



2025-2026 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Schools_10292025_13:37

2025-2026 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for Schools

Farristown Middle School
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Understanding Continuous Improvement: The Needs Assessment for Schools

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 school goals and strategies. Once completed, the diagnostic will lead to priorities to be addressed in the comprehensive school 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 schools to clearly and honestly identify their most critical areas for improvement that they will address 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 schools, each school 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 to determine the priorities of this year's needs assessment. Include the following information in your response:

- names of school council members, leadership teams and stakeholder groups (i.e., Family Resource Youth Service Centers, community partners such as civic and business organizations, etc.) involved in the process
- a timeline of the process
- the specific data reviewed and analyzed
- how and where the meetings were documented.

Data results are reviewed and analyzed in multiple ways and by multiple groups at Farristown. Each department has a PLC which meets twice a month and looks at data to make decisions about day to day instruction. They look at strategies and instruction as ways to improve and help students grow. One member of each PLC is a part of the leadership team. The leadership team meets several times a month as well. They review and analyze school-wide data trends and what needs we may have as a school. The leadership team will discuss issues that may impact multiple areas within the building. For example, are all resource classes making progress? If not, what can we do to assist in that area? We also look at multiple pieces of data including summative and formative results. Diagnostic testing is completed three

times a year in addition to other testing. The SBDM Council and MTSS team also look at student achievement at each monthly meeting. They primarily look at results from the diagnostic and state testing. As these groups look at data, they try to "prescribe" the next step strategy that might help - which includes moving students in and out of Tier 2 and Tier 3 strategies as needed. These include a wide variety of possibilities at Farristown so each case is looked at individually. Members of the Leadership team are Angie Alexander, Ben Colbert, Amy Poynter, Megan Warren, Erin Coffey, Sherra Caudill, Christy Closterman, Katie McClain, Doug Wilson, Zac Wray, and Jennifer Hess. This team represents each department and admin. The SBDM is made up of three teachers, the principal, and two parents: Lee Tran, Katie McClain, Chelsea Tipton, Kenny Fields(p), Rebekah Edmonds(p), and Angie Alexander, principal. All of the groups that meet keep recorded minutes of topics discussed.

Review of Previous Plan

2. Summarize the implementation of the goals, objectives, strategies and activities from the previous year's comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP). What was successful? How will your results inform this year's plan?

We have had many successes over the past couple of years in our efforts to hold on to academic progress after the pandemic and returning to school with several students having gaps in learning. All of our diagnostic data as well as KSA scores indicate that we are making progress in every content area. As we design this year's plan, we are considering the strategies that have worked best in helping students - and continuing those. We have had to create plans for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction that are fairly specific based on the needs of the students. We have extended our minutes in Rtl and expanded our tutoring programs as well. In addition, we have purchased two online programs for Tier 2 that are specifically being used to fill in gaps. This will be the second year for the Tier 2 programs, and they seem to be helping a great deal, and this is our first real math boost in several years.

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

- Behavior remains an area for improvement, as referrals have increased in the last two years from 204 in 2023-2024 to 288 in 2024-2025.
- Reading for students in our gap groups remains an area for improvement because the district saw an 11% increase in novice scores in reading among students with achievement gaps from 2024-2025.

Based on trends in the data, there are two significant areas for improvement. 1) Math scores from iReady are good, but we would like to see more progress in that area. The math gauge keeps showing improvement but in very small increments until last year where there was a 7% increase in proficient and distinguished. 2) Students with disabilities continue to struggle to reach proficiency in reading and

math. They have done well based on disabilities, but keeping that progress moving is very difficult at times. This year, there is a high percentage of students reading on 2nd grade level or below.

Current State of Academics and Climate and Culture

4. Describe in narrative form the current academic state of the school using precise numbers and percentages as revealed by multiple sources of your most recent outcome data. Cite the source of data used. Consider the following data sources:

- Kentucky Summative Assessments
- Benchmark assessments
- Formative assessments
- Graduation rate
- Progress in achieving English language proficiency
- Student access to high quality instructional resources, advanced placement courses, dual credit courses, career and technical education courses, before/after school and summer programs, preschool, full day kindergarten

Example of Current Academic Narratives:

- Thirty-four percent (34%) of students in the achievement gap scored proficient on Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) in reading. Local benchmark data indicates that 32% of all students receive Tier II intervention in reading.
- Fifty-four percent (54%) of our students scored proficient in math on the KSA compared to the state average of 57%. Local formative assessments show 53% of students are on grade level in math.

We recently received individual student data from the Kentucky Summative Assessment. We have also taken the iReady Diagnostic which aligns to KSA. After a look into that information, we observe the following notes about the current academic state at Farristown:

ACADEMIC **About 31% of our students are scoring below proficiency in Reading.
**About 41% of our students are scoring below proficiency in math. *Students with disabilities are making steady progress but still scoring much lower than all students as a whole in reading and math.

5. Describe in narrative form the current climate and culture conditions of the school using precise numbers and percentages as revealed by multiple sources of your most recent data. Cite the source of data used. Consider the following data sources:

- Educator and school staff retention rates
- High-quality professional learning opportunities
- Chronic absenteeism
- School climate
- Behavior

- Staff and student access to mental healthcare
- Family and community involvement

Example of Current Climate and Culture Narratives:

- Teacher attendance rate was 84% for the 2024-2025 academic year. 2023-2024 Impact survey data shows that 71% of staff feel like they belong at our school.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of families participated in a family engagement activity during the 2024-2025 school year.

Our retention rate for staff is good. Our professional learning is excellent. We work hard to build a positive climate and culture and a high percentage of staff and students embrace the culture and try to improve it. Our student attendance is pretty good overall, approximately 95% on average. Our staff attendance has been a bit lower of late due to a couple of teachers having lengthy medical issues (6 weeks or more).

Strengths

6. Plainly state, using precise numbers and percentages revealed by current data, the strengths of the school.

Example:

- We have active partnerships with twelve community organizations and businesses.
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of certified staff have participated in high-quality professional learning through the Kentucky Reading Academies.

The strength according to the data is that students are improving and continue to improve. We are still addressing middle schoolers who come into 6th grade missing some key instruction from elementary. We have also implemented a specific reading program and a specific math program to try to help students "catch up" and "make up" from the gaps created during the pandemic, absences, etc.

Another strength based on individual student reports from KSA is writing. We only have a few students who scored in the lower range.

Another note might be that we have some great community partnerships, one of which has approved a significant grant for a CTE program for our school.

Leverages/Assets

7. Explain how the district will utilize its strengths and leverages, including community resources and assets (i.e., colleges, community partnerships, businesses, industry, etc.) to improve areas for improvement listed above.

Examples:

- We will coordinate efforts with our community partners to meet the behavior needs of more students.

• We will utilize the knowledge gained from the Kentucky Reading Academies to develop a reading action plan to target students in our achievement gap groups.

We plan to use our continued improvement as a way to help other schools by being a Spotlight School for Kentucky and to build strong relationships with community partners to continue our growth.

Evaluate the Teaching and Learning Environment

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 Processes

KCWP 6: Establish Learning Environment and Culture

8a. KCWP 1: Design and Deploy Standards

Schools continually assess, review, and revise school curricula to support the assurance that all students have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for future success.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ Yes

COMMENTS

Our school has PLCs for each department, and they meet regularly to examine data. They use common assessments that are aligned with standards as one way to assess, review, and revise the curriculum as needed. Departments continually look at standards, the targets in use, and the activities to make sure they are focused and clear. Department leaders meet as the leadership team to discuss progress and next steps.

8b. KCWP 2: Design and Deliver Instruction

Instructional programs include consistent implementation of evidence-based instructional practices essential for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional competencies that are aligned to Kentucky Academic Standards and current research.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ Yes

COMMENTS

Student achievement on assessments including iReady provides evidence that the instruction is effective. Strategies used by teachers are evidence – based and include elements of engagement so that all students in the classroom have access. Teachers use strategies to assist students as they work within the content. All subgroups of students are able to achieve at high levels.

8c. KCWP 3: Design and Deliver Assessment Literacy

Schools have a comprehensive, balanced assessment system that provides a variety of evidence to support educational decision making and includes four primary assessment purposes: formative, diagnostic, interim/benchmark, and summative.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ **Yes**

COMMENTS

We have an iReady Diagnostic three times a year in reading and math. Departments have common assessments a minimum of twice per nine week grading period. Individual teachers use formative assessment results to make decisions about instruction.

8d. KCWP 4: Review, Analyze and Apply Data Results

Schools communicate and implement a sustainable system for reviewing, analyzing, and applying data results to ensure a uniform way to elicit, interpret, and act on meaningful evidence of student learning.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ **Yes**

COMMENTS

We work in departmental PLCs to focus on instruction, but we also have Teams within the school that focus on student needs. In that group, we look at all kinds of data to make decisions about what is best for a student who is possibly not finding success in the current structure. In addition to the team, we have an MTSS committee that looks at data – both academic and non-academic – to make sure student needs such as social/emotional needs are met.

8e. KCWP 5: Design, Align and Deliver Support Processes

Schools establish a framework that organizes systems, data, and practices to promote positive, equitable and inclusive learning experiences for all students.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ Yes

COMMENTS

We are currently using online programs to help us monitor progress of students. We have iReady, Reading Plus, ALEKS, and IXL that help us push student improvement in math and reading – but also help with monitoring where students are improving and where they still struggle. We have a class for RtI, and we move students in those classes based on progress. For example, if a student demonstrates a high level need in math, we would place him with a math teacher for RtI class.

8f. KCWP 6: Establish Learning Environment and Culture

Schools intentionally design the learning environment to be inclusive and accessible for all students within a culture where learning and continued growth is the primary focus and foundation for all actions.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

☐ No

☒ Yes

COMMENTS

Teacher and staff work with individual students to try to help them where they are. We offer tutoring and a variety of activities every day after school. Teachers work in PLCs to research best options for specific students who seem to be struggling. Students have an online check in each morning with their team teachers. Teachers address each concern that is brought to their attention.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
 Key Elements	Description of each element	.