



2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary for
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2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

Bell County
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. 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?

Every school system has its own distinct story to tell. The Bell County School District's story begins with sharing the context in which teaching and learning takes place. This context influences the processes and procedures by which the school system makes decisions about curriculum, instruction and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school system remains focused on its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as the trends and issues affecting the school system from within and from the community as well as the kinds of programs and services a system implements to support student learning. At present, the COVID-19 Pandemic has not only caused alarm within the community concerning health and safety, but has also caused the most drastic changes in teaching since the beginning of the formal public education system. These changes have caused high levels of stress for teachers, students, parents, and administrators. Changes include teachers working to learn and implement multiple technology learning management systems, starting the entire district in distance/virtual learning which brought on providing Chromebooks to all students in addition to training them on how to set up and use these devices, allowing students to move to face to face environment, in person and virtual enrollments changing as needs change for individuals, and teachers trying to juggle teaching virtually and in person. The Bell County School District serves approximately 2571 preschool through twelfth grade students (this number has been reduced by 62 students since this time last school year and 127 from the year prior). Our students are served by 6 preschool through 8th grade school centers and one high school (9th - 12th grade). Our district partners with the Bell Whitley Community Action Agency to provide a fully blended preschool model that includes HeadStart to help promote Kindergarten Readiness. We also provide a full day of Kindergarten to help meet the student's needs. Our schools are located across the various communities throughout our county lines that reach from the Fourmile community to Red Bird to Page Cut Off to the Frakes Community and even extends to the city of Middlesboro which is located on the Kentucky/Tennessee/Virginia borders. Our community, parents, and students are serviced by approximately 200 certified employees, 49 instructional assistants, 35 cooks, 26 custodians, 36 bus drivers, 7 Family Resource Youth Service Centers, 1 District Social Worker, 1 Community Education coordinator, and 1 Parent Liaison. 81% of our students qualify for free and reduced feeding program which evidences the low socioeconomic status of our county. Our enrollment has shown a significant decline

in the past few years which constitutes a trend (-62 in 2020/21, -127 in 2019-20, -81 in 2018-19, -110 during 2016-2018). The decline also creates the issue of meeting student needs with less funding. This decline is mainly due to the loss of jobs and the reduction of job opportunities in our area/region. The demise of the coal industry and the decline of the Pineville Hospital to the point of large lay-offs and almost closing are both examples of what is happening economically in our county. Our county school system is currently the largest employer. Thus, economic growth is one of the biggest challenges our district faces as it impacts our student enrollment as well as our funding abilities. Our special education population is currently at 16.7%. Our Gifted and Talented population is currently 11%. Our homeless population is at 15%.

. 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 Bell County School District's mission states that the parents, employees, and community partners strive to provide the individualized support necessary to ensure that each student reaches his or her full potential and is prepared, upon graduation, to successfully pursue their college or career ambitions. This mission was developed by the district and school level administration including both the Special Education and Gifted & Talented directors at the time. This mission is at the heart of what the district, each school, and each employee does for our students on a daily basis whether it be through the instruction given in the classroom, the relationships built with bus drivers and cooks, or the basic needs of the student being met by the FRYSC coordinators and other support staff. Our district holds high expectations for the teaching and learning that occurs within each and every classroom every day. We strive to ensure high quality instruction by providing effective and engaging professional learning opportunities (e.g. New Standards Project, KAGAN, PLTW, Question Formulation Techniques, Growth Mindset, Whole Brain Learning, etc.) for all teachers. Two Instructional Supervisors are utilized to help with ongoing curriculum alignment with the newly adopted Kentucky Academic Standards across all content areas continuing with the work of Rick Stiggins including Daily Learning Targets and Formative/Summative Assessment. We are presently in our eleventh year of utilizing the MAP assessment as our universal screener for K-8 schools and 2nd year for the high school (9th and 10th graders). The data from this online assessment is used to inform whole class and individual student instruction. Our district has also partnered with Berea for the Gear Up SOAR grant. We currently have 7 Academic Interventionists (AI) and 7 College and Career Navigators (CCN_) serving the grant cohort of students. The AIs and the CNNS work with students in a variety of ways including tutoring mentoring,

transition support to high school, family nights, college field trips, etc. Our district continues to work to enhance our students' educational experiences and opportunities in order to provide them with the 21st Century Skills needed to be successful.

. 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.

As our state accountability system continues to change as well as newly revised Kentucky Academic Standards are adopted, our district strives to continue to provide our students with exceptional learning experiences and high quality instruction. At present our district is working on Phase II of our New Standards Project with a focus on The Opportunity Myth - Grade Appropriate Assignments. We are working on the implications of this area on our curriculum and instruction as well as developing new aligned assessments across the content areas and to be implemented in each classroom. The Bell County Schools New Standards Project Phase I focused on revising curriculum maps, revising/rewriting units of study. Our district is comprised of six K-8 schools. Thus, we have 6 middle schools. The middle school area is by far our strongest area across the district. Bell Central School Center at the middle school level received a 5 star rating and was 2nd in the state. Three of the other five schools received 4 star ratings at the middle school level. Our targeted areas of improvement will be the high school level that received a 2 star rating and the elementary level which is primarily at a 3 star rating. We consider this rating to be a "middle of the road" status and is not acceptable as we expect more.

. **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.

Not applicable.

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

Although the Bell County School District is a rural area located in southeastern Kentucky, it is an area that is rich in tradition, heritage, and culture. We find that our area lacks in diverse economical and cultural experiences that other regions access with ease. We, as educators, must continuously strive to overcome these regional barriers to provide more diverse experiences for our students in the fields of arts, sciences, and technology in order to have them better prepared for their futures.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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