



Jason E. Glass, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education and Chief Learner

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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July 6, 2023

Coy Samons, Superintendent
Murray Independent Public Schools
208 S 13th St.
Murray, KY 42071

Dear Superintendent Samons:

As you know, one goal of Kentucky Statewide Consolidated Monitoring (KSCM) is to help create opportunities for the programs in our schools and districts to look at new ways to collaborate and collectively meet our ultimate goal: increasing student achievement while closing gaps and positioning our students to be college- and career-ready. The team members from your visit have engaged in this collaborative process in order to produce the attached Consolidated Monitoring Report.

During the 2022-23 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in the Murray Independent School District. During this process, KDE program staff, utilizing program-specific monitoring tools, conducted on-site visits for the following programs:

- Title I, Part A
- Title I, Part A Neglected
- Title III, Part A
- Title IV, Part A
- Preschool
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Gifted and Talented
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Each program involved in the KSCM has an impact on our goal. For example, Title II, Part A focuses on improving teacher and principal quality to ensure that all students have equal access to highly qualified and effective teachers and leaders. Title I programs provide not only funding, but also guidance on working with disadvantaged students.

This report is the result of what can be best described as a “snapshot” of the district taken during our visit. It begins with identifying “effective practices.” These are individual

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program practices that the team felt were effective, and in some cases innovative. We strongly suggest that the practices identified be submitted to the [KDE Best Practices website](#).

Each district program has already been provided an individual report as required by federal or state law. All findings will need to be addressed by district program areas as specified in the individual reports.

In the meantime, if you have questions regarding specific program monitoring requirements, please contact the individual program contacts listed in this report. If you have questions concerning the consolidated monitoring process, please contact [Erin Sudduth](#) by email or by phone at (502) 564-3791, Ext. 4021. Information regarding education programs within the state of Kentucky may also be found at the [KDE website](#).

Thank you for your work in improving Kentucky's education programs to better serve our children.

Sincerely,

Kelly Foster, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner
Office of Continuous Improvement and Support
Kentucky Department of Education

KF/TR/ES/vb

Attachment: Consolidated Monitoring Report for Murray Independent Public Schools

2022-2023 Statewide Consolidated Monitoring Report

District: Murray Independent

Date(s) of Visit: April 25-27, 2023

Team Leads:

- Title I, Part A – Wes Blake
- Title I, Part A Neglected – Monica Higgins
- Title III, Part A – Kaiman Triplett
- Title IV, Part A – Lee Bowling
- Career and Technical Education – Karla Tipton
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging – Nicole Fields
- Gifted and Talented – Kathie Anderson
- Preschool – Andrea Bartholomew

Effective Practice No. 1: Community

Program(s) Addressed: Title IV, Part A; Career and Technical Education; Preschool

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 1

The district cultivates strong connections with community stakeholders. The district consults with stakeholder groups regarding student needs, gathers data from surveying committee members and communicates how funds are used for their Title IV, Part A program. Collaboration between the district and the Area Technology Center (ATC), the Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT), and the chamber of commerce is a highlight of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program implementation. The LIFT initiative provides funding and support to include teachers in local business and industry planning. These relationships and the feedback they generate are critical to the CTE program. Ties between Murray State University and the Preschool program are supportive to student needs and help cultivate qualified preschool educators for the district. Two preschool sites are on Murray State University's campus and allow speech pathologist students to get practicum hours while helping meet students' needs.

Effective Practice No. 2: Parent and Family Engagement

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A; Career and Technical Education

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 2:

Schools in the district provided evidence of well-attended, engaging and authentic parent and family engagement activities driven by student academic needs. Parents are involved in district committees and local parent and teacher organizations (PTOs). Murray Elementary School parents participate in Future Tiger events such as Dinner Table Projects, Reading Buddy Partners, Superhero Festivals, Grandparent Invites and Paw Prints showcases to display and recognize student success and highlight Writers of the Week. Murray Middle School utilizes activities that help empower parents with the resources and knowledge to help their students achieve academic standards, including a literacy night and a math and science night. At these events, parents receive resources and information about instructional supports that they can use at home to support student learning. The school staff listened to parent feedback and focused on more hands-on activities that built enthusiasm and attendance. The district hosts a CTE career fair to engage students and parents around career and technical education offerings. The career fair gives parents and students hands-on opportunities to experience the skills and expertise they can gain working with local business and industry partners.

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Effective Practice No. 3: Student Services and Plans

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title III, Part A

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 3

The district has effective data analysis and monitoring processes in place to ensure that students' needs are met. The district provides effective professional development, guidance, support and feedback for its schools in both Response to Intervention (RTI) models and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), resulting in a robust culture of data-focused interventions and structured supports to meet both student academic and behavioral needs. The district supports authentic staff and student needs by prioritizing effective teacher and student ratios that ensure opportunities for small-group and one-to-one instruction. When students transfer from middle to high school, they are first given an overview of the registration process and requirements before spending a day visiting the high school and area technology center as well as attending a career fair to learn about the different pathways. Murray Middle School staff utilizes a "Key Core Document" and process that involves all levels of staff in the data-based process of identifying student needs and utilizing effective strategies to meet them. Teachers analyze student academic and behavioral data and work together to complete a collaborative document that identifies appropriate strategies to close achievement gaps. This collaborative approach empowers teacher ownership of the school's goals and strategies and shows how much the principals and administrative staff value teacher feedback and insights which leads to more fidelity in program implementation. Staff at Murray Elementary School involve students and families in the academic goal-setting process as a means of providing students with a sense of ownership surrounding instruction and assessment. The school's RTI and PBIS implementation is continuous and intentional. The staff is organized and has an effective RTI tier system to provide students with targeted additional support to ensure academic progress. To ensure that Title III students gain valuable practice, confidence and feedback when communicating in English, the district focuses on smaller class sizes.

Effective Practice No. 4: Policies and Procedures

Program(s) Addressed: Gifted and Talented

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 4

The district elaborated on the Kentucky School Board Association (KSBA) policies and procedures to ensure that they describe the specific procedures taken by Murray Independent School District.

Effective Practice No. 5: Professional Development

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 5

The district provides relevant and intentional professional development, guidance, support and feedback for its schools in both RTI models and PBIS to help support continuously improving implementation and outcomes for students.

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Effective Practice No. 6: Leadership

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title I, Part A, Neglected; Title IV, Part A; Preschool

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 6

District staff collaborate intentionally with schools regarding Title I, Part A requirements and the effective implementation of needs-focused interventions. Murray Elementary School has created a culture focused on instruction guided by relevant data review and formative assessment analysis. School leadership focuses on providing new staff with the tools they need to support student achievement and guidance on how instruction can be altered to ensure all students improve. District and school staff coordinate to close gaps and enhance achievement for all teachers and students. To help enhance academic achievement, the neglected program for Step Stone Youth Services offers students the opportunity to receive academic instruction by attending their regular school placement. The neglected facility also uses educational field trips to aid students' social-emotional learning (SEL). The Title IV, Part A coordinator is working closely with district staff as well as principals to ensure the needs and objectives of the students are addressed. Individual committee groups (safety, community and technology) and principals work to address needs. Principals emphasized they are always in the loop with district decisions and how Title IV funds are being used to help students. The district's preschool coordinator is also the director of special education and can provide strong leadership to the program and assist with the transition process.

Effective Practice No. 7: Communication

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title III, Part A; Gifted and Talented

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 7

School staff indicated that district staff are approachable and often on-site to provide guidance and support. The Title I coordinator provides a concise and helpful guide for principals that clearly outlines important Title I, Part A requirements to keep in mind throughout the school year. District staff provide ongoing feedback and support in a timely manner when key processes and activities are being planned and implemented. The district seeks both teacher and student feedback on how they can best be supported. Gifted and talented (GT) education staff communicate effectively with classroom teachers, offering resources and ideas regarding student needs, interests and abilities. The Title III coordinator and English learner (EL) teacher collaborate well. They work together to ensure EL students have everything they need to be successful.

Effective Practice No. 8: Climate and Culture

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 8

Murray Middle School cultivates a positive culture that celebrates student successes. Students have a daily news show that allows them to have a voice and highlight their accomplishments, and newsletters feature student work and achievement. The school implements a deliberate PBIS system that features rewards provided by community partners. Murray Elementary School incorporates SEL stations which allow students to apply self-regulation strategies to help develop helpful emotional

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awareness and healthy decision-making. The school's RTI and PBIS implementation is intentional. Students in both elementary and middle school acknowledged that they had opportunities to learn about other cultures and people with different lived experiences than themselves. Students also described their appreciation for learning about one another when they had the opportunities to work in groups. The student voice data, gathered randomly from eight to 10 students, was exceptionally strong. Students were articulate about their sense of belonging and support from the school and teachers.

Effective Practice No. 9: Equity

Program(s) Addressed: Gifted and Talented

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 9

The Primary Talent Pool (PTP) student data indicates the district has an inclusive process for selecting students for GT services.

Final Overview

Murray Independent School District is dedicated to student success and improving their processes. Program coordinators are interested in guidance and technical assistance. District staff are eager to improve and streamline processes. The district has a mindset of continuous improvement and recognizes its demographics are changing with more free- and reduced-price lunch and minority students attending. The district expressed commitment to serving and meeting these students' needs. Staff have a desire to continue learning. District leadership demonstrates a growth mindset. Among all programs, the district recognizes student needs and works hard to proactively address them and create a sense of community around their changing demographic.