2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts

Hardin County Schools
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2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

Table of Contents

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

2023-24 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts
Understanding Continuous Improvement: The Needs Assessment for Districts

The Needs Assessment Diagnostic will facilitate the use of multiple sources of data to determine the current reality and establish a foundation for decision-making around district goals and strategies. Once completed, the diagnostic will lead to priorities to be addressed in the comprehensive district improvement plan to build staff capacity and increase student achievement. The needs assessment is to be conducted annually as an essential part of the continuous improvement process and precedes the development of strategic goals (i.e. desired state).

While the focus of continuous improvement is student performance, the work must be guided by the aspects of teaching and learning that affect performance. An effective improvement process should address the contributing factors creating the learning environment (inputs) and the performance data (outcomes).

The needs assessment provides the framework for all districts to clearly and honestly identify their most critical areas for improvement that will be addressed later in the planning process through the development of goals, objectives, strategies and activities. 703 KAR 2:225 requires, as part of continuous improvement planning for districts, each district to complete the needs assessment between October 1 and November 1 of each year and include: (1) a description of the data reviewed and the process used to develop the needs assessment; (2) a review of the previous plan and its implementation to inform development of the new plan; and, (3) perception data gathered from the administration of a valid and reliable measure of teaching and learning conditions.

Protocol

1. Clearly detail the process used for reviewing, analyzing and applying data results to determine the priorities of this year's needs assessment. Include names of district leadership teams and stakeholder groups involved, a timeline of the process, the specific data reviewed, and how the meetings are documented.

The Hardin County Schools district is comprised of various stakeholders that are committed to continuous review, analysis, and discussion of various types of data. These stakeholders are also committed to developing plans for continuous improvement in all areas including academic achievement, post-secondary transition readiness, and multi-tiered system of support for academics and behavior. District and school administrators receive data first and begin the analysis process. This group consists of the district's Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Early Childhood Education, Director of Elementary Instruction, Director

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

of Middle School Instruction, Director of High School Instruction, Director of Special Education, Principals, and Assistant Principals. The district and school-level administrators collaborate weekly and monthly to discuss our current status. We also meet monthly to participate in leadership development sessions, communicate about operational and procedural needs as well as initiative and programming, collaboratively plan for district initiatives, and review student data. These meetings include the team previously mentioned as well as the Director of Federal Programs and Leadership Development, Director of Instructional Technology, Director of Innovation, Director of Hardin County Educational and Community Television, Chief Operations Officer, Finance Director, Director of Human Resources and Talent Recruitment, Director of Employment, Director of Benefits, Director of Student Services, Director of Alternative Programs, Director of Pupil Personnel, Director of Health and Family Services, and Community Relations Specialist. Meetings are documented in our shared google drive. Upon the release of state assessment data, the District Assessment Coordinator hosts a series of data workshops in order to share school-level information with principals. The District Assessment Coordinator uses a shared google drive to house school and district-level data. This shared drive is used on a regular basis at each of the following leadership development sessions in which the Instructional Services Department works with principals and school leads to facilitate analysis of the data. More detailed analysis is continued by the staff in team or departmental groups, vertical teams, and whole group. Each principal maintains a Data Tracker that is shared with the Instructional Services Department and the Superintendent. The Data Tracker houses multiple measures of data in one place which assist with analysis -recognizing trends, strengths, and needs- and determining action steps. As the Instructional Services Department and the Superintendent work with principals to analyze data found in the Data Tracker notes are also captured in order to assist with developing an improvement plan. Data is also shared with stakeholders outside of the school in public meetings (SBDM and Board of Education). Various pieces of data are analyzed throughout the year including state assessment, benchmark diagnostic assessments, multiple universal screeners, student survey data, behavior screener, MTSS progress, attendance, Studer survey, and anecdotal data.

Review of Previous Plan

2. Summarize the implementation of the goals, objectives, strategies and activities from the previous year's Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP). What was successful? How does it inform this year's plan?

Effective PLCs continue to be an activity to address the review of data and adjust the curriculum. Across the district, PLCs continue to develop standards-based assessments and activities as well as align curriculum. As data was analyzed, adjustments are made. We will continue this process and focus on targeting our subgroups performing below their peer group.

Goal One- Reading and Math Goal- Upon review of this goal and objectives, the committee determined that elementary and middle schools still have work to do in reaching our 2023 objectives of 56.% proficiency in reading. Data from 22-23 shows

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

that our elementary schools are 8% behind the objective we set and our middle schools are also 8% behind the objective for 2023. Our high schools were 17% from obtaining their objective for reading proficiency so we will look at modifying activities.

In math our elementary and middle schools will modify activities and progress monitoring to impact our continued proficiency. Elementry schools were 3% below the objective of 45%; middle schools were 8% below the objective of 43% and high schools were 10% below the objective of 49%.

Goal Two- Science, Social Studies, and Writing Goals (Separate Academic Indicators)- Upon review of this goal and objectives, our schools did not meet the science or social studies objectives. We will continue on track to reach our continuation 2025 goal by modifying activities and checking progress monitoring to ensure growth is continued.

Upon review of the Combined Writing goal and objective, 50% our middle schools met proficiency and surpassed our objective goal by 2%. Elementary and high school both fell below the objective. We will continue on track to reach our continuation 2025 goal by modifying activities and checking progress monitoring to ensure growth is continued.

Goal Three Achievement Gap- Last year we had 10 schools within the district that are TSI in the Disability subgroup and this year we only have 4. The reading objectives set for 2023 were focused on lowering the percent of novice at each level for students with IEPs. Elementary and middle did not reach this objective. However, high school had an objective to lower their novice percentage from 63% to 53% and they surpassed the goal by lowering their novice to 46%. The committee determined the need to continue the objectives and modify/reassess activities.

When reflecting on last year's math objective for students with disabilities, it was determined by the committee that the math objective was focused on lowering the percent novice at each level for students with IEP's. None of the levels met the objective and the committee determined the need to continue the objectives and modify/reassess activities.

Goal Four-English Learner Progress When reflecting on the objective for EL Progress, the change scores show that elementery went up but middle and high school both went down. High school had a significant decrease of 31.4.

Goal Five- Quality of School Climate and Safety- When reflecting on the change scores for QSCS both elementary and high school went down, but middle school went up. For climate, both elementary and high school did not reach the objective but middle school did at 71.8 (surpassing the objective of 69.2). For safety elementary was only .4 less thatn the objective of 73.5 and high school was below by 2.2. Middle schools exceeded the objective by 2.6 for an index of 65.

Goal Six- Postsecondary Readiness-Hardin County schools PSR readiness status went from 81.7 to 88.5 surpassing the goal of 83.8. Continued purposeful one-on-one scheduling with students, goal setting with students, and involving teachers,

counselors, and transition coaches to look at students completing pathways were all activities which led to this increase.

Goal Seven- Graduation Rate- After reflecting on the graduation rate, the status went from 90.9 to 91.1 for Hardin County Schools. Anew objective will need to be set based on indicator and change calculations that now make up the indicator score.

Trends

3. After analyzing data trends from the previous two academic years, which academic, cultural and behavioral measures remain significant areas for improvement?

Example of Trends

• The number of behavior referrals increased from 204 in 2021-22 to 288 in 2022-23.
• From 2021 to 2023, the district saw an 11% increase in novice scores in reading among students with achievement gaps.

After analyzing data from the past two years, proficiency in both math and reading at the elementary level continues to be a concern. While there was an increase in the percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished in Reading and Math we still have more than half of our elementary students scoring Novice/Apprentice. Middle school data trends show similar findings with over half of our students scoring Novice/Apprentice in all tested areas. The high school graduation rate continues to be a focus as Hardin County Schools. Based on trends, the performance of students with disabilities is a continued focus. Although not reflected in grounded data trends yet, anecdotal notes, discussions, and the Quality of School Climate and Safety Survey data show that the social and emotional needs of all students and staff are an area of priority.

IReady trend data shows that Hardin County Schools continues to match or outperform both the KY fall benchmark scores and the national fall benchmark scores in math and reading. In the area of reading, Hardin County started the year with 31% of students on grade level in reading which is more than historical national norms dating pre- COVID. Relative placement on the math benchmark assessment from fall 21-22 to fall 22-23 has only slightly increased by 1%. In reading, our relative placement from fall 21-22 to fall 22-23 has increased by 3%.

While Brigance Kindergarten Readiness Scores dropped during COVID, they have been on a steady increase since 20-21 with a 4.3 increase from the 21-22 school year.

Current State

4. Plainly state the current condition of the district using precise numbers and percentages as revealed by multiple sources of outcome data. Cite the source of data used.

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

Example of Current Academic State:

• Thirty-four percent (34%) of students in the achievement gap scored proficient on Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) in reading.

• Fifty-four percent (54%) of our students scored proficient in math compared to the state average of 57%.

Example of Non-Academic Current State:

• Teacher attendance rate was 84% for the 2022-23 academic year

• Survey results and perception data indicated 74% of the district's teachers received adequate professional development.

Current Academic State

In elementary, 486% of students scored Proficient/ Distinguished in reading, 42% P/D in math, 32% P/D in science, 43% P/D in social studies, and 45% P/D in combined writing.

In middle school, 45% of students scored Proficient/ Distinguished in reading, 35% P/D in math, 28% P/D in science, 38% P/D in social studies, and 50% P/D in combined writing.

In high school, 47% of students scored Proficient/ Distinguished in reading, 39% P/D in math, 13% P/D in science, 41% P/D in social studies, and 43% P/D in writing. Our high school graduation rate was 91.1(4 year cohort)and our postsecondary readiness rate was 83.8 with bonus.

Our district's IReady data from grades K-9 is also important to note given the changes in the state assessment and the 21-22 data being baseline/status. We administered the IReady universal diagnostic in late August/early September of the 23-24 school year. Reading data showed 31% of students in Tier I (on or above grade level), 38% in Tier II (one grade level below), and 29% in Tier III (two or more grade levels below). Math data showed 21% of students in Tier I (on or above grade level), 46% in Tier II (one grade level below), and 33% in Tier III (two or more grade levels below).

Based on ACT data, our district's average composite score is 0.6 above the state. In each subject area, our students outperformed the average score for the state. The percentage of students meeting benchmarks in English, Reading and Math is above the state percentage.

The Brigance kindergarten screener indicated that 46% of our students are ready for kindergarten.

Current Non-Academic State

We had a total of 528 seniors who earned Hardin County Schools Work Ethic Certification.

Hardin County School's elementary and high schools earned a Medium indicator score on the Quality of School Climate and Safety Survey, whereas our middle schools earned a low indicator score rating.

Certified and Classified staffing shortages have continued to be a hurdle for school districts. We currently have 29 certified vacancies that are being filled by long-term substitutes. The majority of these vacancies are being filled by retired teachers. Critical areas include math, science, and special education. HCS has been able to hire a large number of substitute teachers which has led to an average of 4-6 unfilled vacancies daily, this number has been reduced from 10-15 daily in the preceding school year. Classified staff shortages include instructional assistants and custodians.

Priorities/Concerns
5. Clearly and concisely identify the greatest areas of weakness using precise numbers and percentages.
NOTE: These priorities will be thoroughly addressed in the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP) diagnostic and template.

Example: Sixty-eight percent (68%) of students in the achievement gap scored below proficiency on the Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) in reading as opposed to just 12% of non-gap learners.

There are proficiency and growth concerns in math and reading at all levels. In all levels, except 4th grade reading, more than half are scoring Novice/Apprentice. Our strongest area is middle school combined writing with 50% scoring P/D.

In all data, significant achievement gaps were identified for students with disabilities. In elementary, 46% of our students students with disabilities are scoring Novice in reading and 49% are scoring Novice in math. In middle school, 56% of our students with disabilities are scoring Novice in reading and 58% in math. In high school, 46% of our students (this is down from 63% the previous year)with disabilities are scoring Novice in reading and 57% in math.

The Brigance kindergarten screener indicated that only 51% of our students are ready for kindergarten. Our graduation rate was 91.3%. The social and emotional learning of all students and staff continues to be an area of priority.

Strengths/Leverages

6. Plainly state, using precise numbers and percentages revealed by current data, the strengths and leverages of the district. Explain how they may be utilized to improve areas of concern listed above.

Example: Reading achievement has increased from 37% proficient to its current rate of 58%. The systems of support we implemented for reading can be adapted to address our low performance in math.

Two schools —Lincoln Trail Elementary and Rineyville Elementary scored blue overall. We had eight schools that were green overall, seven that were yellow overall and three that were orange. We had no schools with an overall score of red.   Our strongest area is middle school combined writing with 50% scoring P/D.

In iReady, compared to last year, there was growth in most grade levels fo the percentage of students scoring early on teo above grade level. The only grades that did not go up wre 3rd and 7th grade math and 1st, 3rd and 7th grade reading.

Evaluate the Teaching and Learning Environment

7. Consider the processes, practices and conditions evident in the teaching and learning environment as identified in the six Key Core Work Processes outlined below:

KCWP 1: Design and Deploy Standards
KCWP 2: Design and Deliver Instruction
KCWP 3: Design and Deliver Assessment Literacy
KCWP 4: Review, Analyze and Apply Data Results
KCWP 5: Design, Align and Deliver Support
KCWP 6: Establish Learning Environment and Culture

Utilizing implementation data, perception data, and current policies and practices:

a. Complete the Key Elements Template.

● **b. Upload your completed template in the attachment area directly below.**
<u>**ATTACHMENTS**</u>

Attachment Name

📄 HCS Key Elements

8. After analyzing the Key Elements of your teaching and learning environment, which processes, practices or conditions will the district focus its resources and efforts upon in order to produce the desired changes?

Note that all processes, practices and conditions can be linked to the six Key Core Work Processes.

NOTE: These elements will be thoroughly addressed in the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP) diagnostic and template.

> There is room for improvement in all six school improvement strategies listed. KCWP 1- Standards work will continue in all subject areas, especially Science and Social Studies. KCWP 2- Ongoing professional learning to promote instructional strategies to meet the student's individual learning needs. KCWP 3- Developing authentic pre-and post-assessments that are used to drive instruction. KCWP 4- Continuous disaggregation of data at all levels- classroom, school, and district. KCWP 5- Ongoing support for our schools- focus on intervention and enrichment as well as behavioral and social-emotional supports KCWP 6- Teacher attendance, school safety support, and extending the learning culture to our community.

2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts - 2023-2024 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Districts_10112023_14:02 - Generated on 12/19/2023

Hardin County Schools

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
HCS Key Elements		• 7