



2022-23 Phase One: Executive Summary for
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2022-23 Phase One: Executive Summary for Districts

Nicholas County
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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?

Nicholas County is located on the outer edge of central Kentucky about 35 miles northeast of Lexington. The county is rural in nature with agriculture as the major source of income for most families. The county seat is Carlisle, known as "The Little Town with a Big Heart". The Nicholas County School system is located in Carlisle and can be referred to as "the heartbeat of the little town with a big heart." Nicholas County is a small school district with 2 school buildings. Nicholas County Elementary houses preschool through grade 6 with 625 students, 40 certified staff and 16 classified staff. Nicholas County Middle and High School is home to 461 students in grades 7 through 12 served by 35 certified staff and 12 certified staff. In addition to the 2 school buildings, the district has a Board Office that houses the offices of 7 district administrators and a bus garage which provides a location for transportation and maintenance staff services. As a district, Nicholas County lives out her motto, Every Student- Every Day, in all facets and phases of educating students. Special emphasis has been placed on student attendance and academic achievement over the past several years. The lack of business and industry in the county are at the root of many challenges the district faces on a daily basis. With little to no jobs available in the county, residents, especially parents of school age children, travel on average 35 miles to their place of employment in the region. Their work schedules impact their children's school attendance and achievement as well as their availability to participate in our schools many student-focused programs. Over the past 3 years, our student population has remained fairly constant and there has been minimal turnover in teaching staff until the fall of 2021 when the district hired a total of 13 new teachers and 6 full-time substitutes. In the Spring of 2020, our students were forced to leave our school buildings due to Covid 19 and learning was totally remote from late March to the end of the school year. The method of instruction during that time was almost exclusively through paper packets of student work. During the summer, administrative staff worked diligently to secure Chromebooks for all students in grades 2 through 12, select and purchase an online learning platform and develop a Virtual Learning Only program. Even with these upgrades in technology and curriculum, we found that about 30% of our students did not have access to WiFi so we secured hot spots for those students. Teachers were provided professional development opportunities in the use of Google Classroom and our virtual learning platform, Edgenuity. The 20-21 school year began with 14 straight days of nontraditional instruction (NTI) with students learning from home via our virtual learning platform, Edgenuity, and Google Classroom until students could return to in-person learning for 8 days of in-person learning and then 15 days of NTI, 11 days of in-person learning and then finishing out the fall semester with 22 days of NTI. The Spring semester of 2021 included 64 days of in-person learning, 27 days of NTI and 6 snow days. In late summer of 2021, the community experienced a flash flood that resulted in 1 fatality, nearly 100 homes lost, 30 local businesses impacted including the county's only grocery store

which was a complete loss, and over 30 families of our students lost either their homes or most of their belongings. The 2021-2022 school year started with the entire district community making sure students and staff who had been impacted by the flood and/or had lost family members due to Covid 19 were both physically and emotionally ready to start the new school year. The 2021-2022 school year moved the district closer to what could be referred to as a more "normal school year" in regards to most students being able to come back to in-person instruction and only having 5 NTI days for the whole year. However, the 2021-2022 school year proved to be anything but normal in meeting the academic and emotional needs of students. Addressing learning gaps as well as the emotional toil of nearly a two year pandemic has challenged staff to examine new and different methods of assessment, instruction, and social emotional learning to meet the needs of not only students but also their families.

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.

Nicholas County Schools exist to prepare all students with the self-discipline and academic proficiency necessary to be contributing citizens in an ever-changing society. In our 2018-2019 administrative retreat, much time and effort was invested in developing a district "motto" that would enhance our district's purpose/mission statement and be accepted by all NCS staff. We developed the following explanation. At Nicholas County Schools every decision is based on the best interests of our students. Our staff lives out our district motto, Every Student Every Day, in everything they do. Nicholas County Schools provides a safe and nurturing educational environment where students can grow and thrive intellectually, socially and physically. This new narrative describes how our district embodies its purpose through every aspect of the educational experience.

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.

In the 2019-2020 school year our elementary school moved out of the "TSI" rating and both schools and the district received 3 star rating under the new accountability system from KDE. During the summer of 2020, administrative staff worked diligently to secure Chromebooks for all students in grades 2 through 12, select and purchase an online learning platform and develop a Virtual Learning Only program. Even with these upgrades in technology and curriculum, we found that about 30% of our students did not have access to WiFi so we secured hot spots for those students. Teachers were provided professional development opportunities in the use of Google Classroom and our virtual learning platform, Edgenuity. The 20-21 school year proved to be incredibly challenging due to the need to transition quickly from

nontraditional to in-person learning and back from September through February as a result of Covid 19. As a result of the instability in instruction from March 2020 to March 2021, our students at all levels experienced difficulty in returning to a more scheduled learning environment which was evidenced in behavioral issues as well as gaps in academic achievement during the 21-22 school year.

Areas of Improvement - We need to increase levels of student proficiency in all grades in mathematics and reading. We have reorganized the RTi program at our elementary by adopting a new universal screening system which also makes individual student interventions and provides resources for teachers at all 3 RTi levels.

We also need to improve attendance percentages and address truancy issues among student population. The district was able to hire one Student Services Specialist (SSS) to assist the DPP in the district's truancy program in the 2021-2022 school year and a second SSS in August of 2022. Attendance is also a component of the elementary school's Triple Threat Program (Attendance, Achievement and Attitude) which is their version of a PBIS program.

With the introduction of virtual learning, we need to continue to refine our approach to distance learning. The district's Virtual Learning Only Academy (VLOA) is available to qualified students in grades 4-12.

Additional Information

Districts Supporting CSI/TSI (including ATSI) 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.

None of our schools are identified as either CSI/TSI or ATSI.

Additional Information

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

No additional information will be shared at this time.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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