



2022-23 Phase One: Executive Summary for
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Hardin County Schools
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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?

Hardin County Schools is a strong district comprised of a talented and diverse student body, award-winning and magnificent staff, extremely supportive parents, and a community that invests its time, talent, and treasure into it each day. Hardin County Schools consists of 23 schools (3 High Schools, 1 Early College & Career Center, 5 Middle Schools, 13 Elementary Schools, and 1 Alternative School, as well as other alternative settings) and is currently the 5th largest district in the state, serving a diverse population of both suburban and rural populations. Our staff is dedicated to the success of our 14,111 students in grades preschool through 12. The district employs 1,113 certified employees and 1,100 classified employees. The Early College & Career Center has provided opportunities for students to expand their knowledge and skillset for transitioning to the real world. The district continues to look for ways to create opportunities for students to accelerate learning as well as provide opportunities for students to be prepared for life, whether that is college or career-oriented.

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.

Hardin County School's Vision Statement: Schools, Parents, and Community actively involved in "Helping Children Succeed".

Hardin County School's Mission Statement: The mission of the Hardin County Schools, in partnership with the family and community is to prepare students to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a global society.

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 past three years, COVID-19 certainly had its effect on Hardin County Schools. However, the district has worked hard, kept its resolve, and continued to provide quality instruction to all students. Like most, the district transitioned to online instruction in March 2020. In 20-21, Hardin County started the year on an A/B schedule and remained that way until March 2021 when the county's positivity rate

waned. The 2021-22 school year started with all students attending five-day-a-week instruction with the exception of about 100 students receiving instruction in a virtual academy. Hardin County Schools is excited that the 22-23 school year has started in the same manner and with a new sense of energy.

The 2022 HCS Financial Audit found zero discrepancies across the district. Brian Woosley, CPA reported that he and his team had zero audit findings to report for both the district and schools in the most recent audit. Woosley told the Board, "This is the first time I've ever discovered zero findings. I've audited a lot of institutions, including school districts, and zero findings is certainly a rarity, especially for a district of this size." "Our school bookkeepers are doing an absolutely amazing job," HCS Chief Operations Officer John Stith said.

Hardin County Schools' dedication to providing an evidence-informed education that prepares students for success in the real world has led it to earn the annual EVERFI Empowered Seal. Now in its third year, the EVERFI Empowered Seal is a designation awarded to public school districts that have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to comprehensive education strategies on topics such as financial literacy, health, and careers. This is the first time that HCS has been awarded the Empowered Seal.

Hardin County Schools was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). The grant will provide Hardin County Schools with college and career-ready resources necessary to successfully expand HCS STEM programming. "We are extremely thankful to DoDEA for selecting our schools for this grant," HCS Superintendent Teresa Morgan said. "The armed forces make a tremendous daily impact on our schools and community. This investment from DoDEA ensures that it believes in our mission and wants to increase high-quality instructional strategies in our district's internationally acclaimed STEM pathways." HCS uses the funds to provide training and materials for Problem Based Learning at Meadow View Elementary School, Woodland Elementary School, North Middle School and James T. Alton Middle School.

Amelia Nethery, a reading support teacher at Heartland Elementary School, earned the 2022 Hardin County Schools WHAS-11 ExCEL Award presented by LG&E KU. A WHAS-11 reporter and a representative from LG&E KU presented the ExCEL Award and a \$1000 check from LG&E KU to her. The money purchased items for Ms. Nethery's classroom. Mrs. Nethery is the first Heartland Elementary School teacher in the history of the HCS WHAS-11 ExCEL Award.

The Central Hardin Army JROTC Drill team won both the Armed and Unarmed Divisions at the 2022 SGM Paul C. Gray Memorial Drill Championship, one of the most elite drill competitions in the country. Top JROTC teams from the 7th Brigade's footprint of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky competed at North Hardin High School. This is the Bruins' fourth consecutive championship in this event.

Five Hardin County Schools students who participated in the Culinary Arts pathway at the HCS Early College and Career Center earned the right to compete in the National ProStart Invitational (NPSI), the country's premier secondary school

competition focused on restaurant management and culinary arts. Nearly 400 students compete annually and put their skills to the test in front of industry leaders, National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) trustees, state restaurant associations and family and friends - all with hopes of earning coveted scholarships from the nation's best culinary and restaurant management programs. The HCS students earned the top spot in the Kentucky ProStart Invitational - a competition among Kentucky schools that teach the ProStart curriculum. The premise of the competition is a fine dining experience that the participating students conceive, document, prepare and present to a panel of professionals in the culinary field. Students from EC3 have competed twice in the Kentucky ProStart Invitational. Those students earned third place in 2018 and fifth place in 2020.

A free STEM-based learning camp known as the Renewable Energy Summer Camp occurred during the summer of 2022 for Hardin County students at West Hardin Middle School. Over the course of four days, students learned about energy, including the source of energy, its flow and transformation, energy use, consumption and conservation through engaging projects and games. As the culminating project, students applied that knowledge and experience to create a collective carnival of "amusements" whether that be a ride, game, attraction, apparatus or other structure powered by renewable energy. The Center for Energy Education (C4EE), a nonprofit organization and a center for renewable energy research, industry innovation, and workforce development in the Eastern and Midwestern U.S. hosted the camp. The camp was made possible through a sponsorship by ibV Energy Partners, a nationwide leader of utility-scale solar and storage power plant development.

Rudy Garcia, Hardin County Schools Student Support Specialist, was selected as the 2022 Kentucky School Social Worker of the year by the Kentucky Association for School Social Work. Mr. Garcia started working for HCS in 2011. He coordinates the district's student dropout prevention program and the HCS Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) after he implements it.

The John Hardin High School Agriculture Education department is receiving a \$48,071 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture and its Farm-to-School program. The grant will create a dual-credit horticulture course and an embedded School-Based Enterprise (SBE) at JHHS. Students in the JHHS Ag program have raised lettuce for the last two years using hydroponic technology. The program then sells the lettuce to the school cafeteria for students to eat in salads at lunch. After earning a \$10,000 grant from the Altec Innovation Challenge last school year, the students are now raising tilapia for Warm Blessings, a local community kitchen that provides meals to shut-ins as well as indigent and homeless persons.

The North Hardin High School Band has received an invitation to play and march at the National Independence Day Parade on July 4, 2023 in Washington, D.C. "This is a tremendous honor for our students," NHHS Director of Bands Kelsey Dunn said. "The North Hardin Band has a legacy of excellence and has played at some impressive venues and events - from Carnegie Hall to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. This invitation underscores the importance of our success and recognizes

our students' hard work." Bands are invited based on recommendations from each state's Governor's office. Bands also submitted a video recording, photos and other information detailing experience, honors, past adjudication results, festival ratings, etc.

North Hardin High School ninth-grade student Lorielys Berrios-Castillo has earned a National "Yes I Can" Award. The Council for Exceptional Children recognizes children and youth with exceptionalities who have demonstrated their determination and achievements in multiple ways with Yes I Can Awards. The awards recognize 12 students with exceptionalities in six categories: Academics, Arts, School & Community Activities, Self-Advocacy, Technology and Transition. Berrios-Castillo was notified that she was selected as the state award winner in the Academics category in August of this year. She recently was notified that she earned one of the national awards.

Woodland Elementary School has earned Purple Star Award Designation from the Kentucky Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. The Purple Star Program is part of the Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities' Strategies to strengthen the resiliency of Kentucky's military-connected youth and ensure that their social, emotional and academic needs are met. The Purple Star designation recognizes schools that show a major commitment to serving students and families connected to our nation's armed forces. A school designates at least one school staff to serve as a military youth liaison to earn the Purple Star Award. The liaison receives training in military culture and risk and protective factors and stressors associated with being a member of a military family.

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.

NA

Additional Information

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

NA

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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