

2019-20 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts_09042019_16:33

2019-20 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

Rockcastle County
David Pensol
245 Richmond St
Mount Vernon, Kentucky, 40456
United States of America

Last Modified: 12/23/2019
Status: Locked

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2019-20 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts.....	3
Attachment Summary.....	6

2019-20 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

2019-20 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

Description of the District

Describe the district's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the district serves?

Rockcastle County Schools, located in south central Kentucky, educates approximately two thousand, nine hundred children from the three small towns and several outlying communities of the county. Students attend one of three preschool-through-grade-five elementary schools, advance into one middle school, and transition from eighth grade to one high school. The District has a free and reduced lunch rate of approximately 74%, although free lunches are provided for all students. Since Rockcastle County is a rural, primarily farming community, most students spend one hour or more per day on the bus, traveling to and from school. The priorities of our school district are the safety and education of our students. Our children are our most valued assets and we strive to make all decisions based on what is best for them. Just as safety and emergency equipment and procedures are in place at each of the schools to keep children secure, educational programs are implemented to help each child reach his or her potential and become a successful adult. Our district's core instruction program is built on the foundation of a comprehensive curriculum that is aligned with state and national standards. In this core program, all students receive quality instruction. Teachers plan and provide instruction, considering learning styles, progress rates, and assessment data, to help students reach proficiency on state standards. Technology plays a large role in the implementation of instruction and as a learning tool for student use. Flexible groupings and multiple strategies are used to differentiate for the various needs, whether it is enrichment for advanced learners or interventions for struggling students. A system is in place to ensure that this core program is effective for at least eighty to ninety percent of our students. In addition to core instruction, the District has in place several programs to address the learning needs of individual students who require additional support. These are listed below: For identified high performing students, Gifted and Talented Services are available; in addition, differentiation is provided for advanced students at all levels in the classrooms. Advanced placement classes are accessible at the high school level. For qualifying students having difficulty in one or more areas, some programs available in the District are the Rockcastle County Intervention System, Extended School Services, and Special Education. Students are identified for these programs through the use of screenings, assessment results, and progress monitoring data. All students in the three elementary schools benefit from Schoolwide Title I funding. The Academy for Academic Achievement exists for students who have difficulty adjusting and thriving in a regular school setting. The Academy helps these students reach their potentials by addressing behavior, emotional, and academic needs. The District has on hand for career-minded seniors the Cooperative Education Program, partnering with local businesses to provide work experiences. The Rockcastle County Area Technology Center adds to students' career options by providing quality technical education in the areas of business education, health sciences, and automotive, electrical, and welding technology. The Rockcastle College Readiness Center was developed by the District to break down barriers for students in accessing postsecondary education. The Center provides college and career designing resources, financial planning assistance, and guidance on college admissions processes. Through this center, partnerships with local colleges and institutions have been developed to offer dual credit classes for high school students. All these services are provided for the purpose of increasing the number of students who move on to higher education by helping graduating seniors make the transition. Community members also have access to most of these resources, so the county benefits in a variety of ways. While the above district programs are essential to student progress, parents, community members, and businesses

play important roles, as well, in the education of our students. Parents support their children and the schools by helping with homework, attending meetings and school functions, and participating in school based decision making. To support instruction and enhance student awareness of career opportunities, members of the community visit classrooms to provide their expertise and information on a number of topics; local businesses open their doors to class visits so that students can learn about their processes; and Renfro Valley partners with the school system to supplement arts and humanities lessons. Community organizations and businesses have donated funds for a number of needs, such as school playgrounds and eyeglasses for children. The Rockcastle Strategic Planning Committee has aided in the development of new and remodeled school buildings, the creation of the Adult Education Center, and the expansion of early childhood education. These are only some examples of ways parents and the community enhance the education of our children and the District and students are fortunate to have their support. Over the years, the District has worked to have a safe and effective school system with the support of staff, parents, and community. The focus continues to be improving student performance by constantly refining the instructional program to meet student needs in a safe, caring environment. As state standards and requirements are altered, the District and schools realign plans and programs to address the changes, while striving to work toward continuous improvement with a focus on what is best for students.

District's Purpose

Provide the district's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the district embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The Rockcastle County School District has the belief that all students can learn and become responsible, self-sufficient citizens. It is our responsibility to have an instructional program that successfully addresses the learning needs of all students and prepares them for the responsibilities of adulthood. From preschool through twelfth grade, our program strives to reach children early and provide the instruction and intervention necessary for students to learn and thrive in school, in post-secondary education, and in their future careers. Through accountability discussions involving district and school personnel, members of the board of education, and parents, the vision for Rockcastle County Schools was formulated: The board of education and staff of Rockcastle County Schools share the vision of a timely, unified, rigorous district instructional program that prepares all students for success in graduation, college, and careers. In order to make the reality of Rockcastle County Schools correspond with the vision, our mission is defined as follows: The mission of Rockcastle County Schools is to prepare ALL students to graduate and be ready for college and careers. Toward this end, our district must develop a Next Generation environment by:

- establishing and maintaining a well-defined curriculum aligned to new state and national standards;
- promoting the growth of committed professionals who are focused on individual student achievement;
- providing students equitable access to highly effective teachers;
- teaching and assessing with a focus on improving student learning of standards;
- providing appropriate facilities and technology to enhance learning;
- involving parents in decision-making and their children's learning; and
- assisting students in accessing higher education.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the district's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the district is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Rockcastle County schools was a District of Distinction in 2016. In 2019, the district was a 3 star district with one 4 star elementary school (Roundstone Elementary School). Our 2019 scores continue to show improvement across the district in reading and math as we yet again are transitioning to a new accountability cycle. While students at all levels met proficiency targets in

certain areas, schools are constantly working to increase the percentage of students, in every group, scoring proficient or distinguished in every subject at each level. The district's ACT composite scores were the highest in school history and the high school moved out of CSI status. Many advancements have been made for students over the past few years; however, while the District is moving in the right direction, it continues to have improvements to make in order to show consistent annual growth in every area for every student. To improve its educational program, the District has been emphasizing the implementation of the revised standards in the classroom since their adoption. District leaders are currently focusing on improving instructional practices through professional development on horizontal and vertical alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments; re-teaching for proficiency; and co-planning. Middle and high school teachers are participating in a series of trainings on subject area instruction, Assessment for Learning, and ACT standards alignment. Materials have been and continue to be purchased to ensure the use of quality research-based programs and strategies that improve student learning. The District has been working to steadily improve its intervention program, identifying learning needs early and providing intensive instruction to students who are not performing proficiently on standards. Student progress is monitored frequently and instructional changes are made as indicated. The intervention system has required changes in schedules, additional resources, and the training of existing staff; however, student progress toward goals is improving. With all the new challenges, perhaps the most overarching implementation has been restructuring to unify the vision, philosophy, focus, and practices of board members and staff. Within the past few years, district authorities have pulled together school leaders, including councils, for instructional discussions, professional development, and decision-making. Board members and district staff are participating in workshops for study and dialogue. These practices are helping to develop unity among schools and leaders and stronger, more cohesive school and district programs. With all the recent modifications and new requirements from the state and federal governments, as well as devastating continual budget cuts, there are many challenges ahead. Efficiency and dedication will continue to be key elements as we work to make improvements in all aspects of our program and, ultimately, in student performance.

Additional Information

Districts Supporting CSI/TSI Schools Only: Describe the procedures for monitoring and providing support for (a) CSI/TSI school(s) so as to ensure the successful implementation of the school improvement plan.

Not applicable.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Rockcastle County Schools has a culture of taking care of kids first. The belief that the needs of students must be met before they can learn is evident through out all of our schools. Our students are not just a test score, they are our best and most valuable resource for a better future for all. We believe that it is our number one job to help students reach their dreams and become successful adults in life.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
-----------------	-------------	--------------------