



2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for
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2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

Bell 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?

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 as well as the individual well-being of each student. 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 is continuing to influence the educational environment in the most drastic and alarming ways. During the 2020-2021 school year teachers stress levels were at an all time high due to the struggles of juggling health concerns, social distancing, masks, virtual and in person learning as well as the addition of chromebooks for all students and new digital learning platforms that had not previously been utilized. Needless to say, the learning curve was steep for the entire learning community from administrators to teachers to students and parents. New barriers were revealed during the pandemic that include the lack of internet services for many students either due to the affordability or the location of their home being too remote. Now during the 2021-2022 school year, our district has hired 3 virtual teachers to help alleviate some of the stress for virtual students and classroom teachers. In addition, our district now has 10 Digital Learning Coach stipend positions (at least 1 per building and larger buildings having more) to help support the classroom teachers with blended learning. The Bell County School District currently serves approximately 2536 preschool through 12th grade students (decrease of 35 students since last year at this time). 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 students' needs. Our schools are all 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 and Virginia borders. Our

community, parents, and students are serviced by approximately 230 certified employees, 50 instructional assistants, 38 food service staff, 23 custodians, 45 bus drivers, 7 Family Resource Centers, 1 district Social Worker, 1 Community Education Coordinator, 1 Parent Liaison, and 5 IT staff. 79.6% of our students qualify for free and reduced feed program which evidences the low socioeconomic status of our county. Our enrollment has shown a significant decline starting in 2016 and continuing til the present (-62 in 2020/21, -127 in 2019/20, -81 in 2018/19, -110 in 2016-18). The 2020 Census revealed that Bell County had the largest decline in population of 16% in the state of Kentucky. This decline is mainly due to the loss of jobs and the reduction of job opportunities in our area/region. Examples of loss of job opportunities include the decline of the coal industry and the near closing of the Pineville Hospital. Our county school system is currently the largest employer in the county. Thus, economic growth is one of the biggest challenges our district faces as it impacts our student enrollment as well as our funding abilities. In addition, our special education population is currently 16.5% while the Gifted and Talented populatin has declinedto 8% and the homeless population is at 14%.

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 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 schoo, 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 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 12th year of MAP assessment as our universal screener for K-8 schools. 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 and 7 College and Career Navigators serving the grant cohort of students. the AIs and the CCNs 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.

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.

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 had to postpone this work for a year due to COVID Pandemic's effects on our schools and daily operations. We are now working to move forward with developing assessments aligned to the standards across content areas. Our plan is to work on these assessments being online through new online web-based software. Our district is comprised of six K-8 schools; thus, we have 6 middle schools. The middle school level is the strongest across our district. This has been a trend starting before COVID and continuing through the spring of 2021 state KPREP assessment. Bell County High School is also showing growth with the majority of the high school areas scoring at or above the state average on the spring assessment. At present due to the lack of consistent instruction and the other constraints that have been put upon the education system, it is hard to know exactly what areas need targeting; however, the social studies content has new standards and a new assessment format that is completely different from anything that has been implemented to this point. We know that due to these drastic changes in this area, it must be a focus area for the district.

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.

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.

Although the Bell County School District is a rural area located in southeastern region of 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 thjese regional barriers to provide more diverse experiences for our students in the fields of arts, sciences, and technology in order to better prepare them for their futures.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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