



2023-2024 Phase One: Executive Summary for Schools_09132023_18:10

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Yellow Creek School Center
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Description of the School

Describe the school'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 school serves?

Yellow Creek School Center is a preschool through eighth grade educational institution. Our school is comprised of approximately 569 students, 40 certified full-time employees plus 2 preschool teachers, 24 classified full-time employees, and 8 itinerant employees (certified and/or classified). In addition, our school clinic has 1 nurse. Within our school, we also have a Family Resource Youth Service Center (FRYSC), which also seeks to serve and provide supportive services to our students and families. Our school is situated in the small town of Middlesboro, KY (Bell County, KY) with a population of 9,273. This is a decrease in population of 1,061 over the past 11 years. The median household income for our town is \$29,114. Our school has a high Free and Reduced Lunch population of 84% and our Homeless rate is 10%. Our community also has an unemployment rate of 5.1% (KY-4.2%, US-3.7%). Our community has always been a coal community, but with the decline in the coal industry, jobs have also declined as well. In the past few years, we have increased our technology for students and teachers by obtaining new ClearTouch smart panels (teacher workstation/classroom interactive displays) in each classroom, and document cameras to aid with instruction and learning. In 2017/2018, we added 80 Chromebooks. In 2018/2019, we were awarded another 28 Chromebooks from the Charge grant. COVID-19 funds has allowed us to provide Chromebooks for every single student, making our school a 1:1 facility. We have had a huge turnover in staffing the past few years. In 2019/2020, we added 2 new teaching positions. In addition, in 2019/2020, we had 10 certified and 4 classified staff that were new to our building. In 2020/2021, we had 7 new certified and 5 new classified staff members. In 2021/2022, we had 6 new certified and 2 classified staff members. In 2022/2023, we have 7 certified and 5 classified staff. However, we lost a certified position in 2022/23 and an additional certified position this year, resulting in larger class sizes in the middle school. Our school enrollment has either increased or held fairly steady for the past 5 years and has resulted in overcrowding issues. As of date, we are only 2 students less than this time last year. While this proves to be difficult to overcome, all of our staff strives to provide the utmost educational opportunities and experience for our students. In an attempt to temporarily ease the overcrowding issue, our school district provided us with 2 modular units, which now house the 2 preschool classrooms and Comprehensive Care Counseling Services. While this has helped, it has not entirely solved the problem. Although local school budgets have been cut, our school has received several grants both public and private to aid in providing the best education for our students. In 2018/2019, we received a renewal of the Federal GEAR UP grant through Berea College. This grant has aided in supporting students where lack of local funding has not been able to provide. In the previous 7 year grant, our students were provided with an abundance of instructional resources and trips to colleges and career facilities which provided our students with opportunities they may not otherwise have had. The grant also provided teachers with extensive

professional development on teaching strategies, growth mindset, classroom management and within the content area. The renewal grant also provided our school with 4 additional staff members (2 Academic Specialists, 2 College and Career Navigators) in addition to instructional resources. Three of those positions have since moved to the high school level, but 1 College and Career Navigator remains. Our school was the only school in the area to receive an additional mini grant in 2018/2019 from GEAR UP to support a math/science initiative through Texas Instruments. This grant provided 14 days of onsite teacher support/coaching, TI Math Conference for one teacher and one administrator, TI-Inspire calculators, Navigator system for 2 math classrooms and 1 science classroom in addition to science probes and equipment. Last year, we received a STEM Robot lab to use in our middle grades science classes. Our school also received a mini-grant in 2018/2019 from the Elgin Foundation, which provided a supplemental program, Simple Solutions, for use during Rtl for Reading and Math. We were able to use additional school funds to purchase the same program for other content areas in order to reach struggling students in multiple content areas. In 2019/2020, we were also recipients of the Save the Children (STC) Reading Grant. This grant provides 1 certified and 1 classified staff members devoted entirely to improving reading scores in primary-6th grade. The STC grant also provides after school tutoring for 2 hours daily, 4 days each week in reading, math and healthy choices in grades K-6. We also have 5 Social Studies teachers that have been a part of the Charge grant for the past three years. Teachers received monthly professional development related to their content and have received technology in the form of 56 ChromeBooks and Virtual Reality Goggles in addition to instructional resources for teaching. This year, our school received a Full Service Community Schools State (FSCS) Scale Grant from Partners for Rural Impact which includes a school coordinator that provides additional resources and support, especially in the area of family engagement. This year, our district also received a Stronger Connections Grant, which includes access to 2 mental health counselors. Also new this year, our district received the THRIVE/AWARE Grant that provides resources that address mental health, drug awareness, healthy food choices, and positive behavior interventions.

Our ever growing and changing region has made and continues to make a rich historical mark in our area. For the most part, our town has a foundational history that dates back to the Pre-Civil War era, including before Kentucky became a state. For example, our town lies within the Cumberland Gap, the trail that Daniel Boone used to navigate his way through the Cumberland Mountains. Moreover, our area offers state and national parks, hometown festivals, historical re-enactments, and a sense of community pride. Within our area, we have a community college, technical college, and a university available for inspiring our students to acquire a higher education and plan for their future career.

School Stakeholders

Identify and describe the school's stakeholder groups. How does the school ensure stakeholder involvement and engagement in the improvement planning process?

Our stakeholders include: administrators, certified/classified staff, community members, parents and students. We feel that each of these are important to the overall school improvement planning for our school. We ensure stakeholder involvement and engagement in the improvement planning process in several ways.

First, our school improvement team involves administrators, certified/classified staff and parents. We feel this keeps transparency as well as provides a variety of ideas and suggestions. We also share school improvement plan meeting dates via email, Remind, school announcements and SBDM. We also include student, parent and staff engagement via school survey data. We include community and businesses in programs and offerings at the school. Finally, our school improvement plan is posted on our school's website for all to view as well as to share ideas.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs, including the year in which they were last reviewed or revised. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students and how stakeholders are involved in its development.

Yellow Creek School Center's main purpose is to instruct and guide students to become productive and educated citizens for our community and world. Our mission at YCS is threefold: to educate, to encourage, and to engage all students to be the best they can be in order to meet their full potential as human beings. As a result of our mission, we have very high, however, appropriate expectations for each of our students. In addition, we believe that every child can learn if given the right opportunity, tools, instruction, and guidance. We want our students to become independent learners. Furthermore, we celebrate student achievement and success as well as implement an action plan to help students improve. With our overall program and curriculum, instruction is based on the foundation of the Kentucky Academic Standards. Over the years, teachers have deconstructed standards, implemented research based instructional strategies, and created units, lessons, and assessments, which follow the rigor of these standards. This process was also used for the new ELA, Math, Social Studies and PLCS standards.

In addition, we have implemented research-based reading (SFA) and math (Math in Focus) programs to ensure that our students are taught to the same rigor as students across the nation. We have also incorporated a Response to Intervention (RtI) period, to support struggling students. During this period, students receive supplemental instruction based on their individual needs in the areas of reading and math. K-3 students receive supplemental reading instruction either in Reading Mastery, Imagine It, Lightening Squad, or Novel Studies. Targeted 4th-8th grade students receive supplemental reading instruction using Reading Mastery or Corrective Reading. During the school day, struggling students are also provided additional support in reading and math through IXL, MAP Accelerator and computer programs that allow students to work on their reading and math level.

While Program Reviews are no longer state mandated, our school continues to provide high quality curriculum in the areas of art/humanities, practical living/careers, and writing. In fact, although state funding no longer provides for the ILP curriculum in the area of careers/technology, our district purchased the program out of local funds to ensure that our students continued to receive this vital instruction. We have continued and plan to continue to provide students with arts/humanities performances, despite the lack of the state required program reviews.

In 2018/2019, our district also used local funds to help purchase much needed K-8 health curriculum. We also received the Too Good for Drugs Grant in an attempt to teach students prevention skills to avoid drugs and to make better decisions. Furthermore, we have developed a school-wide writing policy that all teachers include within their classrooms. This demonstrates our commitment to providing our students with high level instruction in all content areas to support educating the Whole Child.

In order to accomplish our purpose, vision, and mission, our school offers a wealth of educational programs to help students achieve to their fullest potential. First, all students in Kindergarten through eighth grade complete the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times a year as a means of monitoring student progress. This test measures achievement in reading, math, language usage and general science. Because MAP is aligned with the Kentucky Academic Standards, the data is used to help drive classroom instruction, RtI classes, tutoring, and computer based programs. Students also set MAP goals before testing as a means of self-monitoring their own achievement and as a way for students to be aware of their own progress.

In addition, our teachers and staff can be more productive and effective in targeting the academic needs of our students. After MAP is administered, immediate feedback and results are available for each student. Through this program, a report designed for each student containing specific skills needed for improvement in each content area is available to teachers. By using this report, teachers and staff can monitor each student's achievement with these specified skills and provide strategies and interventions to help students personally improve. We use this information to set goals with students and encourage them to improve. Equally important, our MAP testing has opened a line of communication with parents, and has provided talking points pertaining to their child's growth, achievement, and academic needs. Second, during the past several years, our school has targeted reading for student improvement in Kindergarten through eighth grade. At YCS, we understand that reading is crucial to learning, and students must read and comprehend at a high level in order to achieve in all content areas; therefore, we have implemented several programs to help our students gain skills and succeed in reading. Our core reading program, Success for All (SFA) is implemented in grades K-8. In conjunction with SFA, students in Kindergarten through third grade receive supplementary reading instruction through the Reading Mastery program or Lightning Squad. Targeted students in 4th-8th grade receive supplementary reading instruction through the Corrective Reading program. Students are selected for each additional reading program based on their current skill level in reading. With SFA and Reading Mastery, students are assessed, monitored, and placed according to their current skill level. In addition, select students are assigned to an

additional RtI reading class based on the results of their MAP assessment. Some students also receive supplemental instruction using the Simple Solutions curriculum. The curriculum provides daily instruction, daily practice and on-going assessment. In fact, the math curriculum provides students with 120 opportunities per year to see each skill, which reinforces the skills over and over throughout the school year, resulting in better retention. Students also receive remediation in Reading through the Save the Children Interventionist. This year, we received an additional Save the Children grant that provides after school intervention/support in Reading and Math as well as a Healthy Choices program in grades K-6. Our reading teachers receive coaching from the school level Reading Facilitator, Elgin Grant Reading Coach, District Reading Coach, and SFA Reading Coach.

All students in our school utilize the IXL program (computer based) for reading and math, which is designed, based on each student's individual needs and allows each student to progress through skill levels at their own learning pace. Reports are available in order to monitor student progress with IXL. This program both remediates and accelerates students based on individual performance. This program has multiple content areas for students to practice, including reading, language, math, science and social studies. In addition to the above mentioned initiatives, we have a home connection with reading. It is a K-3 weekly reading program titled, "Once Upon a Friday" and a PreK program titled, "Fairytale Wednesday." In order to boost students' interest in reading we will have parents and community partners read to K-3 students every Friday and PreK every Wednesday. Currently, we are not able to have our parent/community reading program due to COVID, but will resume once it is safe to do so. Third, we have targeted math as an area for student growth at our school.

In Kindergarten through eighth grade, our students follow the Math In Focus curriculum. This program focuses on a Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract approach to math. Math content is introduced using concrete materials (manipulatives) and students learn to draw it out pictorially and finally through the abstract algorithm. This program also embodies the cooperative learning approach and gradual release that gives students support before they are expected to do it independently. In order to aid student math improvement and success, our school provides several additional programs besides regular classroom instruction for students. Over the years, our partnership in the GEAR UP grant has provided numerous resources including calculators, resource materials, manipulatives and professional development training. We also previously received the GEAR UP mini grant to support a math/science initiative and this year a STEM Robot lab. This grant has provided our middle school students with 5 class sets of TI-Inspire calculators, Navigator system, science probes and high level coaching and professional development via a Texas Instrument certified trainer. We also partner with our District Math Coach to provide teachers support through classroom visits, observations and demonstration lessons.

Last but not least, Yellow Creek School offers other opportunities for our students to succeed. During our RtI class period, students can receive extra support and one on one or small group tutoring for reading or math. Furthermore, GEAR UP College and Career Navigators have provided several college/career field trips opportunities within our area and region and/or virtual field trips. Our ILP coordinator also

encourages students to find a career path they are interested in and helps them find resources to learn more about their career interests. Our Technology teacher also collaborates with the writing teacher to host a Career project where students take the results of their ILP, research, create displays and present about their career of choice. GEAR UP also works with middle school students to learn about KEES info, financial literacy and STEM activities.

In addition, students have opportunities for extracurricular activities after school such as: Academic Team, Art Club, Math Club, various sports (football, basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, cross-country), Science Olympiad, and Robotics. Our Academic Team, basketball, cheerleading and Robotics teams all had successful years last year, with each of them winning several competitions at district and/or regional levels. Several students also competed at the state level in Governor's Cup and Robotics. Last year, we also started our first Elementary and Junior Beta Clubs and Drama Club. During our first year, last year, we had several students place at the state and national level at both the elementary and middle level at the BETA conventions. We respect the right to encourage growth and development of the whole student. While COVID-19 has posed several challenges and barriers the past few years, Yellow Creek School Center continues to focus on ways to improve despite the circumstances. We have identified the grade levels that were most impacted by lack of instruction during COVID and have focused our resources on those students and helping them overcome the deficits that resulted during virtual instruction. We know we must adapt as a school to meet the needs of our community, state and nation to lead our students to success that enables them to compete at any level. While the task has not been without obstacles, teachers and administrators have embraced the challenge and have become better instructors by seeking new opportunities in professional development and instructional supports. For example, several teachers have already become Google Certified and many are using new digital platforms to aid with the digital delivery such as Google Classroom, G-Suite, EdPuzzle, Screencastify, Nearpod, Flipgrid, just to name a few.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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

Over the past several years, Yellow Creek School Center has had mixed results in state assessment data. For three years, we saw a decline in all subject areas in Middle School and sporadic growth and decline at the elementary level. Our Middle School was rated Proficient for two consecutive years. However, in 2014-2015, our middle school dropped to a Needs Improvement Rating. The elementary school was also rated as Needs Improvement - Progressing. Language and Mechanics at the elementary level had seen exceptional growth. Reading at the elementary level had seen a steady increase in achievement. Our focus was Reading, but for the past three years, Math became the focus. However, in 2015-2016, we saw a huge increase in our student performance. That year, our elementary school was rated Proficient/Progressing and our Middle School was rated Distinguished/Progressing, School of Distinction/High Progress School, which is a huge increase from Needs

Improvement at both levels the previous year. In 2016-2017, we still saw improvements in many areas, but unfortunately had a decline in elementary math. If classification labels had still been released, our school would have had both a Distinguished elementary and a Distinguished middle school despite the decrease in elementary math. In 2017-2018, we saw improvement in many areas (elementary reading; middle-reading, math, social studies, writing), but did see regression in other areas (elementary-math, social studies, writing and with students with disabilities). Our focus has been at the middle level, but this year, it will be at the elementary level, especially in math as well as the gap group of students with disabilities in reading and math. As for positives, in 2018-2019, we saw growth in our middle school math, which had been a huge focus in previous years and was a celebration point this year. We had the highest growth indicator in our district at the middle school level. Our elementary and middle writing has outperformed the state level for the past several years. Our elementary and middle schools were both classified as "Other," which is also a positive. However, after our K-PREP data analysis for the 2018/2019 school year, our gap groups (SWD, F/R) were concerns in Reading in addition to our proficiency levels in Elementary and Middle level Mathematics. Our biggest issue continues to be moving students from Apprentice to Proficient. We have reduced our Novice in many areas, but continue to struggle moving students from Apprentice to Proficient in many areas. The COVID-19 Pandemic affected all of our progress. We saw a decline in Elementary/Middle Reading and Math and Elementary On-Demand Writing. Only Middle On-Demand Writing and Elementary & Middle level Science saw gains. Elementary/Middle Reading and Math saw double digit decreases. Despite our efforts to reach students with virtual and In-Person learning, the pandemic had a tremendous impact on student learning. As for notable improvements, our Elementary Reading, Math and Social Studies and Middle Reading and Social Studies Proficiency have all steadily improved overall prior to the pandemic. This is a promising trend, but we still have a long way to go with proficiency in many content areas to be where we want to be after COVID-19. We did see gains in Middle level On-Demand Writing and Elementary/Middle level Science in 2019/2020. In 2021/2022, we saw significant growth in most areas on KSA, including: Elementary/Middle Reading and Writing On Demand. As compared to our district, we out performed all district schools at the elementary level and all but one school at the middle level. We had several areas that scored higher than the state average including (Middle Reading, Elementary/Middle Social Studies, Elementary/Middle ODW, and Elementary Science. We continue to focus on math and social studies at all grade levels as well as science at the middle level. We were very pleased with the student growth on KSA and feel that we are finally headed in the right direction again, post COVID. We anticipate similar or even better state assessment results for the 2022/2023 school assessment. Student data yields a positive trend of steady improvement.

We are also in the early stages of implementing the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS). While we are in the beginning stages, we are pleased with the positive results so far and the reduction in behavior referrals and resolutions. This is an area we hope to continue to improve on. We feel that if students feel the positive behavioral impact, they will feel better about themselves and be more productive in the classroom. 2019/2020 was our first year implementing PBIs, we saw a significant

impact that dramatically reduced office referrals as well as was changing our school culture. As with many other areas, COVID-19 dramatically impacted our level of PBIS implementation due to ever changing placements for learning from virtual to in-person and back to virtual. We have a strong PBIS initiative this school year now that all students are transitioned back to in-person instruction. We feel that our PBIS Tier I level of implementation is going well, but is still in the early stages. We are working on improving SEL instruction in relation to PBIS. We need to improve our Tier II and III levels for PBIS.

Additional Information

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

While our school has a long way to go to achieve the levels of proficiency that we hope for, we have made steady improvements in assessment, prior to COVID-19. We are a resilient school and are quickly returning to higher levels of proficiency. Our school is a very tight-knit community and our staff is truly devoted to the well-being and success of our students. Many of our staff members take care of student needs far beyond the school day. They buy them clothes, food and visit them during hospital stays. Our staff goes above and beyond in caring for our students and is devoted to the success of our school. We also continue to strive to improve our campus grounds with improvements to our playground over the past several years, new paving, an electronic welcoming sign to celebrate student achievements as well as to keep parents informed as well as a new geo-thermal heating/cooling system. We feel that despite living in a low-income community, our students deserve the very best of education, which includes a welcoming and inviting environment/building. We want our students to recognize and believe that they can accomplish anything!

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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