

Matthew G. Bevin
Governor



Hal Heiner
Secretary
Education and
Workforce Development Cabinet

Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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March 31, 2016

Marty Feltner, Superintendent
Nicholas County Schools
395 W. Main Street
Carlisle, KY 40311

Dear Superintendent Feltner:

As we make changes to address the needs of our students, we encounter the walls of the past. One goal of Kentucky Statewide Consolidated Monitoring (KSCM) is to help remove those walls wherever possible and 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 2015-16 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in Nicholas County Public 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 II, Part A
- Title III, Part A
- Preschool
- Alternative Programs
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
- Career and Technical Education
- Gifted and Talented

Each program involved in the KSCM has an impact on our goal. For example, Career and Technical Education (CTE) impacts student success and helps to close the achievement gap by working to make all students Career Ready. Through the use of a sequence of courses known as career pathways, CTE ensures that all students have equal opportunity to develop skills in demand by local industry. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports the vision of KDE by focusing the efforts of the State, districts, schools and teachers toward closing achievement gaps for students with disabilities and ensuring all students reach proficiency, graduate from high school, and successfully transition to a career or post-secondary education.

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

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not only funding but guidance on working with disadvantaged students. These programs and the others engaged in consolidated monitoring, simply by reducing duplication of effort, can work together to achieve more collaboratively than any of them could alone.

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 practices that the individual programs felt were effective, and in some cases innovative. We strongly suggest that the practices identified be submitted to the KDE Best Practices website.

In addition, the monitoring team collectively discussed the findings and concerns of each program to identify what is categorized as “Common Concerns”. This represents a consolidation of findings reported by individual programs that were similar in nature and therefore presented a potential opportunity for collaboration between identified programs. Each of these concerns has been identified by at least two programs. Any suggested or required actions will be addressed by the specified programs. During this collaborative time, team members from all programs discuss suggestions for potential opportunities to work across programs, streamline implementation and increase success within each program.

Each program has already provided an individual report as required by federal or state law. Any required actions are monitored by the programs through those individual reports. In order to help the collaborative work of the programs and provide districts with a way to document improvement efforts, we encourage you to utilize the Consolidated School and District Improvement Planning tools in ASSIST.

KDE is striving to provide examples of collaboration and continuous improvement. Our hope is that what we have begun becomes an example that can be replicated across the state. Each district representative will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the consolidated monitoring process. 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 Helen Jones by e-mail at helen.jones@education.ky.gov or by phone at (502)564-3791. Information regarding education programs within the state of Kentucky may also be found at www.education.ky.gov.

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

Sincerely,

Kelly Foster, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner

KF/HJ/vb

Attachment

2015-2016 Statewide Consolidated Monitoring Report

District:	Nicholas County	
Date(s) of Visit:	February 2 – 4 , 2016	
Team Leads: (List primary person on this visit for each program)		
Title I - Neil Watts	Preschool – Bill Buchanan	
Title II – Monica Murphy	CTE – Karla Tipton	
Alternative Programs – N/A	IDEA- Stephanie Sterling	
ESL – Gary Martin	Gifted And Talented – Leann Pickerill	

Highlight of Effective Practices 1

Programs Addressed <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	Title I	✓	Preschool	✓	Career and Technical Education
	Title II		IDEA		Alternative Programs
	ESL		Gifted and Talented		
<i>Clearly describe actions and/or practices that the team deems as effective (Include impact on student achievement)</i>					
<p>Nicholas County and community partners collaborate effectively to provide services and supports for students and families. For example, the state-funded preschool program blends with Community Action Council Head Start to provide comprehensive services to students. The Title I program offers a Read-Fest each year, bringing together resources and community agencies.</p>					

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Common Issue 1

Programs Addressed <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	Title I	✓	Preschool		Career and Technical Education	
	Title II	✓	IDEA	✓	Alternative Programs	
	ESL		Gifted and Talented			
Common Issue <i>(Clearly describe issue as it relates to each program)</i>						
Financial management is a problem across identified programs. The district expended funds on unsupported or unallowable costs. MUNIS codes were used inaccurately and expenditures did not match the approved budget. MUNIS codes were not updated annually to reflect current budget and program activities. Reports were not prepared as defined by regulation and guidelines.						
Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)						
Nicholas County may consider developing processes to ensure staff follows accepted accounting principles. These processes must include internal auditing and oversight procedures. Budgets must be developed annually and accurately. Expenditures must align with approved budgets and allowable MUNIS codes found in the non-competitive funding matrix.						

Common Issue 2

Programs Addressed <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	Title I		Preschool		Career and Technical Education	✓
	Title II		IDEA	✓	Alternative Programs	
	ESL	✓	Gifted and Talented			✓
Common Issue <i>(Clearly describe issue as it relates to each program)</i>						
Student level data needs to reflect the requirements of each program. Students were inappropriately identified in multiple areas. Infinite Campus (IC), Technical Education Database System (TEDS), and other student records reflected errors in both student and course information. These errors led to inappropriate plans and assessments for students.						
Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)						
Nicholas County needs to develop a plan that ensures all programs receive critical information from KDE about program requirements and expectations. This plan may include strategies for effective communication between district leadership, program and school staff to ensure fidelity of implementation. The plan may also include steps to ensure that program leaders receive adequate training and professional development.						

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Common Issue 3

Programs Addressed <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	Title I		Preschool		Career and Technical Education	
	Title II		IDEA	✓	Alternative Programs	
	ESL	✓	Gifted and Talented			✓
Common Issue <i>(Clearly describe issue as it relates to each program)</i>						
<p>There were significant errors related to documenting and reporting student progress in program areas. Some students were exited from the program who still needed services. Other students did not receive progress reports related to goals.</p>						
Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)						
<p>Nicholas County program staff should receive professional development related to program expectations and requirements. Training should include procedural steps and processes for program data and progress monitoring. Program decisions for students should be based on data analysis and evaluation. This analysis should be informed by state and federal regulations, requirements and guidelines.</p>						

Final Overview

<p><i>Clearly describe the following for the identified program(s):</i></p> <p><i>How programs are effectively working collaboratively to better serve students</i></p> <p><i>Suggestions for adjustments that could help programs begin or improve their collaborative efforts</i></p> <p><i>Suggestions for how each program can further help with student success and closing gaps</i></p>
<p>Nicholas County schools and community programs collaborates well together. While student level data and financial reporting issues must be resolved, the Nicholas County School District works hard to provide high-quality educational experiences for their students. Strategic planning to address common issues will enhance the district's positive momentum.</p>