

Knox County District Leadership Assessment Report



02/06/2011 - 02/11/2011



District Leadership Assessment Executive Summary

Knox County School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Walter T. Hulett, Superintendent

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a district leadership assessment of Knox County School District during the period of 2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the district leadership assessment. We have provided space for identifying the actions steps you will take, the timelines you will establish for those steps, and the person(s) for overseeing the action steps. We encourage you to ask your best people to prioritize bold, specific actions on aggressive timelines to improve student achievement as soon as practicable.

District Deficiencies and Next Steps in Supporting its Low-Performing Schools

1. Deficiency	District leadership has not consistently monitored classroom instruction to ensure effective instructional practices improve student academic performance.
Next Steps	District leadership should create a common walkthrough instrument to be used on a frequent and ongoing basis that will allow for quantifiable data that can be used to measure progress and set SMART goals. This should also contain a component for providing specific and meaningful feedback to teachers. The instrument should include but not be limited to a way to collect data and provide feedback on instructional strategies, rigor in instruction, student use of technology, non-negotiables, congruency of targets to standards and students' ability to communicate learning targets.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
2. Deficiency	District leadership has not assured assessment strategies support proficient student work.
Next Steps	District leadership should develop a common district rubric to provide timely and specific feedback on assessments to ensure they are rigorous, congruent to standards, have specific rubrics and include Student Performance Level Descriptors. District leadership should develop a system for regular monitoring of all assessments to provide timely feedback.

District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
3. Deficiency	District leadership has not ensured vertical collaborative discussions occur between feeder and receiver schools to eliminate overlaps and gaps in the curriculum at key transition points.
Next Steps	District leadership should develop a plan for regular discussion to occur between key transition points (i.e., preschool to elementary, elementary to middle, middle to high) throughout the school year in order to identify gaps in the curriculum and develop strategies to address these gaps.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
4. Deficiency	District leadership has not ensured that a “no excuses” mindset exists in all schools and with all stakeholders.
Next Steps	District leadership should develop, communicate and market the belief that all Knox County students can and will learn at high levels. District leadership should ensure that all stakeholders recognize and accept their role in the success and failure of each and every student. District leadership should ensure all staff, students, parents and other stakeholder groups understand and recognize what proficient performance looks like and promote proficiency for all students.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
5. Deficiency	District leadership has not intentionally developed or supported authentic parental involvement focused on improving student achievement.

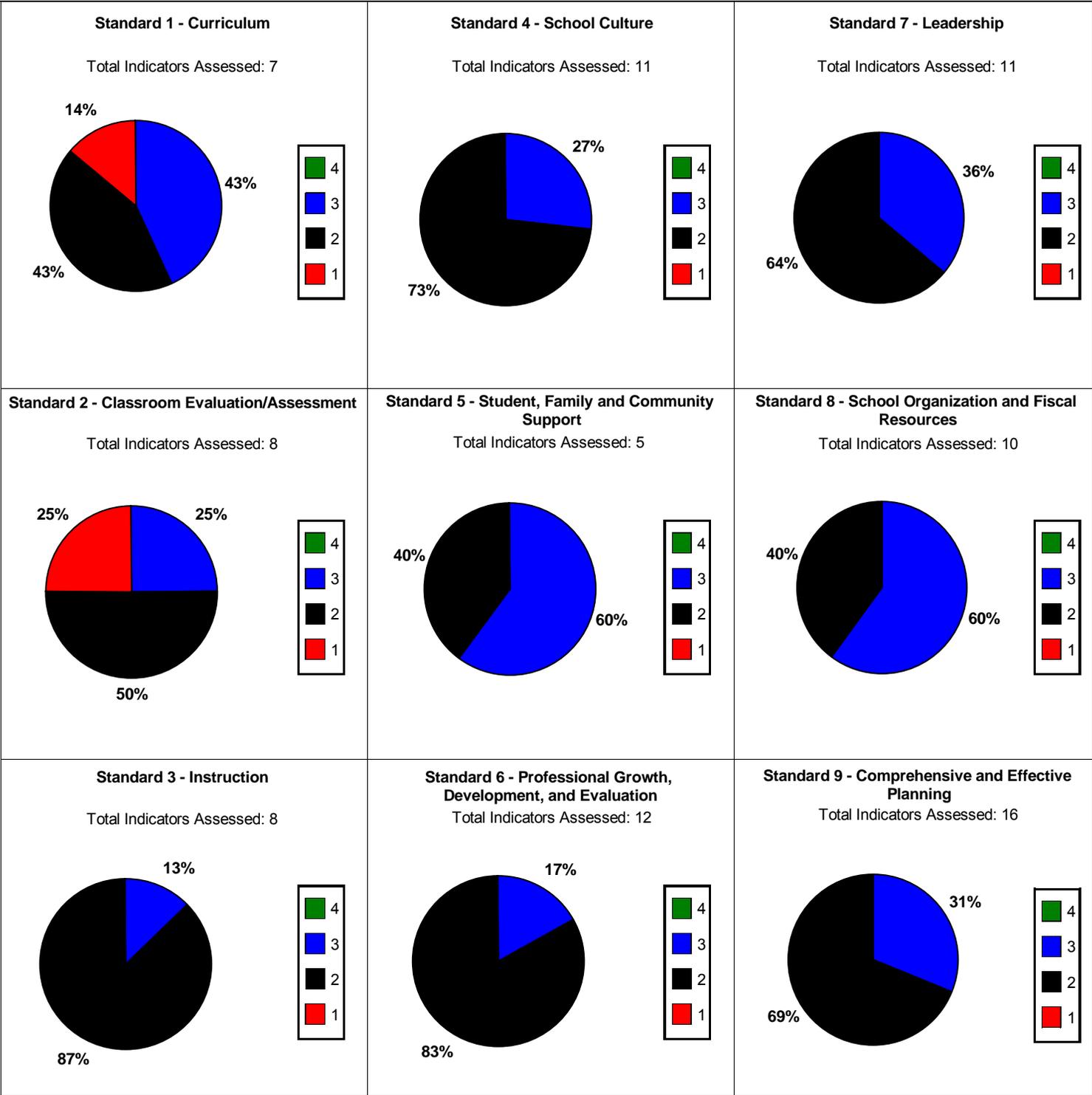
Next Steps	District leadership should ensure all schools create and implement a detailed plan promoting parent involvement to improve student achievement. District leadership should actively and intentionally involve parents in decision-making at the school and district level. District leadership should provide all stakeholders learning opportunities in multiple areas (e.g., Kentucky standards and expectations, decision-making process, academic achievement planning, helping children succeed).
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
6. Deficiency	District leadership has not ensured professional growth plans foster an effective evaluation process.
Next Steps	District leadership should develop a new professional growth plan format that includes a detailed reflection of personal growth needs in addition to school needs. District leadership should create a timeline that allows for review of growth plans throughout the year to assess progress toward implementation and personal growth.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	

Knox County

KDE 2011 District Leadership Assessment Report At-a-Glance

The charts below indicate the percentage of indicators in each standard for the following four performance levels:

- 4- Exemplary level of development and implementation
- 3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation
- 2- Limited development or partial implementation
- 1- Little or no development and implementation



9 STANDARDS AND 88 INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - Knox County

<p>Standard - 1 - Academic Performance</p> <p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <p>1.1a Curriculum is aligned. Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations</p> <p>1.1b District initiates, facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards</p> <p>1.1c District initiates, facilitates discussions to eliminate unnecessary overlaps</p> <p>1.1d Evidence of vertical communication, intentional focus on key curriculum transition points</p> <p>1.1e School curriculum provides specific links to continuing education</p> <p>1.1f Systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing curriculum</p> <p>1.1g Curriculum provides access to a common academic core</p>	<p>Standard - 4 - Learning Environment</p> <p><u>School Culture</u></p> <p>4.1a Leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment</p> <p>4.1b Leadership creates experiences that all children can learn</p> <p>4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students</p> <p>4.1d Teachers, staff involved in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning</p> <p>4.1e Teachers accept their role in student success</p> <p>4.1f School assigns staff...opportunities for ALL students</p> <p>4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families</p> <p>4.1h Evidence that the teachers and staff care</p> <p>4.1i Multiple communication strategies...to all stakeholders</p> <p>4.1j Evidence that student achievement is highly valued</p> <p>4.1k The school/district provides support...needs of all students</p>	<p>Standard - 7 - Efficiency</p> <p><u>Leadership</u></p> <p>7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision</p> <p>7.1b Leadership decisions focused on student academic data</p> <p>7.1c All administrators have a growth plan</p> <p>7.1d Evidence that the leadership team disaggregates data</p> <p>7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff...access to curriculum related materials</p> <p>7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected...instructional issues</p> <p>7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources</p> <p>7.1h School/district leadership provides policy and resource infrastructure</p> <p>7.1i Process for the development and the implementation of council policy</p> <p>7.1j SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance</p> <p>7.1k Principal demonstrates leadership skills in academic performance, learning environment, efficiency</p>
<p>Standard - 2 - Academic Performance</p> <p><u>Classroom Evaluation/Assessment</u></p> <p>2.1a Classroom assessments frequent, rigorous, aligned with Kentucky's core content</p> <p>2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment</p> <p>2.1c Students can articulate what is required to be proficient</p> <p>2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps</p> <p>2.1e Assessments designed to provide feedback on student learning for instructional purposes</p> <p>2.1f Performance standards communicated, evident in classrooms, observable in student work</p> <p>2.1g Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership</p> <p>2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed</p>	<p>Standard - 5 - Learning Environment</p> <p><u>Student, Family and Community Support</u></p> <p>5.1a Families and the community are active partners</p> <p>5.1b All students have access to all the curriculum</p> <p>5.1c Reduce barriers to learning</p> <p>5.1d Students are provided opportunities to receive additional assistance</p> <p>5.1e School maintains an accurate student record system</p>	<p>Standard - 8 - Efficiency - School Organization and Fiscal Resources</p> <p><u>Organization of the School</u></p> <p>8.1a School is organized...use of all available resources</p> <p>8.1b All students have access to all the curriculum</p> <p>8.1c Staff are allocated based upon the learning needs of all students</p> <p>8.1d Staff makes efficient use of instructional time</p> <p>8.1e Staff...planning vertically and horizontally across content areas</p> <p>8.1f Schedule aligned with the school's mission</p> <p><u>Resource Allocation and Integration</u></p> <p>8.2a Clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula)</p> <p>8.2b Budget reflects decisions directed by an assessment of need</p> <p>8.2c Councils, school boards analyze funding and other resource requests</p> <p>8.2d Resources are allocated and integrated to address student needs</p>
<p>Standard - 3 - Academic Performance</p> <p><u>Instruction</u></p> <p>3.1a Evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms</p> <p>3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned</p> <p>3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored...diverse student population</p> <p>3.1d Teachers demonstrate content knowledge</p> <p>3.1e Evidence teachers incorporate the use of technology</p> <p>3.1f Instructional resources are sufficient to deliver the curriculum</p> <p>3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work</p> <p>3.1h Homework is frequent and monitored, tied to instructional practice</p>	<p>Standard - 6 - Learning Environment - Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation</p> <p><u>Professional Development</u></p> <p>6.1a Support for the long-term professional growth of the individual staff members</p> <p>6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity</p> <p>6.1c Staff development priorities...alignment...goals for student performance</p> <p>6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning</p> <p>6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded</p> <p>6.1f Professional development planning connect student achievement data</p> <p><u>Professional Growth and Evaluation</u></p> <p>6.2a Clearly defined evaluation process</p> <p>6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth</p> <p>6.2c Employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency</p> <p>6.2d A process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute</p> <p>6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional leadership needs</p> <p>6.2f Evaluation process to provide teachers...change behavior and instructional practice</p>	<p>Standard - 9 - Efficiency - Comprehensive and Effective Planning</p> <p><u>Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs</u></p> <p>9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission</p> <p><u>Development of the Profile</u></p> <p>9.2a Planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data</p> <p>9.2b Use data for school improvement planning</p> <p><u>Defining Desired Results for Student Learning</u></p> <p>9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research, expectations for student learning</p> <p>9.3b Analyze their students' unique learning needs</p> <p>9.3c Results for student learning are defined</p> <p><u>Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness</u></p> <p>9.4a Strengths and limitations are identified</p> <p>9.4b Goals for building, strengthening capacity</p> <p><u>Development of the Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>9.5a Steps for school improvement aligned with improvement goals</p> <p>9.5b Plan identifies resources, timelines</p> <p>9.5c Evaluating the effectiveness of improvement plan</p> <p>9.5d Improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results</p> <p><u>Implementation and Documentation</u></p> <p>9.6a Plan is implemented as developed</p> <p>9.6b School evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning</p> <p>9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact</p> <p>9.6d Evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement</p>

Legend

Grey - No Assessment Made

Green 4- Exemplary level of development and implementation

Blue 3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation

Black 2- Limited development or partial implementation

Red 1- Little or no development and implementation

Focus on Student Academic Performance

The district leadership assessment report contains many important findings district leadership should consider. It will be the task of district leadership to read and prioritize the results from this report to plan for improving student performance.

Carefully read the scholastic leadership assessment report for each school that triggered the district leadership assessment. Consider the implications of the report for each school's work and policies.

Build greater understanding of new approaches to professional development and address the ways that stakeholders will have to work differently to improve instruction.

Identify the implications of this report for stakeholders.

Acknowledge and address the fact that current practice does not provide adequate opportunity for teachers and principals to carry out the demands of their work to ensure student success.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted district leadership assessment of Knox County School District during the period of 2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011.

The district leadership assessment team activities included a review of the documents collected for the district portfolio and profile; classroom observations (34), eWalks (36), as well as formal interviews and informal discussions with teachers (51), students (87), parents (11), assistant superintendents (2), board members (5), district directors (5), district leadership (12), school leadership (14), SBDM council members (13), classified staff (16), community members (15), and the superintendent.

The district leadership assessment team utilized the Standards and Indicators for School Improvement, stakeholder interviews and a portfolio of district records during this visit. All collected data were considered in the development of the report. The specific findings and recommendations are organized under the headings of Academic Performance, Learning Environment and Efficiency. Each of the nine standards for success in Kentucky schools and districts is addressed in the following pages.

The chairperson of the team was Wayne Puckett - District Administrator. The other team members were: Ruth Gail Butler - University Representative, Thom Coffee - Educational Recovery Specialist, Jill L. Crowe - University Representative, Carol Edelen - Parent, Betty E. Fox - District Administrator, Martha R. Francis - Teacher, Mariann Harlan - Teacher, Barbara W. Miller - Building Administrator, Gayle H. Mills - Building Administrator, and Dee Ann Newton - Teacher.

Academic Performance

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment and instruction.

Standard 1: The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.

Standard 2: The school utilizes multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

Standard 3: The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student performance.

Learning Environment

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family, and community support; and professional growth, development and evaluation.

Standard 4: The school/district functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

Standard 5: The school/district works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and development needs of students.

Standard 6: The school/district provides research-based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school structure and resources, and comprehensive and effective planning.

Standard 7: School/district instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, and developing leadership capacity.

Standard 8: The organization of the school/district maximizes use of time, all available space and other resources to maximize teaching and learning and support high student and staff performance.

Standard 9: The school/district develops, implements and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of classroom assessments, classroom assignments, committee meeting minutes and agenda, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, curriculum documents, curriculum maps, employee handbooks, eWalk data, individual professional growth plans, Kentucky Performance Report disaggregated data, Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment, master school schedule, organizational charts, professional development records, samples of classroom assessments, samples of student work products, school council policies and bylaws, school Web pages, state statute and regulation, student handbook, student work, School Improvement Grants and district Web pages

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, community members, counselor, curriculum resource specialist, district leadership, school council members, school leadership, students, superintendent and teachers

Observations of classrooms, common areas and computer lab

Performance Rating 3

- 1.1a There is evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations and the Program of Studies.

District leadership initiated and facilitated curriculum alignment meetings to ensure curriculum documents are based on and aligned with the content standards contained in the Program of Studies, Core Content for Assessment 4.1 and College Readiness Standards. During the 2009-10 school year, curriculum maps and common learning checks were created and implemented for all courses. Pacing guides are used to help structure the time frame for course units, to suggest core content emphasis for each unit and define what the students should know and be able to do and to guide the teachers toward related assessments. Curriculum maps and pacing guides for core content classes have been developed and distributed electronically to teachers. District leadership is initiating the deconstructing of the Kentucky Core Academic Standards.

- 1.1e The school curriculum provides specific links to continuing education, life and career options.

District leadership ensures the district curriculum provides some connections

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating **3**

to post-secondary education and career options. College Readiness Standards are identified in the aligned curriculum. Learning experiences and activities expose students to a variety of career options with the integration of knowledge of life skills and the requirements for being self-sufficient members of society. Students may receive college credit through Dual Credit classes with Eastern Kentucky University (Corbin Campus) and Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College. Advanced Placement programs are offered. The Kentucky Appalachian Higher Education grant allows the offering of career awareness for seniors. Student job shadowing experiences and work-based learning for seniors provides real-life work experience and responsibilities. The Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps' curriculum, practical living and vocational classes and the counselor provide instruction of life skills and knowledge to prepare students to be self-sufficient and productive citizens. District leadership ensures all students in grades 6-12 develop individual learning plans; however, all plans are not systematically reviewed by students, parents or district leadership to ensure student goals are pertinent to educational development.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students.

District leadership states that all students have access to a common academic core. School leadership assumes the responsibility of student assignments. District leadership collaborates with school leadership in the appropriate placement of students with disabilities. District leadership reviews master schedules to ensure enrollment in academic courses that are aligned with current state standards.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating **2**

- 1.1b The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

District leadership initiates some opportunities (e.g., five additional calendar days, curriculum committee meetings, district leadership team meetings) for school staff members to engage in discussions to address state and local curriculum standards. Core content and grade level teachers participate in non-negotiable weekly professional learning community meetings within their respective schools. District leadership does not have a formal process for teachers to intentionally engage in on-going discussions that focus on vertical articulation to ensure curriculum scaffolding. Teachers express concern over the lack of vertical articulation to ensure continuity as students move from feeder to receiver schools. Virtual professional learning community meetings provide the opportunity for high school teachers to participate in curricular discussions. District leadership is currently in the process of extending this initiative to provide the opportunity for vertical and horizontal discussions between and among all schools.

- 1.1c The district initiates and facilitates discussions between schools in the district in order to eliminate unnecessary overlaps and close gaps.

District leadership participates in curriculum planning to ensure alignment with Kentucky's curriculum documents. Additional literacy and math coaches are being provided through School Improvement Grant funding and will assist in addressing overlapping curriculum topics and the redundancy of content skills within individual departments and grade levels. Curriculum maps and pacing guides address some curriculum sequence between and among grade levels. District leadership has not fully implemented their process to address and resolve unintentional overlaps and close gaps in all content areas of the curriculum.

- 1.1f There is in place a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the curriculum.

Board of education has curriculum policies (08.1-08.112) and procedures to address curriculum issues. District leadership offers limited assistance to school councils in the development of each school's curriculum policy but

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating 2

sets the expectation that schools address curriculum in an appropriate policy. There is no formal documentation that each school's curriculum is regularly reviewed and evaluated in order to make modifications for improvement. All schools use the curriculum maps and follow the pacing guides developed by the district. District leadership engages in discussions of curriculum issues at the district level (e.g., leadership team meetings, principal professional learning community meetings, curriculum team meetings) to address curriculum issues, but the discussions are not consistently scheduled with representation of all stakeholders.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating **1**

- 1.1d There is evidence of vertical communication with an intentional focus on key curriculum transition points within grade configurations (e.g., from primary to middle and middle to high).

District leadership does not initiate transitional discussions between schools for the purpose of vertical curriculum alignment throughout the district. There is little or no discussion between schools to identify key curriculum transition points (i.e., preschool to elementary, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school) for addressing and resolving curriculum transition issues. Some teachers initiate their own curriculum discussions within content areas and schools, but the process is neither systematic nor monitored by the district. Conversation among key transition point teachers is limited.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

District leadership should continue to review and revise the existing curriculum to ensure all students access to a curriculum aligned with Kentucky Core Academic Standards. District leadership should further determine where interdisciplinary connections could naturally be made to better connect curriculum to the real world and to more effectively use instructional time. District leadership should develop a plan to monitor implementation by the instructional staff to ensure the curriculum remains rigorous, intentionally aligned and used within the classroom. The plan should intentionally address cultural-specific needs as well as multiple learning styles of their identified gap populations.

District leadership should provide opportunities for teacher discussions within and among schools to identify key curriculum transition points (i.e., preschool to elementary, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school) to ensure vertical curriculum alignment and eliminate curricular gaps.

Resources:

Carr, J. F. & Harris, D.E. (2001). *Succeeding with Standards: Linking Curriculum, Assessment and Action Planning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. ISBN 0-87120-509-2

Jacobs, H. H. (2004). *Getting Results with Curriculum Mapping*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

O'Shea, Mark R. (2005). *From Standards to Success*. Alexandria: VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Standards-Based Curriculum Development Manual. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601).

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of bulletin boards, exhibits and displays, classroom assessments, classroom assignments, classroom displays, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, curriculum documents, curriculum maps, eWalk data, Implementation and Impact Checks, individual professional growth plans, Kentucky Performance Report disaggregated data, Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment, lesson plans/units of study, professional development records, professional resource materials, protocols for analyzing student work, rubrics, samples of classroom assessments, samples of student work products, school council policies and bylaws, School Report Card data, school Web pages, student work, videos of student performances, board of education policies, district corrective action plan, walkthrough instruments and PLC feedback forms

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, curriculum resource specialist, district leadership, principal, school council members, students, superintendent and teachers

Observations of classrooms

Performance Rating 3

2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps.

District leadership requires school leadership to collect and review the results of multiple assessments (e.g., Kentucky Core Content Test, No Child Left Behind reports, Discovery Education probes, district learning checks) to identify some curriculum gaps. Schools use the Knox Intervention System to address specific core content where gaps exist. Student data discussions take place in meetings of the board of education, school councils, school committees, school principals, district leadership and professional learning communities.

2.1g Implementation of the state-required Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership.

The board of education has adopted an assessment policy (08.222). The district assessment coordinator ensures that the building assessment coordinators are in compliance with all statutes and regulations on the administration of and ethical procedures for the state assessment program. All persons administering the state assessment receive training on the

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating **3**

Administrative Code of Conduct for Assessment and Accountability. District leadership has a system in place to train students who receive accommodations on what their accommodations are and how to ask for them. Staff members responsible for providing accommodations are monitored by district leadership to ensure accommodations are given throughout the year.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

- 2.1a Classroom assessments of student learning are frequent, rigorous and aligned with Kentucky's core content.

District leadership provides some teachers professional development focused on developing district common learning checks based on curriculum maps and units of study. Limited feedback is given to teachers to ensure the assessments are rigorous and congruent to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment 4.1, Program of Studies and College Readiness Standards. District leadership sets the expectation that schools address classroom assessment in an appropriate policy; however, this is not consistently monitored for compliance. School councils review Discovery Education, district learning checks and Kentucky Core Content Test assessment data. District leadership has attempted to develop school level competence in the design of classroom assessments through Classroom Assessment for Student Learning book studies, professional learning communities and the development of learning checks. District leadership does not have a systematic process in place to consistently monitor the rigor and congruency of classroom assessments or to provide timely and specific feedback to teachers concerning the quality of assessments.

- 2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with core content subject matter.

District leadership collaborates with some teachers in the design of district common learning checks. District leadership provides all teachers with the opportunity to build authentic assessments through professional learning communities during common core planning. However, district and school leadership infrequently provides specific feedback on the assessments to teachers in order to ensure that the assessments are congruent to Kentucky Core Content for Assessment 4.1.

- 2.1e Multiple assessments are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning for instructional purposes.

District leadership does not have a protocol in place to review school assessments to ensure they provide meaningful feedback. Most learning checks do not include question specific rubrics. Student assessments often lack meaningful and specific feedback. District leadership communicates the

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

expectation that teachers analyze the results of multiple assessments during professional learning communities to improve instruction. However, district leadership does not monitor or provide feedback to ensure that this is effectively occurring in all schools.

2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress.

District leadership has clearly communicated the expectation that all teachers analyze student work for the purpose of informing instruction and curricular decisions. Professional learning communities and common planning time provide the opportunity for teachers to analyze student work. However, district leadership does not monitor to ensure this is occurring in all schools. District leadership does not systematically provide timely and specific feedback to all staff members to ensure the analysis of student work is effectively informing instructional practices or improving student performance.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating **1**

- 2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient.

District leadership has established non-negotiables which include the use of learning targets. District leadership does not have a protocol in place to effectively measure if students can articulate academic expectations and the requirements of proficiency. Some walkthrough tools focus on whether or not a learning target is present in lesson plans or posted in the room, but most walkthrough instruments do not determine if students can articulate academic expectations or what is required for proficiency.

- 2.1f Performance standards are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

District leadership does not effectively monitor to ensure Student Level Performance Descriptors are communicated or evident in student work. There is minimal communication of Student Level Performance Descriptors on assessments, during classroom instruction or in student work through the use of specific rubrics. Students are often unaware of the characteristics of proficient work. Teacher comments on student work are often limited to a grade or performance level and lack specific feedback based on Student Level Performance Descriptors to ensure students know how to improve.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

District leadership should develop a systematic process for providing feedback on the quality of assessments (e.g., rigor, congruency to standards, specific rubrics) in order to ensure that all assessments lead students to proficiency. District and school leadership should frequently review teacher evidence binders (e.g., assessment, professional learning community) and provide teachers specific and timely feedback using a common district rubric to ensure that all district assessments are rigorous, congruent to core content standards and include Student Performance Level Descriptors.

District leadership should develop a systematic process to allow all staff the opportunity to participate in the revision and refinement of district common learning checks.

District leadership should create a district walkthrough instrument which includes a way to monitor if students are able to communicate the academic expectations, whether or not specific Student Level Performance Descriptors are communicated and evident in student work and if classroom assessments are rigorous and congruent to content standards. District leadership should monitor to ensure that frequent walkthrough data are used to measure progress in these areas. Data from these walkthroughs should be shared with school level staff and used to set SMART goals. District leadership should ensure specific and timely feedback is provided and that support structures are in place when goals are not met.

Resources:

Allen, D. & McDonald, J. (1992). The Tuning Protocol: A Process for Reflection on Teacher and Student Work. Coalition of Essential Schools. www.itag.education.tas.gov.au

Johnson, R. S. (2002). Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap: How to Measure Equity in Our Schools. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. ISBN 0-7619-4509-1

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J. & Pollock, J. E. (2001). Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

SISI Toolkit Standard 2. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%202/Standard%20%20By%20Standards.htm

Wiggins, G. (1998). *Educative Assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of bulletin boards, exhibits and displays, classroom displays, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, curriculum documents, curriculum maps, district technology plan, employee handbooks, eWalk data, Implementation and Impact Checks, Kentucky Performance Report disaggregated data, Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment, lesson plans/units of study, professional development records, records of teacher certification/experience, rubrics, samples of classroom assessments, samples of student work products, school council policies and bylaws, school Web pages, student handbook, student work, highly qualified summary report, district report card data, district Web site, board of education policies, district corrective action plan, Knox Intervention System, walkthrough instruments and PLC feedback forms

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, community members, curriculum resource specialist, district leadership, principal, school council members, students, superintendent and teachers

Observations of cafeteria, classrooms, common areas, computer lab, media center and outdoor areas

Performance Rating 3

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

District leadership actively recruits teachers from local universities (e.g., Union College, University of the Cumberlands, Eastern Kentucky University) and posts vacancies in appropriate educational publications and on the district Web site. Eleven teachers in the district are certified by the National Board of Professional Standards. District leadership has a plan to use School Improvement Grant funds to provide stipends to teachers meeting the criteria (i.e., data section, highly effective teaching and learning, parental involvement) of the Knox Effective Teaching and Learning Program initiative. As defined by the No Child Left Behind Act, 8.1 % of teachers are not highly qualified to teach in their content areas. The superintendent regularly meets with and mentors thirty teachers who are new to the district this year. District leadership requires staff to participate in professional development that addresses instructional strategies (i.e., Classroom Assessment for Student Learning). Professional development is also required on activities related to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards and achievement gaps (i.e.,

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating **3**

Thoughtful Education). However, district leadership does not consistently ensure that all teachers participate in professional development which focuses on updating teachers' content knowledge and instructional practices in order to challenge students to higher levels of learning.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating **2**

- 3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

District leadership and school leadership conduct walkthrough observations that include monitoring the use of effective instructional strategies. However, the observation instruments used are inconsistent districtwide and some do not provide quantifiable data and specific, meaningful feedback to teachers to inform instruction. As a part of the district's non-negotiables, each teacher is required to maintain a binder that contains their lesson plans, curriculum maps and other instructional information. School leadership does not consistently monitor these binders for compliance with district non-negotiables. Appropriate, timely and specific feedback is not always provided to teachers. Teachers participate in professional learning communities in which standards are addressed, assessments are created and data are collected and reviewed. These requirements have not yet led to rigorous, high-quality instruction on all levels or in all content areas.

- 3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state learning goals and assessment expectations for student learning.

District leadership provides resources and opportunities for teachers to ensure instructional strategies and activities are aligned with student learning goals and assessment expectations. Teachers are provided professional development opportunities involving Classroom Assessment for Student Learning and Thoughtful Education. Teachers participate in professional learning communities in which they are expected to unpack the core standards, create assessments, construct and critique instructional activities and analyze student work and assessment results. These learning communities are at different levels of implementation throughout the district. Some of the learning targets created for use in the district are not congruent with core standards and formative assessments are not uniformly used to drive instructional practices.

- 3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

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Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

District and school leadership monitor classroom practices through instructional rounds, walkthroughs and district liaison visits, but timely, meaningful and specific feedback is not provided to teachers in order to inform and improve classroom instructional practices to meet unique student learning needs. Non-negotiable professional learning communities and common planning time provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate in planning and modifying instruction to meet unique student learning needs. Formative and summative assessments, instructional activities and analysis of student work are among the topics expected to be covered in these meetings. District personnel (e.g., superintendent, assistant superintendent, liaisons, curriculum coaches) sometimes observe or participate in these meetings (i.e., virtual professional learning communities). The Knox Intervention System provides a three-tiered approach for teachers to differentiate instruction and work individually with students who need additional help to be successful.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate the use of technology in their classrooms.

The board of education has adopted an access to electronic media policy (08.2323), and district leadership has set the expectation that school councils adopt policies regarding the use of technology. District leadership has provided technology (e.g., computer labs, interactive boards, document cameras) to all schools based on student population and has ensured that each school has at least one educational technology facilitator to assist teachers with the use of technology in the classroom. The district technology plan states the goal of having “all staff proficient at integrating technology into the curriculum” and that “students will learn to use technology as a resource for learning and a tool for everyday life.” The comprehensive district improvement plan includes a technology plan with goals to be completed by 2013. Some professional development has been offered to teachers on the use of technology in the classroom, but implementation has been inconsistent. District leadership relies on school leadership to monitor frequent and appropriate student use of technology in the learning process; however, student use of technology is not occurring consistently throughout all schools.

3.1f Instructional resources (textbook, supplemental reading, technology) are

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

sufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum.

District leadership allocates adequate funds for instructional resources, including technology, based on state statutes and regulations. District leadership has not developed a formal process for requesting discretionary funds; however, district leadership responds to requests for additional resources when the need is warranted and resources are available. District leadership ensures all schools have the resources necessary to effectively deliver instruction to all students.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

District leadership has established non-negotiable professional learning communities in all schools. One component of the professional learning community's four-week rotation includes the expectation to collaboratively analyze student work. The level of implementation of this process varies among schools and content areas. District leadership has not identified or implemented a protocol for analyzing student work and using the resulting data to inform instructional practices. District leadership ensures a review of student assessment data is occurring but does not ensure that student work is analyzed in a manner that will effect change in instructional practices and student achievement.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent and monitored and tied to instructional practice.

Board of Education homework policy (08.211) states each school shall establish standards for out-of-school assignments that encompass the amounts and types of homework assignments to be given by grade level. Homework is addressed in the district's student handbook which includes suggestions for parental support and student responsibilities regarding homework. District leadership sets the expectation that all school councils have adopted a homework policy. District leadership does not have a process in place to ensure that homework is a meaningful extension of classroom work.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

District leadership should create a common districtwide walkthrough observation instrument that will allow for quantifiable data that can be used to measure progress and set goals. This instrument should also contain a component for providing specific and meaningful feedback to teachers to improve instructional strategies in order that all classroom instruction is rigorous and student-centered. This instrument should be used uniformly across the district on a regular and ongoing basis to guide instructional practices in all classrooms.

District leadership should ensure the full implementation of all four cycles of professional learning communities.

District leadership should provide teachers additional opportunities to increase their content knowledge and improve the quality of their instructional delivery.

District leadership should identify and implement a protocol for the analysis of student work. District leadership should provide appropriate professional development to ensure that all instructional leadership and teachers understand how to use the protocol for analyzing student work to inform instruction. District and school leadership should develop a process for monitoring and measuring the impact of the analysis of student work results on classroom practices and student learning.

Resources:

Ainsworth, L. (2011). Rigorous Curriculum Design: How to Create Curriculum Units of Study That Align Standards, Instruction and Assessment.

Gregory, Gayle & Chapman, Carol. (2007). Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit

□All.

Jensen, Eric. (2005). Teaching with the Brain in Mind, 2nd edition.

Rawlinson, Regina M. (2007). A Mind Shaped by Poverty: Ten Things Educators Should Know.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of brochures, pamphlets, bulletin boards, exhibits and displays, certified personnel evaluation plan and process, class rosters, classroom displays, committee meeting minutes and agenda, committee rosters, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, cumulative folders system/student working folders/portfolios, district personnel evaluation system and documentation of implementation, employee handbooks, enrollment data, eWalk data, examples of school to home communications, Family Resource Youth Services Center advisory council/subcommittee meeting minutes, fire marshal reports, Implementation and Impact Checks, individual professional growth plans, job descriptions, Kentucky Performance Report disaggregated data, list of co-curricular offerings, newspaper clippings/press releases, newspapers, organizational charts, policies and procedures on access to student records, professional development records, samples of classroom assessments, samples of student work products, school calendar with motivational and celebratory events, school council meeting agenda and minutes, school council policies and bylaws, school event calendar, school improvement planning team meeting minutes and agenda, school mission, belief and vision statements, school newsletter, School Report Card data, school visitors register, school Web pages, school/district safety plan, student handbook, student work, student/parent/staff handbooks, student/teacher ratio, trophy cases and videos of student performances

Interviews with assistant principal, assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, community members, district leadership, Extended School Services director/staff, media specialist, parents, school council members, school leadership, students, superintendent, teachers and parent liaison

Observations of cafeteria, classrooms, common areas, computer lab, media center and outdoor areas

Performance Rating 3

4.1b Leadership creates experiences that foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels in order to motivate staff to produce continuous improvement in student learning.

District leadership expresses a commitment of high expectations for all students and communicates this commitment to stakeholders through a variety of venues (e.g., professional learning communities, administrative meetings, district Web site). District leadership provides opportunities (e.g.,

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Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating **3**

professional learning communities, common planning time) for teachers to collaborate and share successful strategies that positively impact student learning. District leadership recognizes student and teacher successes in a variety of forms (e.g., board of education meetings, district Web site, local radio MIX 96, Knox County TV 4, The Barbourville Mountain Advocate, News Journal, Times Tribune).

4.1i Multiple communication strategies and contexts are used for the dissemination of information to all stakeholders.

District leadership ensures communication is shared regularly with all stakeholders. The Knox County Public Schools Student Handbook is distributed to all students. All board of education meetings are televised on Knox County Schools TV 4. The new district Web site provides multiple sources of information for stakeholders regarding all aspects of student life at Knox County Schools. Additional links to the schools are available with plans to expand the sites to include more pertinent information. Media avenues (e.g., Knox County Schools TV 4, WYMT, MIX 96, The Barbourville Mountain Advocate, school marquees, Facebook, Twitter) are used to disseminate district and school information. District leadership publishes multiple brochures describing a variety of aspects and programs (e.g., Title 1, Knox Intervention System, Knox County Schools TV 4) within the school district. The One Call phone system is being purchased and implemented for use districtwide. Open houses and school meetings offer some opportunities to share limited information with stakeholders. Some schools send home newsletters and weekly classroom updates.

4.1j There is evidence that student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (e.g., displays of student work, assemblies).

District leadership acknowledges and celebrates successes and achievements of district and school staff and students. The Board of Education recognizes and celebrates student achievements at board meetings through Spotlight on Reading and Math Blast. Award winning staff and student accomplishments are recognized and featured in district brochures (e.g., eleven national board certified teachers, Kentucky middle school science teacher of the year, presidential award for mathematics and science teaching, excellence in teaching awards from Campbellsville

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Performance Rating **3**

University, Chief Finance Officer awarded by University of Kentucky Gatton College of Business and Economics). District leadership supports school successes by attending special assemblies rewarding school efforts. District leadership supports school leadership in the recognition of student work in public venues (e.g., art exhibitions at the Methodist Church and hospital, music performances at Union College and Red Bud Festival, window displays during Daniel Boone Festival, written works including poetry, photo essays and short stories at the Methodist Church).

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Performance Rating **2**

- 4.1a There is leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment (e.g., culture audits/school opinion surveys).

The board of education has adopted safety policy (05.4) and procedures designed to provide students and staff with a safe and orderly learning environment. District leadership was unaware of some safety concerns (e.g., unlocked entry doors, exposed wiring, moldy ceiling tiles) observed at some schools. District leadership, in coordination with community agencies (e.g., health department, police department, ambulance service, fire department) has created a District Emergency Management Plan. A crisis and disaster management flip chart has been adopted and provided to all classrooms. Each school has an emergency response team made up of staff members trained in emergency response procedures (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, AED). Each school is provided an emergency kit (e.g., flashlights, first aid supplies, citizens band radios). All required safety drills (e.g., fire, earthquake, severe weather and lockdown) are practiced on a regular basis with information documented and forwarded to district leadership. Bus evacuations are conducted three times a year. District leadership adopts a code of student conduct in accordance with board policy (09.42) and distributes this information to parents through the student handbook. The board has adopted grievance policies for students (09.4281) and certified (03.16) and classified employees (03.26). These are communicated in the student and employee handbooks and can be found on the Knox County Public Schools Web site. District leadership rarely solicits information from a variety of stakeholder groups (e.g., teachers, families, community members, students, classified staff) to assist in evaluating the learning environment in each school.

- 4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally and this is evidenced in their practice.

District leadership sets the expectation that the principal at each school ensures that school councils have adopted policies on academic, discipline and classroom management, but a formal process to monitor these policies has not been developed. District and school leadership monitor the discipline and academic practices through classroom walkthrough observations, but little specific feedback is provided. Some schools promote a culture of high expectations through rewards (e.g., pizza parties, passes to school events,

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Performance Rating 2

lunch rewards) and recognition (e.g., morning assemblies, school announcements, student of the month pennants) for individual and classroom successes (e.g., improved classroom attendance, reduced number of tardies, proficient/distinguished students). District leadership recognizes individuals and groups (e.g., Spotlight on Reading, Knox Central Choir, Future Business Leader of America local and state winners) at board of education meetings.

- 4.1d Teachers and non-teaching staff are involved in both formal and informal decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning.

District leadership does not have a formal process for recruiting or selecting staff to serve on committees to provide for equitable representation from each school and all employee groups. District leadership is beginning to solicit input from teaching and non-teaching staff for decision-making through the development of the Drop Out Prevention Task Force and a district facilities planning committee.

- 4.1e Teachers recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure.

District leadership sets the expectation that all staff members recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure, but does not consistently monitor to ensure teachers are setting high expectations and providing challenging instruction that actively engages students. District and school leadership provide teachers with the opportunity (i.e., professional learning community meetings, common planning) to review assessment data and reflect on their responsibility for student successes and failures. Some school leadership share walkthrough data with individual teachers and in faculty meetings, but the impact of these data on classroom practices is not consistently measured. District leadership has provided few opportunities for parents to develop partnerships with schools that focus on improving student achievement.

- 4.1f The school intentionally assigns staff to maximize opportunities for ALL students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

District leadership allocates staff to schools based on board of education approved allocation formula. School council staffing allocations meet state

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Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

requirements for teacher to student ratios. Additional certified staff (e.g., curriculum coaches, literacy coaches, math coaches) is provided from other funding sources (e.g., Title I, Part A: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, district general funds, Education Jobs Fund Program). School leadership submits council policies to district leadership, but district leadership does not monitor to ensure school councils have adopted policies on school staff and student assignment. District leadership does not monitor to ensure schools intentionally match all students' needs with teacher strengths when creating a master schedule. District leadership provides Knox Intervention System for students with identified learning needs. District leadership collaborated with high school leadership to develop a trimester schedule that includes a period (skinnies) for intervention services to meet identified student learning needs in mathematics and reading. Extended School Services teachers scaffold instruction with their own qualifying students during school hours. Transportation costs limit after school services. District leadership provides resources such as PLATO, Discovery Learning, SuccessMaker, Read 180, Study Island, Encyclomedia, Smart Boards, ACT prep Web-based programs and Success for ALL reading programs to enhance student achievement.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families about individual student progress (e.g., engage through conversation).

The board of education has adopted a grading policy (08.221) that specifies when report cards and interim reports are to be available to parents. There is a discrepancy in what is stated as policy in the student handbook and policy that appears in the board policy manual. Each trimester both high schools and one middle school issues one computer generated report and one interim report to be made available to parents. Each nine weeks all elementary schools and one middle school issues one computer generated report and one interim report to be made available to parents. District leadership does not require written explanations regarding student performance as part of these reports. The district Web site offers, through Infinite Campus Parent Portal, a district tool for parents and students to access instant, online, timely and secure student information (e.g., class schedule, assignments, attendance, discipline, course registrations, report cards, transcripts). Information about Parent Portal is available to parents through multiple avenues (e.g., brochures, Web site, principal and attendance clerk). Students' grades are to be updated in Infinite Campus at a minimum of once

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Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

a week. Information in the parent portal is also available for parents in a variety of languages (e.g., Spanish, Chinese). The district Web site offers parent access to Individual Learning Plans, but lack of parent access to parent and student codes is sometimes a barrier to participation. A new Individual Learning Plan training for counselors will be offered thru WEB-X and will include counselor/school staff roles and responsibilities in implementing this process. District leadership is planning to monitor this training.

- 4.1h There is evidence that the teachers and staff care about students and inspire their best efforts.

District leadership does not routinely conduct surveys or review data to determine if teachers and staff care about students and inspire their best efforts. Perception surveys have not been conducted since the 2006 scholastic audit. The board of education has adopted program guidelines policy (08.13452) for English language instruction that states at the time of initial enrollment, parents of ESL students are requested to complete a survey of primary and home language to assess need only. All district Family Resource/Youth Services Centers conduct annual surveys as the basis for needs assessment and program planning. A Kentucky Incentives for Prevention (KIP) drug and alcohol survey is also conducted. District leadership is active and visible in the schools and community promoting high expectations and achievement for all students. Some school staff verbalized caring about students but focus on excuses (e.g., low socio-economic, dysfunctional families, single parent households, drugs) for the lack of student success. High school leadership has developed an advisor/advisee program for teachers and students to build positive relationships during the students' high school careers. District leadership has not adopted policies and does not have a systematic process to ensure all students have a parent or adult to advocate for students' learning needs.

- 4.1k The school/district provides support for the physical, cultural, socio-economic, and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

District leadership initiates, collaborates and implements programs (e.g., Backpacks for Kids, Kids First) and develops partnerships with government

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Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

agencies (e.g., Knox County Health Department, Knox County Attorney, Family Court Judge) that focus on specifically reducing barriers to learning for low socio-economic students. A Drop Out Prevention Task Force and a parent liaison position were created to reduce the drop-out rate. District leadership has a referral process for at-risk students using the Success Network Leadership Team (parent liaison, counselor, attendance clerk, Family Resource/Youth Services Center). Data from this team is entered into infinite campus. The responsibilities of the Family Resource/Youth Services Centers are to “promote the flow of resources and provide support to families in ways which strengthen the function and enhance the growth and development of the individual members and the family unit, by ensuring that families have access to and are connected with appropriate community resources and receive from those resources the help they need, to promote young people’s progress toward capable and productive adulthood by assisting them to recognize their individual and family strengths, and to address problems that block their success in school.” District leadership provides supplemental services (e.g., tutoring), Knox Intervention System and Extended School Services for eligible students. Some schools offer advisor/advisee for students and teachers to build relationships. At-risk high school students are provided alternative methods for attaining graduation requirements (e.g., PLATO credit recovery, night school, supplemental education services). Some strategies (e.g., monitoring preplanning of special education teachers, professional development for differentiated and assistive technologies) focus on providing individualized instruction for underachieving student populations. District leadership does not facilitate the coordination and evaluation of these programs to ensure they operate efficiently and have the intended impact on eliminating achievement gaps within the student population.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

District leadership should collaborate with families, business leaders and community members to create a culture of high expectation for teaching and learning for all students. District leadership should intentionally recruit representatives from all stakeholder groups (certified and classified staff members, families, students, business leaders, community members) to develop authentic partnerships at all levels for improving student achievement. District leadership should provide all stakeholders learning opportunities in multiple areas (e.g., Kentucky standards and expectations, decision-making process, academic achievement planning, helping children succeed).

District leadership should develop a comprehensive two-way communication plan. This plan should include multiple forms of communication and procedures for providing and disseminating information to all stakeholder groups. The communication should be continual and provide families with information that encourages frequent and meaningful interactions among the entire school community and should include a clear pathway for parents and community members on how to initiate communication at the school.

District leadership should adopt policies and a systematic process to ensure all students have a parent or adult to advocate for every student's learning needs.

Resources:

Inside the Black Box of High Performing High Poverty Schools, Lexington, KY: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

Payne, R. (1998). A Framework for Understanding Poverty. Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc.

SISI Toolkit Standard 4. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%204/Standard%204%20By%20Standards.htm

Empowering Parents School Box.
<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/schoolbox/index.html>

Kentucky Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council. (June 2007). Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle. <http://www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdoonlyres/45597738-F31B-4333-9BB9-34255F02BC6D/0/PACtheMissingPiecev2.pdf>

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of brochures, pamphlets, bulletin boards, exhibits and displays, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, district technology plan, eWalk data, Extended School Services program overview and data, Family Resource Youth Services Center documentation, newspaper clippings/press releases, newspapers, organizational charts, policies and procedures on access to student records, school Web pages, student handbook and student/parent/staff handbooks

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, community members, counselor, district leadership, Extended School Services director/staff, Family Resource/Youth Services Center personnel, local board of education members, parents, school council members, school leadership, school nurse, students and teachers

Observations of classrooms, common areas and media center

Performance Rating 3

- 5.1b Structures are in place to ensure that all students have access to all the curriculum (e.g., school guidance, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services).

District leadership has a technology plan and provides all schools with technology (e.g., computers, mobile computer labs, SMARTboards, Promethean boards) to assist with classroom instruction and student learning. All schools have a classroom teacher identified as an educational technology facilitator, and district leadership provides four technology support technicians that all schools may access. Extended School Services and Title I programs are available to all schools. District leadership has acquired daytime waivers and sets the expectation that each school schedules Extended School Services to accommodate students' needs. District leadership provides support to many programs and services (e.g., Back to School Expo, Backpacks for Kids, Kids First) initiated by Family Resource Youth Services Centers. School leadership ensures all students have access to guidance services. District leadership has provided some technology (e.g., PLATO credit recovery, SuccessMaker, Carnegie Math) to ensure all students have access to the entire common academic core. District leadership administers the funding of several grants (e.g., Read to Achieve, Math Achievement Fund Grant, Striving Readers Grant, 21st Century,

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating **3**

Educational Technology Competitive American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Grant) and ensures guidelines and regulations are met. District leadership does not systematically monitor these programs for impact on student learning. The board of education has not adopted policy to ensure all students have equal access to the entire academic core.

5.1c The school/district provides organizational structures and supports instructional practices to reduce barriers to learning.

District leadership provides opportunities (e.g., in-school bank, Cooperative Work Experience) and technological resources (e.g., SMART boards, Promethean boards, document cameras, personal response systems) to staff members to actively engage students in learning . The board of education has adopted a health requirements and services policy (9.21). District leadership addresses student health and social services needs through referrals from the Family Resource/Youth Services Centers directors, guidance counselors and on-site school nurses. District leadership reviews data (e.g., EXPLORE, PLAN, Kentucky Interim Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report, ACT) to identify students' learning needs. District leadership provides additional support through various programs (e.g., Extended School Services, PLATO credit recovery, Knox Intervention System, Knox Learning Academy, Striving Readers, ACT Prep). District leadership partners with community agencies (e.g., Knox County Attorney, Comprehensive Care, Knox County Health Department, Literacy Council, Junior Woman's Study Club) and businesses (e.g., B & H Shoe Store) to reduce barriers to learning. High school students are provided advisor/advisee groups. District leadership has not established a systematic process for identifying an adult advocate for every child. District leadership offers training (e.g., enrichment in foreign languages, Rosetta Stone) to assist teachers in understanding cultural differences. District leadership ensures the inclusion of students (e.g., Exceptional Child Education, English as a Second Language) in core curriculum classes, but not all students' needs are intentionally matched with teacher strengths when creating master schedules.

5.1e The school maintains an accurate student record system that provides timely information pertinent to the student's academic and educational development.

The board of education has adopted student records policy (9.14) governing

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating **3**

the maintenance and security of student records. Infinite Campus is used to support student record management in classrooms and offices. Multiple forms of data (e.g., enrollment, attendance, grades, test scores, individual education plans, individual learning plans, intervention data) are included in Infinite Campus. These data are updated regularly. District leadership advertises availability and offers training to parents on the use of Parent Portal to allow them access to information. Parents are able to schedule times to access student information at their child's school.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating 2

- 5.1a Families and the community are active partners in the educational process and work together with the school district staff to promote programs and services for all students.

District leadership has formed a public relations department that promotes district and school programs and services using the district Web site, brochures and local media (e.g., Knox County Schools TV 4, WYMT, MIX 96, The Mountain Advocate). Partnerships with government and higher-education agencies (e.g., Knox County Attorney, Knox County Health Department, Union College, Family Court Judge, Eastern Kentucky University Corbin Campus) provide for additional programs and services that enhance student learning; however, partnerships with other community groups are limited. District leadership with the Family Resource/Youth Service Center provides many services (e.g. Back to School Expo, Backpacks for Kids, Kids First, Angel Tree Project) that facilitate interaction between teachers, students and families. District leadership has involved stakeholders in the recently initiated Drop Out Prevention Task Force. This group's mission is to reduce drop out rates by requiring all schools in the district to identify at risk students. Each school has formed a Success Network Leadership Team that provides interventions for these students. District leadership has not intentionally solicited input from stakeholder groups (e.g., local businesses, industries, community members, civic organizations, parents) in establishing a shared vision and focusing strategies to move all students to proficiency. District leadership has designed some programs and initiatives with the intent to encourage parent involvement; however, parent involvement is limited.

- 5.1d Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive additional assistance to support their learning, beyond the initial classroom instruction.

District leadership collaborates with school leadership to ensure that resources and programs (e.g., Extended School Services, PLATO credit recovery, Knox Intervention System, ACT Prep) are available for students who need additional time to master core content. District leadership does not facilitate coordination or evaluation of services (e.g., Extended School Services, Family Resource/Youth Services Center, school guidance programs) to eliminate gaps and overlaps.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

District leadership should clearly define an intentional plan to increase parent and community involvement. District leadership should encourage school staffs to embrace the idea of parent and community members within the schools. Programs should be initiated to involve all stakeholders as active partners in the decision-making and educational process at the district and school level.

District leadership should develop a systematic process to monitor and evaluate student support services (e.g., Title I, Extended School Service, Family Resource/Youth Services Centers and school guidance programs). District and school leadership should collaborate regularly to determine gaps and overlaps in the delivery of these programs. Support services should be revised as needed to ensure all students' health, social and academic needs are addressed.

Resources:

Hiatt-Michael, D.B. (2001). Promising Practices for Family Involvement in Schools. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

National Dropout Prevention Center. (2004). Linking Learning With Life (Service Learning Series). Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Payne, R., DeVol, P. & Dreussi-Smith, T. (2006). Bridges Out of Poverty. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process, Inc.

SISI Toolkit Standard 5. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%205/Standard%205%20By%20Standards.htm

Kentucky Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council. (June 2007). Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle. <http://www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/45597738-F31B-4333-9BB9-34255F02BC6D/0/PACtheMissingPiecev2.pdf>

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of certified personnel evaluation plan and process, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, district budget and allocations, district Effective Instructional Leadership Act records (EILA), district personnel evaluation system and documentation of implementation, individual professional growth plans, Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards, professional development records, staff development agenda and state statute and regulation

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, district leadership, local board of education members, school council members, school leadership, students, superintendent and teachers

Observations of cafeteria, classrooms, common areas, computer lab, hallways and media center

Performance Rating 3

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded.

District leadership engages in a variety of job-embedded professional growth activities. A leadership professional learning community of district directors and all school principals meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month to conduct instructional rounds and review the results of data obtained from them. An annual leadership retreat is held each summer for the purpose of updating the instructional leadership skills of both principals and district leadership. Book studies (e.g., works of Silver and Strong, Rick Stiggins) are ongoing forms of professional enrichment for district leadership. Academic discussions are regular agenda items for the weekly meetings of the district directors and superintendent. All of these activities are designed for the acquisition of professional learning and instructional skill development that fosters continuous growth and builds instructional capacity and expertise in the district and school administrative staff.

6.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process.

The Knox County Board of Education has an evaluation policy (03.18) to lay foundations for the evaluation of all certified personnel in the district. Procedures to accompany this policy are specified in the Knox County Certified Evaluation Plan that was approved by the local board of education

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating **3**

on July 24, 2007. State approval of the plan was granted on July 31, 2007, certifying that the plan met all state requirements for the evaluation of all personnel.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

- 6.1a There is evidence of support for the long-term professional growth needs of the individual staff members. This includes both instructional and leadership growth.

District leadership verbalizes the belief that professional development is an important agent in bringing about change in practices that lead to increased student performance. District leadership supports this belief through the provision of such resources as PD 360, new teacher induction program, district conducted professional development sessions and affiliation with Southeast/Southcentral Educational Cooperative. Job-embedded professional growth opportunities are supported by district leadership through the establishment of weekly non-negotiable professional learning communities and by the provision of curriculum, literacy and math coaches in the schools who facilitate ongoing professional trainings for teachers. During monthly professional learning community meetings, district leadership and school principals meet to conduct instructional rounds in the district schools. This year's focus for these instructional rounds is task rotation and questioning techniques. Some classified staff have professional training requirements based on role descriptions. Although district leadership provides many avenues of support for staff growth, it has not fully established a continuous process that meets the unique instructional and leadership needs of every employee in the district.

- 6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity through on-going professional development.

District and school leadership work in a cooperative manner to design annual professional development plans at the school level. After conducting a needs assessment based on the analysis of student achievement data (e.g., Kentucky Interim Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report, Discovery Education, district common learning checks), district leadership provides each school general topics from which to frame a professional development plan. Targeted items for 2010-11 center around Classroom Assessment for Student Learning, common core rollout, gap reduction activities, suicide prevention (high school and middle school), researched based program training needs, items addressed in school specific professional development surveys and leadership needs for school administrators. Each school is afforded the opportunity to tailor its professional development plan in a

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Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

manner that best accommodates the growth needs of its staff. Some professional growth activities are embedded in the work of professional learning communities designed to help build instructional capacity with the staff. Some school plans contain activities that lack continuity from year to year and often fail to effectively scaffold on previous training experiences or meet the unique professional growth needs of staff.

- 6.1c Staff development priorities are set in alignment with goals for student performance and the individual professional growth plans of staff.

Professional development priorities (e.g., Classroom Assessment for Student Learning, task rotation, questioning strategies, instructional rounds) for the superintendent and district staff reflect connectivity to goals for student performance outlined in the comprehensive district improvement plan. Professional development activities of district personnel are not always intentionally aligned with individual professional growth plans. District leadership sets the expectation that school-level certified staff professional development activities are clearly aligned with goals for student performance and identified growth needs on their individual professional growth plans. However, the district has no structured process of ensuring that this expectation is met.

- 6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning and the priorities set for the school and district staff development activities.

Informal discussions occur between district and school leadership concerning strategies identified in the comprehensive district and school improvement plans. District leadership reviews each school's improvement plan but does not ensure the connectivity of professional development activities with student learning goals.

- 6.1f Professional development planning shows a direct connection to an analysis of student achievement data.

District leadership analyzes student achievement data (e.g., Kentucky Interim Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report, ACT, Discovery Education, district common learning checks) and uses the results of this analysis to formulate guidelines for annual district and school professional development

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

planning. District leadership informally reviews professional development activities at both the school and district level but does not have a systematic process that fully ensures professional development activities address the learning needs of all student populations. When school professional development plans warrant revision, district leadership provides assistance.

6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth and development of certified staff based on identified needs.

The Knox County Board of Education has a school budget and purchasing policy (02.4242) that specifies professional development allocations to schools shall be based on Kentucky Administrative Regulations. District leadership meets policy requirements by appropriating professional development allocations to the schools based on average daily attendance. Additional sources of funding (e.g., Title I, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant, School Improvement Grant) have been made available to the district to supplement state appropriated professional development allocations. District leadership has informal discussions with school leadership concerning professional development expenditures, but does not have a formal system in place to assess if they always have a significant impact on meeting the identified needs of students.

6.2c The school/district effectively uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency.

Parameters for the development of individual professional growth plans for certified personnel are outlined in the Knox County Schools Certified Personnel Evaluation Plan. This plan specifies that growth targets “may be suggested by the evaluator” and calls for the plans to be reviewed on an annual basis. The plan does not require that they be developed through a collaborative process. Individual professional growth plans of district and school certified staff are often in simple checkmark format with few scripted details. Most individual professional growth plans fail to include individual growth needs but are fully based on growth needs of the entire school staff. Growth plans show little reflection to feedback data generated from the evaluation process. District leadership does not have a formal system in place to monitor the implementation of individual professional growth plans at all levels to ensure targeted strategies for growth are actually completed.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

6.2d Leadership provides and implements a process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute and regulation.

District leadership supports administrators in the development of personnel evaluation skills through means of an annual training session tailored to the Knox County Schools Certified Personnel Evaluation Plan. This training is required for all district administrators charged with the responsibility of evaluating certified personnel and is conducted as part of the annual leadership retreat. The current Knox County Schools Certified Evaluation Plan, approved by the Kentucky Department of Education on July 31, 2007, exceeds state requirements for the frequency of summative evaluations on tenured staff. State regulations call for tenured teachers to be evaluated on a three year cycle; whereas, the Knox County plan specifies that cycle be reduced to every two years. District and school administrators implement a certified evaluation system that requires at least two formal observations on each non-tenured teacher and one per evaluation cycle on tenured teachers. Inadequate amounts of specific detailed feedback supplied by evaluators throughout all phases of the evaluation process limit the impact of the evaluation system on improving classroom practices that could result in increased student performance.

6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional leadership needs, has strategies to address them, and uses the effective instructional leadership act requirements as a resource to accomplish these goals.

The 2010-11 district professional development plan, tagged as an appendix to the comprehensive district improvement plan, makes limited reference to leadership needs (i.e., task rotation, questioning strategies, mandates of Senate Bill 1). The strategy (i.e., instructional rounds) listed in the plan provides little detailed guidance on how the needs will be addressed. The Effective Instructional Leadership Act is used as a resource for the development of instructional leadership skills of district and school administrators.

6.2f Leadership uses the evaluation process to provide teachers with the follow-up and support to change behavior and instructional practice.

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Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

District leadership does not formally monitor to ensure school administrators provide adequate levels of feedback or make proper support structure provisions for teachers throughout the evaluation process. District leadership does not have a systematic process in place to monitor progress on the implementation of individual professional growth plans at the school level. District leadership closely observes the skills of all first year teachers to the district. Frequent walkthroughs are conducted by the superintendent with detailed feedback and followup support structures to strengthen any identified professional growth needs. The superintendent facilitates a new induction professional development session for this targeted group of teachers each quarter.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

District and school leadership should collaborate to develop and implement a multi-year, job-embedded plan for professional growth that scaffolds on previous training experiences and builds a high level of competence in the instructional staff. The plan should be reflective of the individual professional growth needs of the staff in addition to the goals for student achievement derived from an analysis of multiple sources of student achievement data. District leadership should develop a systematic process for monitoring the impact of professional development activities on teacher practice and student performance.

District leadership should capitalize on the value of the evaluation process. District leadership should develop and implement a systematic process to monitor the effective execution of all components of the personnel evaluation plan at both district and school levels. The evaluation process should be used by the evaluator and evaluatee to collaboratively develop individual professional growth plans that address both school and individual needs. District leadership should ensure school leadership reviews individual teacher professional growth plans throughout the school year to assess progress toward implementation and growth

Resources:

DuFour, R. (2004). *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond when Kids Don't Learn*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Maxwell, J. C. (1998). *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Maxwell Motivation, Inc. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing.

SISI Toolkit Standard 6. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%206/Standard%206%20By%20Standards.htm

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of brochures, pamphlets, categorical program financial reports, certified personnel evaluation plan and process, committee meeting minutes and agenda, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, curriculum maps, district Effective Instructional Leadership Act records (EILA), district personnel evaluation system and documentation of implementation, district technology plan, employee handbooks, eWalk data, Individual Learning Plans, individual professional growth plans, Kentucky Performance Report disaggregated data, lesson plans/units of study, master school schedule, needs assessment data, newspapers, organizational charts, rubrics, samples of classroom assessments, school Web pages, student/teacher ratio, Title 1 program plan and The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle

Interviews with assistant principal, assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, community members, curriculum resource specialist, district leadership, local board of education members, parents, principal, school council members, school leadership, superintendent and teachers

Observations of classrooms, common areas and outdoor areas

Performance Rating **3**

7.1b Leadership decisions are focused on student academic performance and are data-driven and collaborative.

The board of education approved comprehensive district and school improvement plans that require district and school leadership to provide monthly reports on progress of student performance. The board of education reviews student performance data as a standing item on the monthly agenda. District leadership provides the board with monthly common learning checks results, quarterly student performance data from Discovery Education and program specific performance data (e.g., PLAN, Explore, Success for ALL). Student performance data is collected by each of the district's schools and displayed in the board room during regular public board meetings. The superintendent enters into dialogue with the board in a public review of the student performance data. The board of education uses student performance data to drive programmatic and financial decision making. Student performance data and goals on district and school improvement plans are the main focus of district leadership and principals' meetings and guide the decision making for improving student performance.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating **3**

- 7.1d There is evidence that the school/district leadership team disaggregates data for use in meeting the needs of a diverse population, communicates the information to school staff and incorporates the data systematically into school's plan.

District leadership collects, disaggregates and analyzes data from the Kentucky Interim Performance Report, No Child Left Behind reports, district common learning checks, Discovery Education results and program specific assessments to drive decision making for district and school improvement. The superintendent leads discussions with district and school leadership regarding the data and the implications for improved teaching and learning. District leadership uses these data to guide the district planning process to determine and prioritize the unique learning needs of students, including specific student populations with identified achievement gaps. District leadership establishes annual measurable student performance goals using data. Student performance data and performance goals are shared with the board of education and district and school leadership to facilitate school planning to meet the unique learning needs of all students.

- 7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff have access to curriculum related materials and the training necessary to use curriculum and data resources relating to the learning goals for Kentucky public schools.

District and school instructional staff are provided access to the latest Kentucky Curricular Documents (e.g., Program of Studies, Kentucky Core Content for Assessment 4.1, College Readiness Standards, Kentucky Core Academic Standards) and local curriculum documents (e.g., pacing guides, curriculum maps). Training in the use and implementation of the district curriculum is provided for all instructional staff through districtwide and job-embedded professional development. District leadership is proactive in deconstructing the Kentucky Core Academic Standards and has developed a detailed timeline to complete this process.

- 7.1k There is evidence that the principal demonstrates leadership skills in the areas of academic performance, learning environment and efficiency.

The superintendent communicates as part of his vision that the Knox County

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 3

School District will develop and implement an instructional program that will prepare all students to be successful in whatever life endeavor they may choose. He holds all staff accountable for student success and failure and is prepared to provide staff with support, training and corrective actions when needed to ensure that the district and schools make the progress required to meet the state and national student performance goals. The superintendent models the professional standards he expects from staff and communicates these expectations through the evaluation process, district leadership and principal meetings, board of education meetings and to the community. Many strategies that he and the district staff have initiated are exemplary (e.g., virtual professional development during common planning between high schools, his work with first year teachers to the district, Knox Highly Effective Teaching and Learning Portfolio initiative). He ensures that the focus is always on improving student achievement. Through these efforts he has earned the respect and support from stakeholders, colleagues and educators in this region and the state. The superintendent's support through the school improvement grants for Tier III schools is beginning to impact classroom practices and student achievement (e.g., No Child Left Behind elimination of achievement gaps, decrease districtwide novice scores, improvement in ACT scores). The superintendent is actively involved in professional organizations, regional committees and Kentucky Department of Education advisory committees. He always takes advantage of opportunities to promote Knox County School District, staff, community and his vision for Knox County students.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating **2**

7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision.

Although a written vision statement has not been formally developed, the superintendent can articulate his vision for the district centered on giving every child the opportunity to be successful in whatever life's endeavor they may choose. This "vision" is reflected within the district's mission statement, "Opening Minds to a World of Possibilities." The mission statement was created in 2009 as a result of conversations among district directors and principals. The mission is included on district and school Web pages and on printed publications. A public process including representatives from all stakeholder groups was not used to develop the mission statement, but the board of education has embraced this mission as the driving force for the school district. The mission is used as a stimulus in shaping the educational programs, plans and actions of the district.

7.1c There is evidence that all administrators have a growth plan focused on the development of effective leadership skills.

District and school administrators have individual professional growth plans aligned with Interstate Leadership Licensure Consortium and state standards. District and school administrators obtain most Effective Instructional Leadership Act hours within district-led professional development (e.g., leadership summer retreat, district leadership professional learning community, district leadership team meetings) and administrative book studies (e.g., Classroom Assessment for Student Learning). Additional Effective Instructional Leadership Act hours can be obtained through out of district opportunities but must be approved by either the superintendent or assistant superintendent. Several principals are receiving professional development through the Kentucky Leadership Academy. Although all individual professional growth plans are not developed in a collaborative format, the superintendent has set expectations for required components. District leadership is required to select individual professional growth priorities based on job responsibilities and needs identified in the comprehensive district improvement plan. School leadership is required to develop individual professional growth plans based on student performance data, reflect school grant requirements, conform to identified needs in school improvement plans or individual identified leadership needs. Individual professional growth plans are collected, reviewed and revised annually but

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

are not monitored for growth on a regularly scheduled basis during the school year. District leadership provides some direct guidance on promoting specific effective leadership skills based on the unique needs of each district or school leader but may offer suggestions during initial development of the individual growth plan.

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected and allocated to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

District leadership promotes the concept that instructional time is a valuable, finite resource that should be used effectively. District leadership has established non-negotiables (professional learning communities, essential questions posted, learning targets posted daily and articulated, curriculum maps in binder on desk, up-to-date lesson plans in binder, formative assessments, interpreting data-Knox Intervention System), communicated these non-negotiables to all staff, posted them on the district Web page and communicated them to families of students in the district's persistently low performing schools (Knox Central High School, Knox County Middle School, Lynn Camp Middle and High School). District liaisons assigned to schools may informally discuss disruption to instructional time issues with school leadership, but district leadership has not checked to determine if school council policies on protection of instructional time have been adopted and implemented at all schools. School leadership at most schools has articulated expectations (e.g., no phone calls to classes during instructional time, intercom announcements at certain times of the day only) for protection of instructional time, and leadership monitors classrooms and professional learning communities work for non-negotiables compliance.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides the organizational infrastructure, and removes barriers in order to sustain continuous school improvement.

Allocation of district resources to schools is adequate to meet most of the unique learning needs of each school. Schools that are in state and federal Tier III assistance receive not only the appropriate funding from the school allocation formula but also receive School Improvement Grant funds. All schools receive some form of instructional and leadership support personnel (e.g., instructional coaches, district leadership support personnel). District

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Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

leadership attempts to ensure that distribution of programs, materials and personnel is fair and equitable using needs assessments tied to comprehensive school improvement plans and school council requests. District leadership in collaboration with school leadership and the board of education provides the organizational structures to focus fiscal, human, and physical resources on efficient and effective delivery of educational services to improve student performance. The district's finance department has established protocols to monitor district allocations and expenditures for compliance and efficiency. Some categorical and grant programs are not consistently evaluated to measure their impact on district and school improvement goals.

- 7.1h The school/district leadership provides the organizational policy and resource infrastructure necessary for the implementation and maintenance of a safe and effective learning environment.

The board of education has adopted a safety policy (5.4) and district leadership implements procedures for maintaining a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment for both students and staff. The board of education has approved a code of conduct of acceptable behavior and discipline for students. This code of conduct is included in the student handbook for communicating behavioral expectations to students and parents. District leadership, in coordination with community agencies (e.g., health department, police department, ambulance service, fire department), has created a District Emergency Management Plan. A crisis and disaster management flip chart has been adopted. All schools have emergency response teams comprised of staff members trained in emergency response procedures (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, AED). District leadership provides emergency kits (e.g., flashlights, first aid supplies, CB radios) to be used during times of disaster. All required safety drills (e.g., fire, earthquake, severe weather, lockdown) are practiced on a regular basis with information documented and forwarded to district leadership. Some schools have implemented safety procedures (e.g., all doors locked except the front door, visitor sign-in), but other schools have safety issues (e.g., cameras not working, all doors not locked, open campus). District leadership does not always take timely action to correct safety issues when security risks are reported. District leadership rarely solicits information from a variety of stakeholder groups (e.g., teachers, family members, community members,

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Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

students, classified staff) to assist in evaluating the learning environment in each school. District leadership has made significant progress in replacing and upgrading school facilities. The board of education has recently initiated a local facility planning committee for the purpose of establishing priority needs to further improve facilities to ensure equitable learning environments for all students.

- 7.1i Leadership provides a process for the development and the implementation of council policy based on anticipated needs.

District leadership relies on school leaders to ensure that the necessary policies and bylaws for school councils are in place. District leadership does not take an active role in monitoring the implementation or impact of these policies on student achievement and the effectiveness of the by-laws in improving school councils' work. A district liaison has been assigned to each school and may sometimes attend school council meetings, but the primary function of the district liaison is to serve as the link between the district office and individual schools. The school council district coordinator is available to assist school councils upon request. The district coordinator encourages school councils to become members of the Kentucky Association of School Councils for assistance in developing high quality policies and bylaws.

- 7.1j There is evidence that the SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance.

District leadership is occasionally represented at school council meetings and functions. District leadership relies on school principals to provide updates regarding the school councils' work. The school council district coordinator collects school council monthly agenda and meeting minutes. District leadership assists school councils in the development of comprehensive school improvement plans.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

The superintendent should review all district initiatives (e.g., communication, parent and community involvement, personnel and evaluation process, classroom instruction, professional learning communities, virtual learning, teacher quality, data analysis and feedback) and develop a plan to take these initiatives to the next level.

District leadership should take an active role in ensuring all school councils are effective governing bodies charged with the responsibility of improving the learning of each and every student. District leadership should conduct a comprehensive review of all school council policies to ensure that all required policies and bylaws are up-to-date and in compliance with board of education policies and Kentucky Revised Statutes. District liaisons to schools should serve as a school council resource and provide feedback to district leadership regarding services needed, particularly in those schools identified as persistently low performing.

District leadership should collaborate with school leadership to consistently monitor school safety procedures and conditions at each school. District and school leadership should immediately develop and implement a plan of action to resolve and eliminate safety issues in a timely manner.

Resources:

Schmoker, M. (2006). Results Now. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

SISI Toolkit Standard 7. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%207/Standard%207%20By%20Standards.htm

Manley, Robert J. and Hawkins, Richard J. Designing School Systems for All Students: A Toolbox to Fix America's Schools

Kentucky Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council. (June 2007). Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle. <http://www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/45597738-F31B-4333-9BB9-34255F02BC6D/0/PACtheMissingPiecev2.pdf>

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of certified personnel evaluation plan and process, committee meeting minutes and agenda, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, district budget and allocations, district personnel evaluation system and documentation of implementation, district technology plan, eWalk data, individual professional growth plans, organizational charts, protocols for analyzing student work, safe schools data reports, school budget and allocations, school financial reports, school mission, belief and vision statements, school/district safety plan and student handbook

Interviews with assistant principal, assistant superintendent(s), central office staff, classified staff, community members, district leadership, local board of education members, parents, principal, school council members, students and superintendent

Observations of cafeteria, classrooms, common areas, computer lab, hallways and media center

Performance Rating 3

- 8.1b The master class schedule reflects all students have access to all the curriculum.

District leadership collaborated with school leadership at the two county high schools to explore trimester scheduling. District and school leadership discussed how trimester scheduling could improve course offerings for Knox County students and also include an intervention time for students at-risk of failing a course. Representatives from the high schools attended several symposiums in Jefferson County prior to the adoption of the trimester schedule. Training in designing lessons for a 72 minute class period was provided to all high school teachers. District leadership collaborates with school leadership, particularly with middle and high school principals, to determine specific needs related to staffing, programs and master schedules. District leadership communicates the expectation that school leadership provide all students access to core curriculum classes but does not monitor the master schedule to ensure this is continuously occurring. District leadership reviews master schedules and sometimes asks for clarification or offers suggestions for improvement. The board of education approves all master schedules prior to the beginning of each school year. School council staffing allocations meet state requirements for teacher to student ratios. Additional staff members are provided from other funding sources (e.g., Title

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Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating **3**

I, Part A: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, district general funds, Education Jobs Fund Program) to improve the effectiveness of the master schedule by increasing course offerings, reducing class size and providing time for intervention services.

8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff are allocated and organized based upon the learning needs of all students.

The board of education has adopted a school staffing policy (02.4331) that uses projected student enrollment to determine the number of allotted certified positions for each school. School leadership is allocated certified teaching staff based on a teacher to student ratio and is in compliance with the board adopted staffing policy and Kentucky Revised Statutes. District leadership collaborates with school leadership to determine additional staff members needed to develop a sufficient master schedule. District leadership encourages school leadership to assign staff members to positions based on their strengths and the unique learning needs of all students.

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grade configurations that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the improvement plan (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on learning time and not seat time; and integrated units).

District leadership provided training in the professional learning community concept as a means of promoting team planning within schools. District leadership established professional learning communities as a non-negotiable and view these planning sessions as an opportunity for teachers to plan both horizontally and vertically. Virtual professional learning communities have recently been implemented at Lynn Camp High School and Knox Central High School. These virtual professional learning communities focus on core content departments and are facilitated by the superintendent and assistant superintendent. Plans are in place to implement virtual learning across the district. A professional learning community for principals meets monthly.

8.1f The schedule is intentionally aligned with the school's mission and designed

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Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating **3**

to ensure that all staff provide quality instructional time (e.g., flex time, organization based on developmental needs of students, interdisciplinary units, etc.).

District leadership collaborated with the two county high school principals as they explored and approved a five-period trimester schedule. The trimester schedule includes time (skinnies) for students at-risk of failing a course the opportunity to receive intervention services and other students the opportunity to receive enrichment in core subjects. District leadership reviews master schedules of middle and high schools to ensure the design of the schedule promotes maximum use of instructional time. District leadership uses a variety of funding sources (e.g., Title I, Part A: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, district general funds, Education Jobs Fund Program) to improve the effectiveness of master schedules at all schools by increasing course offerings, reducing class size and providing time for intervention services. District leadership promotes the concept that instructional time is important and should be used effectively. District leadership has established non-negotiables to assist school leadership in providing strategies (e.g., professional learning communities, essential questions posted, learning targets posted daily and articulated, curriculum maps in binder on desk, up-to-date lesson plans in binder, formative assessments, interpreting data-Knox Intervention System) for improving instructional time and the quality of instruction. District leadership encourages school leadership to work with school councils to develop policies on protection of instructional time but has not followed up to determine if protection of instructional time policies have been adopted at all schools.

8.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula) to provide equitable and consistent use of fiscal resources.

The board of education has adopted policies and district leadership implements procedures to ensure that school councils receive funding allocations in a timely and equitable manner. The school allocation formula uses attendance projections to distribute resources to the school councils. District leadership makes timely adjustments to school allocations at the end of second month attendance that reflect changes in average daily attendance from the initial allocation of Section 6 funds. District leadership has

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating **3**

implemented accounting practices that require purchase requisitions and purchase orders that initiate and track all purchases at the district level. School budgets are managed through the purchase order and district approved accounting practices. The finance officer provides budget oversight in an effort to ensure that all district and school expenditures are made according to code and program guidelines. The district budget provides adequate funding to schools for staff, instructional supplies and materials according to the school allocation policy. Each school has received staff above and beyond the minimum required according to staff allocation formula. District leadership ensures that all personnel that are responsible for the accounting of school activity funds receive annual training in Kentucky's Schools Activities Guidelines (i.e., Redbook). The June 30, 2010, district financial audit revealed no findings in the district accounting system. District auditors identified findings in the accounting of school activity accounts at some schools. However, these findings were minor and corrective actions were identified by the district's management letter.

8.2c School councils and school boards analyze funding and other resource requests to ensure the requests are tied to the school's plan and identified priority needs.

The board of education's district planning policy (01.111) requires district leadership to review funding sources to ensure goals, objectives and action components of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans are aligned with budget and funding sources. District and school leadership establishes annual improvement goals for student performance and the elimination of achievement gaps within the student population. These goals are identified in the district and schools' improvement plans with strategies along with fiscal and human resources required for implementation. The district improvement plan and the School Improvement Grant identifies specific action components and resources (e.g., literacy and math coaches, achievement gap coordinator, parent liaison) needed to assist the district's persistently low performing schools in eliminating achievement gaps and to meet state and federal identified student performance goals. District and school progress toward meeting annual performance goals are reported at the monthly public board of education meetings.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating **2**

8.1a There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

Multiple opportunities (e.g., district and school leadership meetings, instructional rounds, district liaison school contacts, school level professional learning communities, district leadership professional learning community, Dropout Prevention Task Force) are in place for district leadership to collect information regarding human, fiscal and physical resources. District and school leadership use the district certified evaluation process to make determinations on how human resources are meeting the learning needs of students and the instructional needs of staff members. Corrective action plans are often used to assist certified employees in improving skills. The superintendent personally works with new district certified employees to instill expectations, observe classrooms and offer suggestions for improvement. District liaisons are assigned to all schools to serve as an intermediary between the school and central office. Information is informally collected through conversations or observations on issues that may be impeding student learning. Fiscal resources are monitored by program coordinators and the finance department using MUNIS. District and safety plans procedures have been developed, but physical resources (e.g., cameras working properly, doors unlocked, maintenance needs) are not always maintained in a timely and effective manner. Although schools are allocated district resources (e.g., curriculum coaches, Success for All facilitators, Title I personnel) to improve student achievement, school leadership do not actively seek available community resources or to establish parent, business and community partnerships that can enhance student learning beyond classroom instruction. District leadership frequently collaborate with principals to discuss organizational structures to determine solutions (e.g., trimester scheduling, credit recovery, professional learning communities, Knox Intervention System) for the intent of eliminating barriers to student learning. Information concerning the use of the many available resources the district provides is collected (e.g., conversations, data analysis, walkthroughs, observations, evaluations), but district leadership does not ensure feedback is provided to classroom teachers with followup monitoring to determine if the information is having the intended impact on classroom practices or student learning.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of instructional time to

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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

maximize student learning.

District leadership has established seven non-negotiables (e.g., professional learning communities, essential questions posted, learning targets posted daily and articulated, curriculum maps in binder on desk, up-to-date lesson plans in binder, formative assessments, interpreting data-Knox Intervention System) for teaching staff. Non-negotiables are baseline strategies developed for the purpose of raising the bar in classroom practices to provide all students with a rigorous and challenging education. Additional resources (e.g., instructional rounds) support school leadership in improving organizational structures to make efficient use of instructional time and provide feedback on classroom practices. Information concerning the use of the many available resources the district provides is collected (e.g., conversations, data analysis, walkthroughs, observations, evaluations), but district leadership does not ensure feedback is provided to classroom teachers with followup monitoring to determine if the information is having the intended impact on classroom practices or student learning.

- 8.2b The school/district budget reflects decisions made about discretionary funds and resources are directed by an assessment of need or a required plan, all of which consider appropriate data.

The board of education's improvement planning policy (02.4242) references 702 KAR 3:246 section 7 (a), (b), (c), (d) and outlines how school councils request section seven discretionary funds. However, district leadership has not communicated formal procedures to school councils on how to determine needs of the school and how to submit requests to the board for consideration of discretionary funding. District leadership is responsive to meeting unique needs of schools that require funding beyond the basic allocation. Instructional staff, athletic and academic coaches, curriculum specialists, research-based programs and technology are examples of the district providing supplemental resources to meet specific needs of individual schools.

- 8.2d State and Federal Program Resources are allocated and integrated (Safe Schools, Title 1, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services) to address student needs identified by the school/district.

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Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

State and federal categorical funds are allocated according to program guidelines to support student learning. These program funds provide required resources for special needs and supplemental materials and support staff for all schools. Some categorical and general funds are integrated in an effort to support needs of individual schools and maximize impact on student achievement. These supplemental funds are used to address identified barriers that impede improvement of individual student performance and school progress. Board of education program evaluation policy (08.5) establishes the expectation for evaluating district programs, but district leadership has not developed written procedures for implementation. District leadership informally monitors the use of categorical program funds and occasionally evaluates the effectiveness of these programs to determine impact on student achievement and in eliminating achievement gaps within the student population. There is some collaboration between categorical program directors (e.g., Title I, professional development, Extended School Services, Family Resource/Youth Services Centers), but district leadership does not facilitate the coordination and evaluation to ensure that programs operate efficiently and have the intended impact on eliminating achievement gaps within the student population.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

District leadership should develop a systematic process for collecting and analyzing data (e.g., walkthroughs, instructional rounds) and ensure appropriate, specific and timely feedback is provided to classroom teachers. District leadership should ensure followup monitoring to determine if the information is having the intended impact on classroom practices and student learning.

District leadership should review the board program evaluation policy (08.5) and develop written procedures for evaluating all district programs to determine impact on meeting annual measurable goals and objectives of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans.

Resources:

Kentucky Association of School Councils - <http://www.kasc.net/>

Kentucky School Board Association - www.ksba.org

Lezotte, L. W. Stepping Up: Leading the Charge to Improve Our Schools. Okemos, MI: Effective Schools Products, Ltd.

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D.J. & Pollock, J. E. (2001). Classroom Instruction that works: research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Findings For This Standard Are Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plan, district technology plan, employee handbooks, examples of school to home communications, Implementation and Impact Checks, school mission, belief and vision statements, school Web pages, School Improvement Grant plan, district corrective action plan, district Web site and board of education policies

Interviews with assistant superintendent(s), district leadership, local board of education members, parents, school council members, school leadership, superintendent and teachers

Performance Rating 3

9.2b The school/district uses data for school improvement planning.

District and school leadership use student achievement data from state assessments (e.g., No Child Left Behind report, Interim Performance Report, PLAN, ACT, Explore), school assessments (e.g., T-Pro, Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation, Discovery Education, learning checks) and non-cognitive data (e.g., surveys, Infinite Campus attendance data, graduation rate, lesson plans, program reports) to identify needs and determine goals, priorities and action steps of the comprehensive district improvement plan. The 2009-10 district approved plan has been revised to develop the 2010-11 plan. This 2010-11 improvement plan will be submitted to the Knox County Board of Education for approval at the February 2011 meeting.

9.3b The school/district analyzes their students' unique learning needs.

District leadership conducted a data analysis to identify underachieving student populations (e.g., free/reduced lunch students in reading, students with disabilities in reading) whose academic needs are not being met. District leadership also identified graduation rate as an area of need. All schools did not receive a "Yes" in both reading and mathematics on the No Child Left Behind report. District leadership uses multiple sources of cognitive and non-cognitive data for developing priorities, setting goals and creating action steps in the comprehensive district improvement plan. Some strategies (e.g., monitoring pre-planning of regular and special education teachers, professional development for differentiation and assistive technology,

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating **3**

implement and refine Knox Intervention System, credit recovery, night school and Supplemental Education Services, advisor/advisee) in the plan focus on underachieving student populations. District leadership recently appointed a task force that includes representatives from a variety of district and community stakeholder groups. This task force is charged with the responsibility of collecting and analyzing data (e.g., attendance, drop-out, graduation rate, surveys) for the purpose of developing a strategic plan for improving attendance, graduation rate and decreasing student drop-outs.

9.4b The school/district goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are defined.

Board policy for school improvement planning (02.442) details the actions necessary for the completion of comprehensive school improvement plans. Goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan are written in clear and concise terms, but the focus is on meeting annual yearly progress on No Child Left Behind reports. District leadership through consultation with school leadership develops clear, concise and measurable goals for schools with Tier III status. District liaisons are assigned to all schools but primarily focus on the three persistently low-achieving schools. District level administrators attend some school level leadership meetings and offer assistance in monitoring progress toward school goals and determining next steps to address progress and concerns. School leadership submits their comprehensive school improvement plans for peer review by district administrators. This review is accomplished through double-blind scoring with results returned to school councils for revisions.

9.5a The action steps for school improvement are aligned with the school improvement goals and objectives.

The action components of the comprehensive district improvement plan have an intentional focus on closing achievement gaps among low-performing students. Some activities (e.g., credit recovery, night school, Supplemental Education Services, advisor/advisee, Knox Intervention System) specifically target improving graduation rate. Other activities (e.g., monitoring pre-planning of regular and special education teachers, professional development for differentiation and assistive technology) target improving achievement for students with disabilities. Principals share needs of their

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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

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Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating **3**

schools and these needs are compiled for use in developing activities of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Many activities (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, Everyday Math, Connected Math, Carnegie Math, Success for ALL, Reading Revisited, Read 180, Systems 44, Thoughtful Education) are research based. District leadership is making a concerted effort in developing plans to improve non-cognitive gaps (e.g., attendance, graduation rate, drop out rate) through the formation of a task force.

9.6a The plan is implemented as developed.

District leadership provides personnel (e.g., district liaison, curriculum coaches, Success for ALL coaches, literacy coaches), funding and informal support in the implementation of comprehensive school improvement plans. School leadership submits comprehensive school improvement plans to district leadership for peer review. Feedback is provided through double blind scoring by district administrators. Most district staff members are aware of the goals, objectives and priorities identified in the comprehensive district improvement plan.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

- 9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission and goals that engage the school community as a community of learners.

The mission statement, "Opening Minds to a World of Possibilities", evolved in the fall of 2009 from conversations among district directors and principals. The superintendent shares a part B to this mission that every child be ensured an opportunity to be proficient. A formal process was not used to include representatives from all stakeholder groups (e.g., teachers, classified staff, community members, family members, students) in the development of this district mission statement. The mission is shared through district and school Web sites and printed publications. District goals were determined as a part of the comprehensive district improvement plan development, and activities in the plan were selected to support the achievement of these goals. A written vision statement has not yet been developed. Some beliefs are stated in the Philosophy of the Knox County Schools located in the Policies and Procedures Manual, but these statements are not commonly known by staff and community members.

- 9.2a There is evidence the school/district planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data.

District and school leadership collects achievement data from state assessments (e.g., No Child Left Behind report, Interim Performance Report, PLAN, ACT, Explore), school assessments (e.g., T-Pro, Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation, Discovery Education, learning checks), non-cognitive data (e.g., surveys, Infinite Campus attendance data, graduation rate, lesson plans, program reports) and comprehensive district and school improvement plans to develop the goals, priorities and action steps of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Data from student work samples are rarely used in the development of the comprehensive district improvement plan.

- 9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research and current local, state and national expectations for student learning and are viewed by the planning team.

The 2009-10 comprehensive district improvement plan includes research-

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Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

based activities (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, Everyday Math, Connected Math, Carnegie Math, Success for All, Reading Revisited, Read 180, Systems 44, Thoughtful Education). District and state expectations are used in developing activities (e.g., instruct students from an aligned curriculum, monitor instruction to assess congruency with aligned curriculum) and goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan. District leadership is working with Eastern Kentucky University to provide Knox County high schools the opportunity to participate in the College Readiness Transition program. College Readiness Standards are embedded in each unit of study in all content areas, and district learning checks assess these standards. District leadership does not ensure board of education district and school improvement planning policies (01.111, 02.442) and planning administrative procedures (01.111AP.2, 02.442AP.21) are followed in the development of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans.

9.3c The desired results for student learning are defined.

District leadership has clearly stated, in measurable terms, the desired results for student learning. District leadership has not established specific periodic benchmarks in the comprehensive district improvement plan. Although specific benchmarks are not listed in the comprehensive district improvement plan, Discovery Education assessments and district common learning checks are regularly reviewed for the purpose of monitoring continuous student progress in all schools.

9.4a Perceived strengths and limitations of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are identified using the collected data.

District leadership requires school leadership to submit comprehensive school improvement plans annually. The Schoolwide Program Component Report attached to comprehensive school improvement plans is used to identify the use of Title 1 Part A: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, professional development planning and Title 1 school and districtwide resources. District and school leadership collaborate to examine data (e.g., Interim Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report, district common learning checks, walkthrough findings) to determine strengths and limitations of instructional and organizational effectiveness within the district. Classroom data are not always used when examining instructional issues. There is not

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

an intentional effort to solicit input from parent and other stakeholder groups in the evaluation and perception of existing strengths and limitations in the instructional and organizational effectiveness of the district.

- 9.5b The plan identifies the resources, timelines, and persons responsible for carrying out each activity.

The comprehensive district improvement plan contains timelines for the implementation of all components and is designed to provide timely impact on student performance. Some funding sources (e.g., professional development, Title 1 Part A: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, school improvement, Education Jobs Fund Program) are integrated to support the goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Each component in the plan identifies a specific component manager who is to collect evidence for completing implementation and impact checks, but these checks are not occurring. A responsible person is designated and charged with supporting and monitoring each activity. A formal procedure has not been determined to measure the impact that activities in the comprehensive district improvement plan have on classroom practices and student achievement.

- 9.5c The means for evaluating the effectiveness of the improvement plan are established.

A systematic process has not been implemented for evaluating the impact of the activities of the comprehensive district improvement plan on student achievement. Revisions to the 2009-10 plan were identified during weekly directors' meetings to address districtwide needs. School board policy on accountability (02.44) requires each school council or school planning committee to report progress on achieving their goals annually, but these reports have not occurred this school year. District leadership reports school assessment data (e.g., district common learning checks, Discovery Education) and non-cognitive data (e.g., attendance) at each board of education meeting.

- 9.5d The improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results for student learning and analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

The comprehensive district improvement plan is fundamentally aligned with the district's mission, "Opening Minds to a World of Possibilities", for student achievement. Beliefs for student learning are not referenced in the district improvement plan. Activities are designed to address improving instruction through research-based strategies. Emphasis is placed on teacher preparedness through professional learning community meetings. These meetings are scheduled on a four-week rotation of planned activities (i.e., unpacking standards, formative assessments, instruction, learning check data).

9.6b The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning set by the plan.

District leadership has developed a process for collecting data (e.g., Discovery Education, district common learning checks, attendance) from all schools at regular intervals. These data are not usually evaluated to formally determine the implementation and impact that the comprehensive district improvement plan is having on attaining the goals and objectives for district improvement. School specific data (e.g., Discovery Education, formative assessments, T-Pro, ACT, PLAN, Explore) are collected and examined by school leadership and staff to determine implementation and impact of comprehensive school improvement plan strategies and activities on student achievement. Data are collected and reviewed throughout the year, but district and school leadership do not analyze these data to revise comprehensive district and school improvement plans based on changing needs of student achievement.

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact on classroom practice and student performance specified in the plan.

District leadership supports administration of common learning checks and Discovery Education assessments throughout the year, but these results are not consistently used to determine the degree or effectiveness of implementation of the comprehensive district improvement plan or impact on student learning. District and school leadership have been trained in instructional rounds and are beginning to implement these in schools. District leadership has not developed a systematic method of organizing walkthrough or instructional rounds data to help determine the impact the comprehensive

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

district improvement plan has on classroom practices.

9.6d There is evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement.

District leadership does not have a systematic process to measure continuous progress in achieving the goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan or to evaluate the impact of instructional practices on student achievement. District leadership conducts an annual review of the Kentucky Interim Performance, No Child Left Behind and ACT reports to measure progress in achieving the goals for school improvement. Review and annual modifications are made to the comprehensive district improvement plan based on this data. Other student performance data is available during the school year, but is not used to modify the comprehensive district improvement plan at regular intervals.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

District leadership should commit and adhere to the planning process as defined by board policy. The comprehensive district improvement plan should be developed with input from a broad spectrum of the school community and external stakeholders. The plan should serve as the guide for district and school leadership work toward accomplishing the district's mission and goals.

District and school leadership should assist planning committees in establishing quarterly benchmarks tied closely to priority needs. These benchmarks should be clearly communicated to staff, students and community, and progress toward meeting these benchmarks should be reported to the board of education at public monthly meetings. The success or failure of improvement strategies to meet benchmarks should drive celebrations and reviews and revisions of the plan throughout the school year.

Resources:

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence - www.prichardcommittee.org

Prioritizing Changes. SISI Toolkit Standard 9. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601).
http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%209/Documents/Prioritizing%20Changes.doc

Sample I & I Monitoring Checklist, SISI Toolkit, Standard 9. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601).
http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%209/Documents/Sample%20I%20&%20I%20Monitoring%20Checklist.doc

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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Summary of Next Steps:

District leadership should create a common walkthrough instrument to be used on a frequent and ongoing basis that will allow for quantifiable data that can be used to measure progress and set SMART goals. This should also contain a component for providing specific and meaningful feedback to teachers. The instrument should include but not be limited to a way to collect data and provide feedback on instructional strategies, rigor in instruction, student use of technology, non-negotiables, congruency of targets to standards and students' ability to communicate learning targets.

District leadership should develop a common district rubric to provide timely and specific feedback on assessments to ensure they are rigorous, congruent to standards, have specific rubrics and include Student Performance Level Descriptors. District leadership should develop a system for regular monitoring of all assessments to provide timely feedback.

District leadership should develop a plan for regular discussion to occur between key transition points (i.e., preschool to elementary, elementary to middle, middle to high) throughout the school year in order to identify gaps in the curriculum and develop strategies to address these gaps.

District leadership should develop, communicate and market the belief that all Knox County students can and will learn at high levels. District leadership should ensure that all stakeholders recognize and accept their role in the success and failure of each and every student. District leadership should ensure all staff, students, parents and other stakeholder groups understand and recognize what proficient performance looks like and promote proficiency for all students.

District leadership should ensure all schools create and implement a detailed plan promoting parent involvement to improve student achievement. District leadership should actively and intentionally involve parents in decision-making at the school and district level. District leadership should provide all stakeholders learning opportunities in multiple areas (e.g., Kentucky standards and expectations, decision-making process, academic achievement planning, helping children succeed).

District leadership should develop a new professional growth plan format that includes a detailed reflection of personal growth needs in addition to school needs. District leadership should create a timeline that allows for review of growth plans throughout the year to assess progress toward implementation and personal growth.

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

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In Conclusion:

The members of the Knox County District Leadership Assessment Team are grateful to the district leadership, staff, students, families and community for the cooperation and hospitality extended to us during the assessment process.

The Leadership Assessment Team has examined extensive evidence and arrived at the following conclusions:

District Authority:

District leadership has the capacity and capability to implement the district improvement plan for the 2011-12 school year given the following conditions: (1) District leadership will revise the corrective action plan based on the results of the leadership assessment report and will submit the plan to KDE for approval; (2) District leadership will implement the KDE approved corrective action plan with the assistance of a district coach provided by KDE; (3) District leadership will reserve 0.9% of the district Title I, Part A allocation for conducting improvement activities related to the district corrective action plan and (4) District leadership will monitor the progress of meeting annual goals.

Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education:

_____ Date: _____

Pursuant to School Improvement Grant Section 1003 (a) Guidance from the US Department of Education

The district must submit an application to receive 1003 (a) funds.

The application will outline the district's corrective action plan and annual goals for improving student achievement in the schools in the district and must be approved by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE).

The annual goals will be based on student achievement on the state assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics.

The district must monitor the goals with a valid, reliable, fair and strong predictive assessment tool that correlates with KDE's summative measures of student achievement.

I have received the leadership assessment report for Knox County School District. I understand the district must meet the requirements listed above.

Superintendent, Knox County Schools

_____ Date: _____

District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

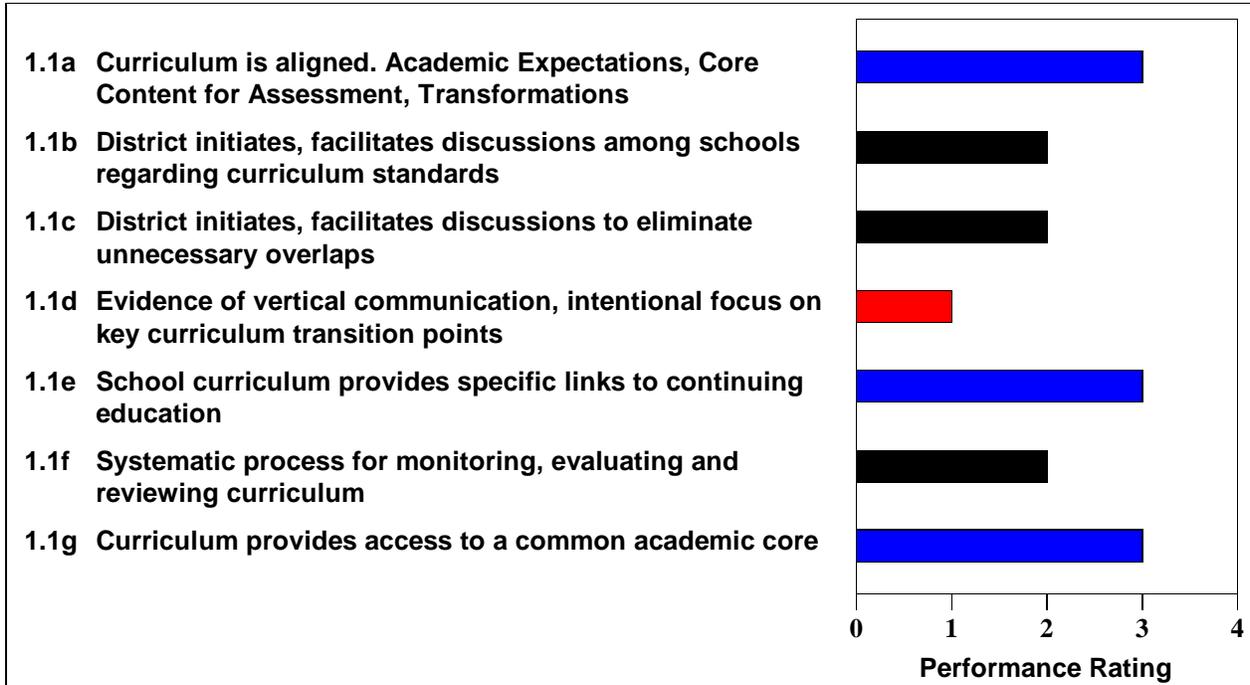
Knox County

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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

1.1 Curriculum

Academic Performance



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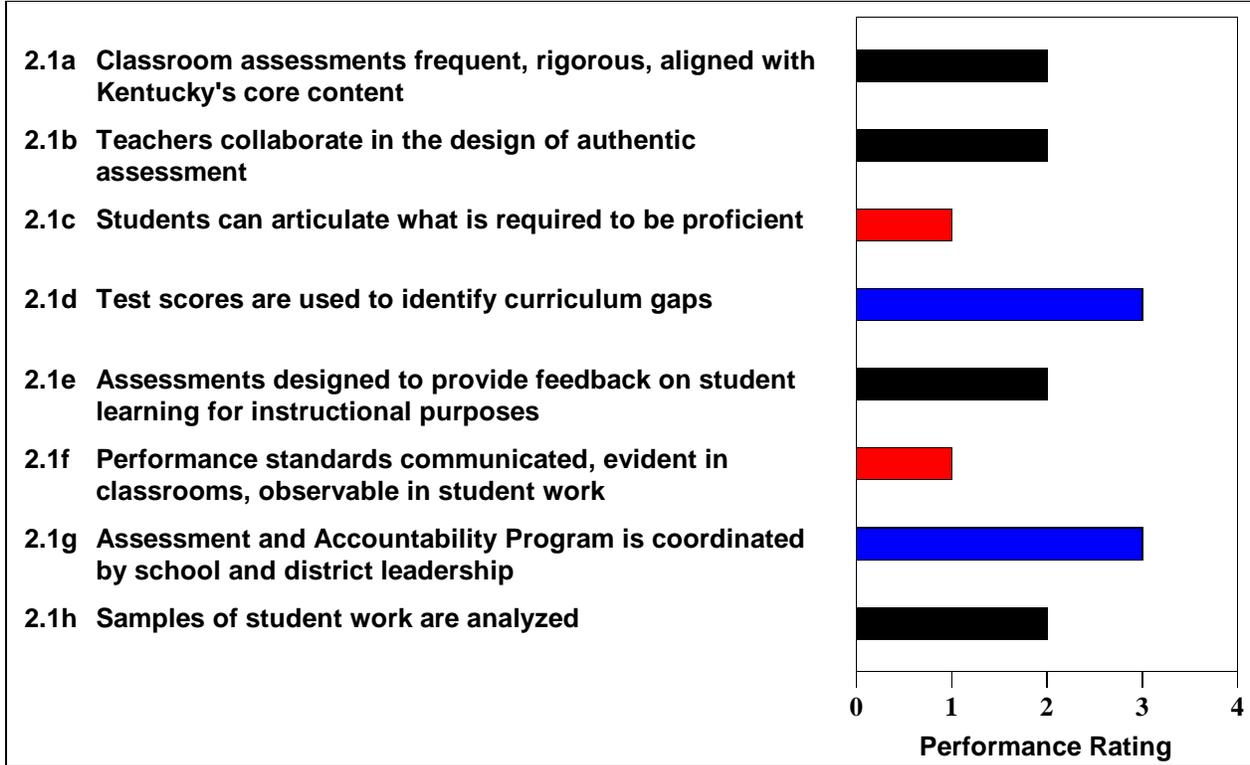
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2.1 Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

Academic Performance



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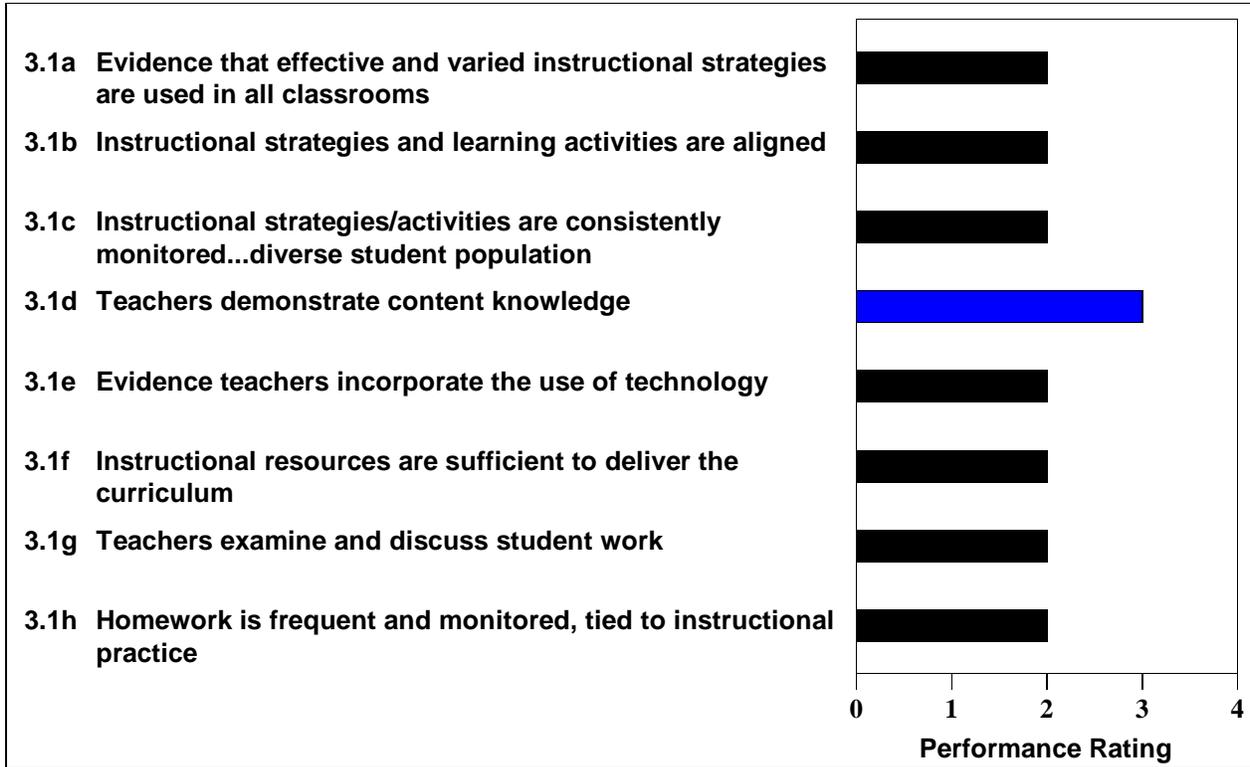
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2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

3.1 Instruction

Academic Performance



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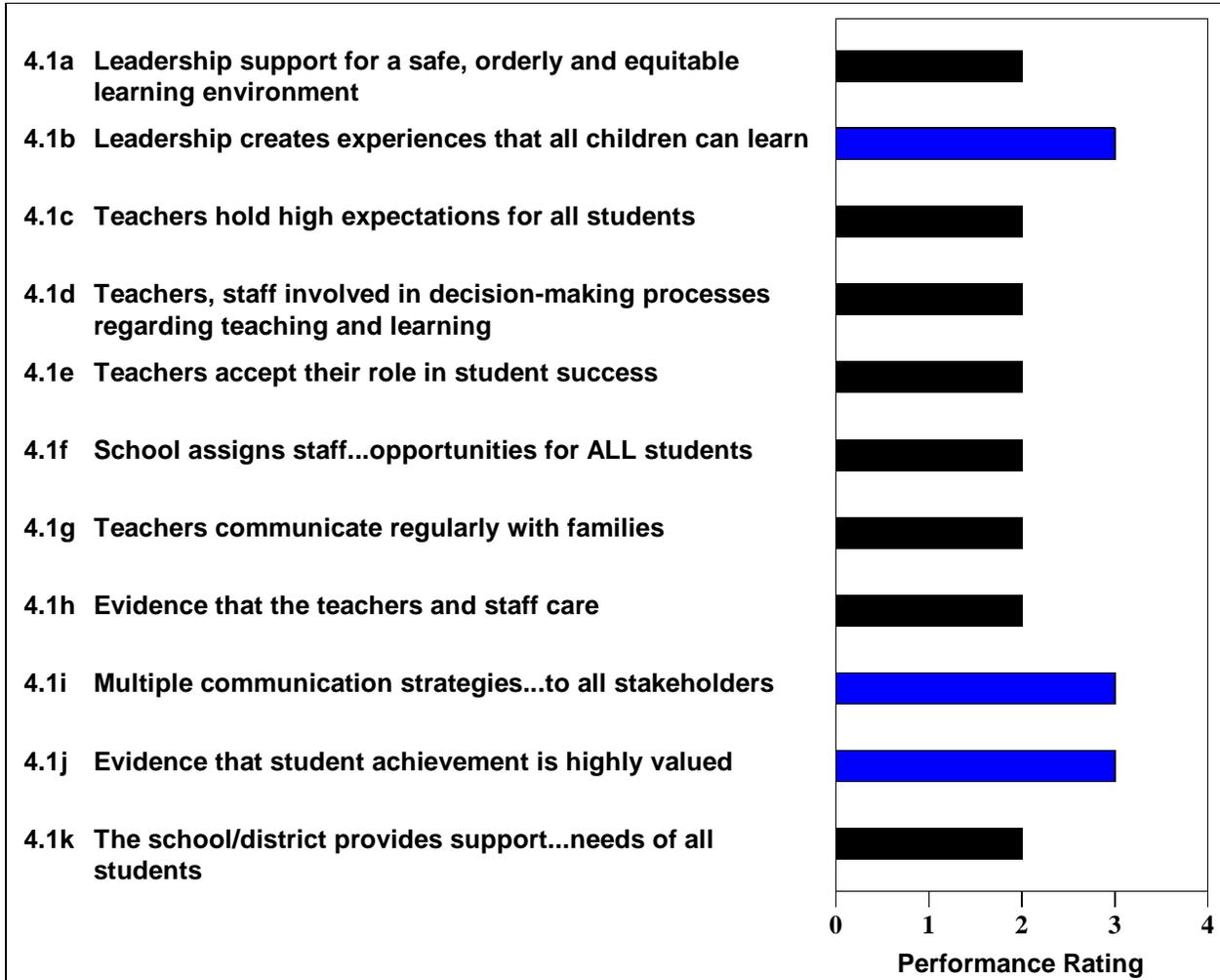
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4.1 School Culture

Learning Environment



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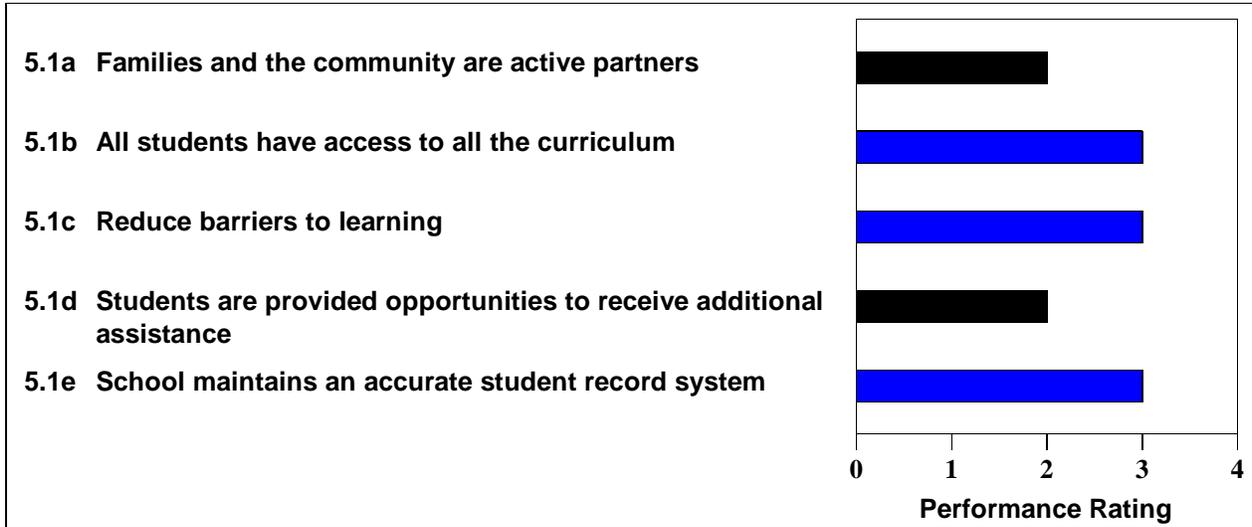
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5.1 Student, Family and Community Support

Learning Environment



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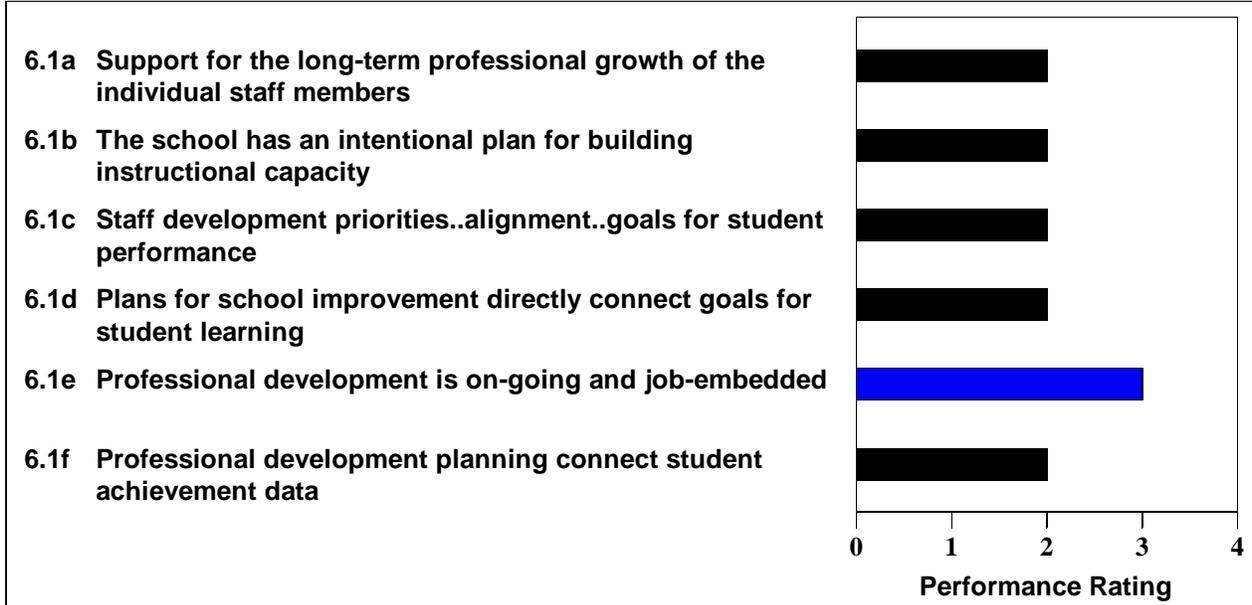
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6.1 Professional Development

Learning Environment



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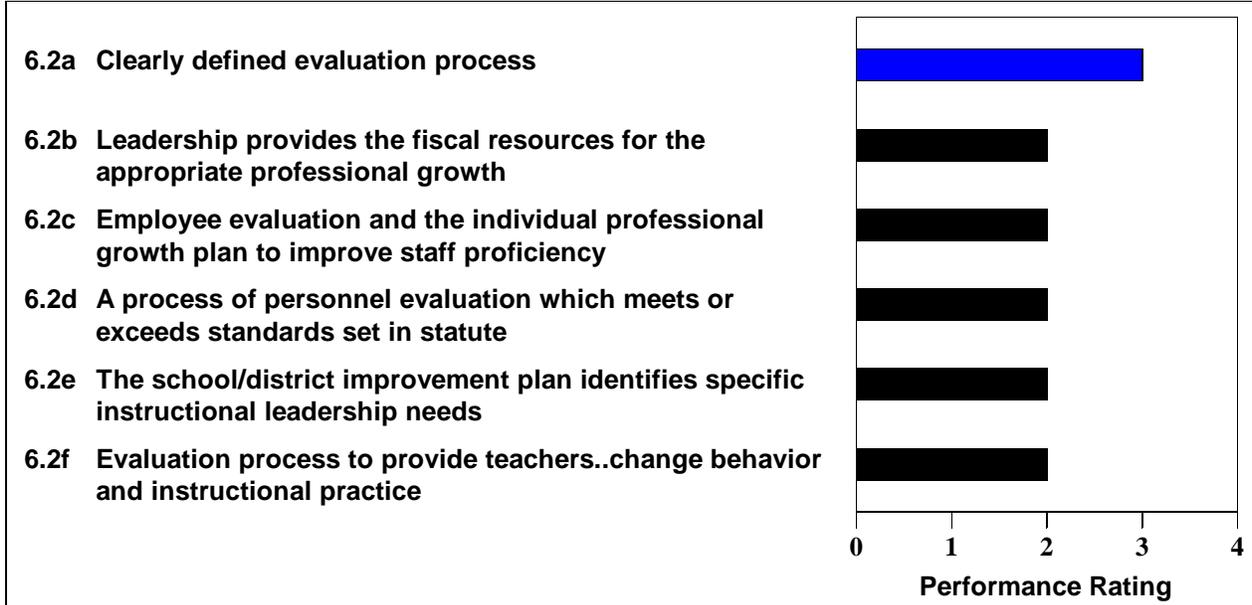
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6.2 Professional Growth and Evaluation

Learning Environment



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

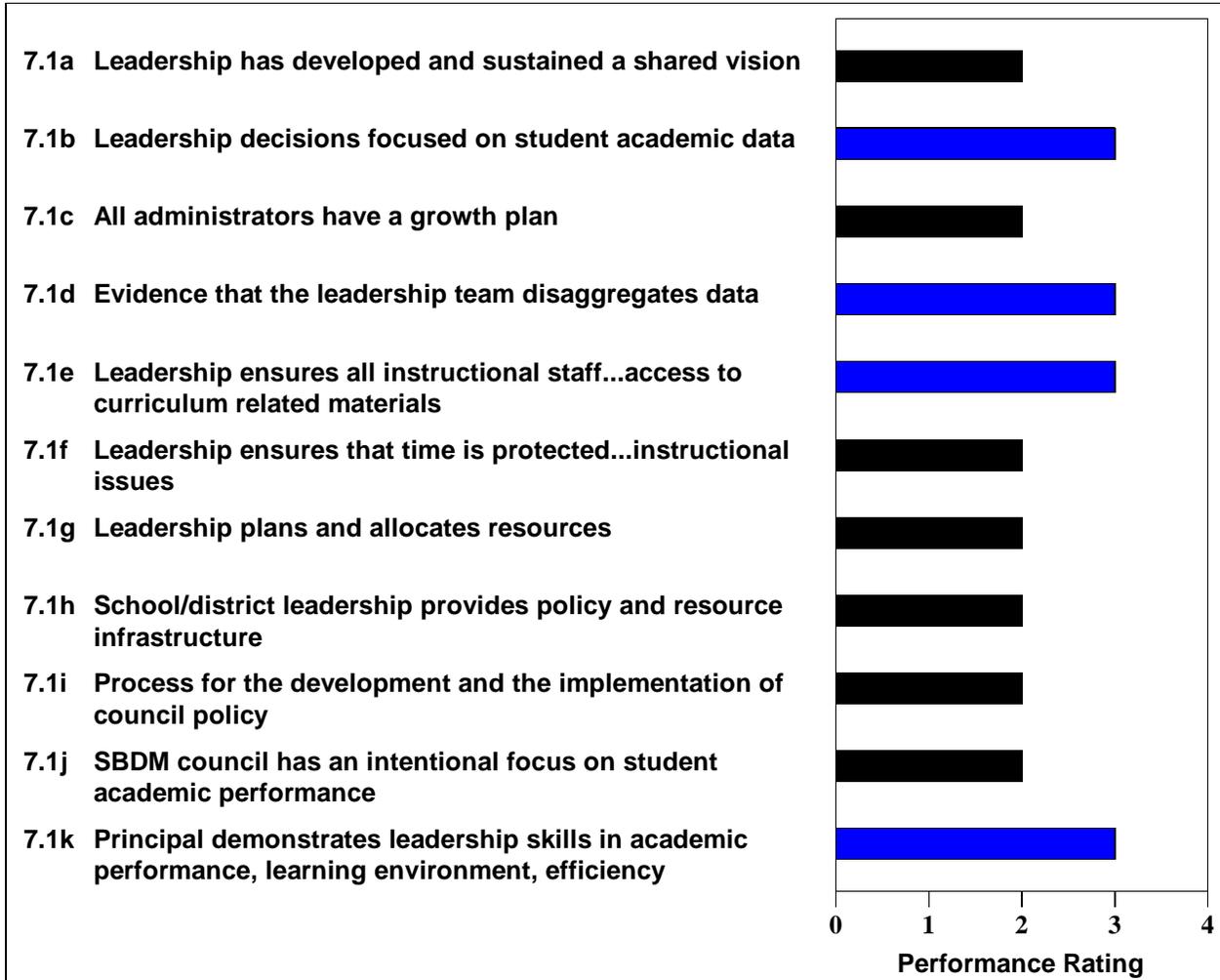
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7.1 Leadership

Efficiency



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

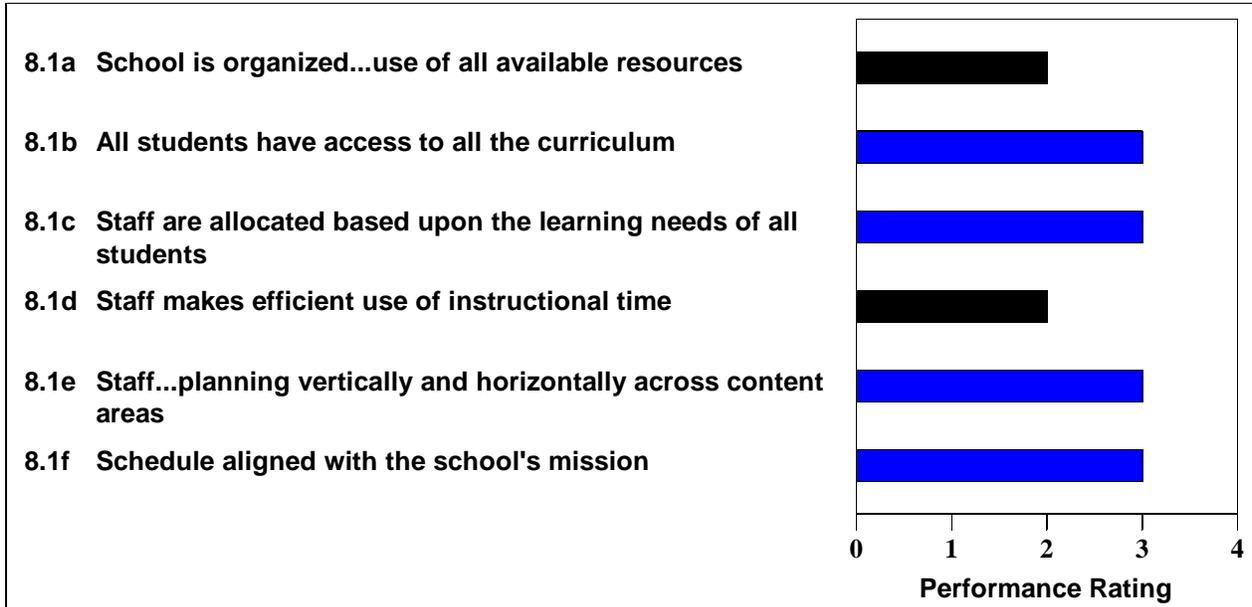
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8.1 Organization of the School

Efficiency



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

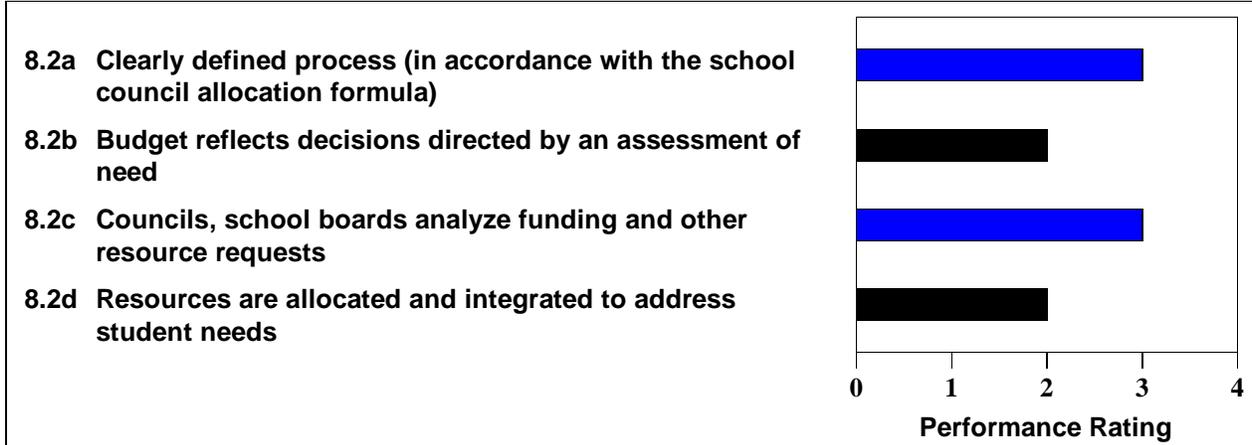
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8.2 Resource Allocation and Integration

Efficiency



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9.1 Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs

Efficiency

9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

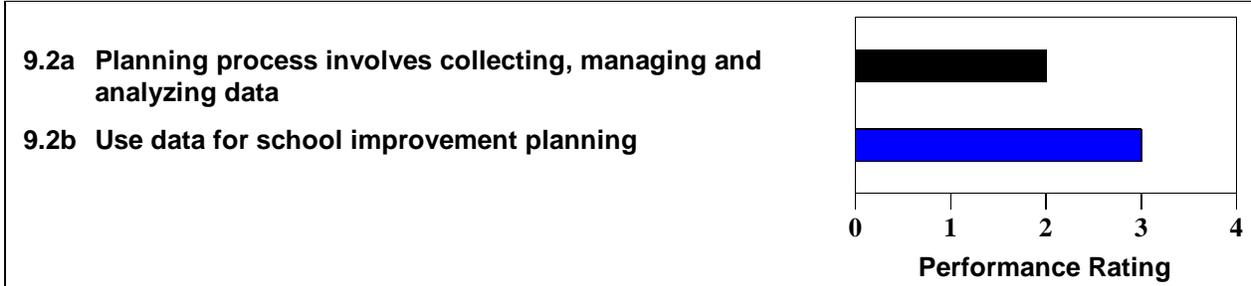
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9.2 Development of the Profile

Efficiency



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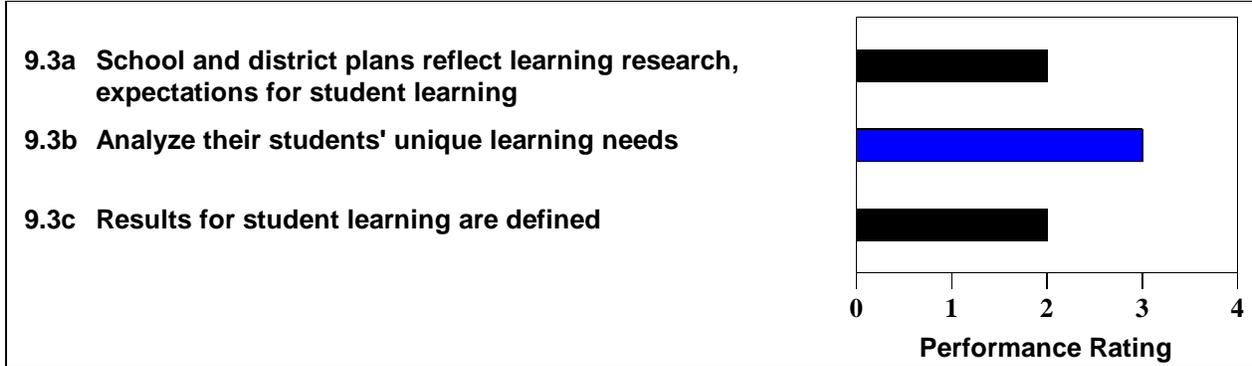
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9.3 Defining Desired Results for Student Learning

Efficiency



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

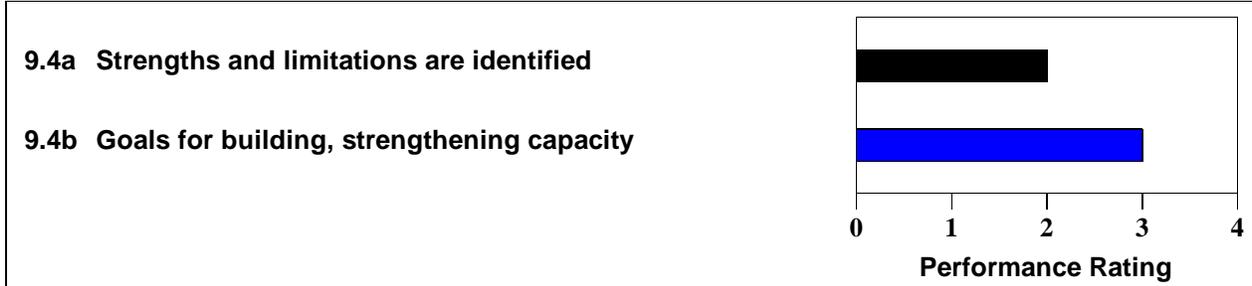
Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

9.4 Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

Efficiency



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

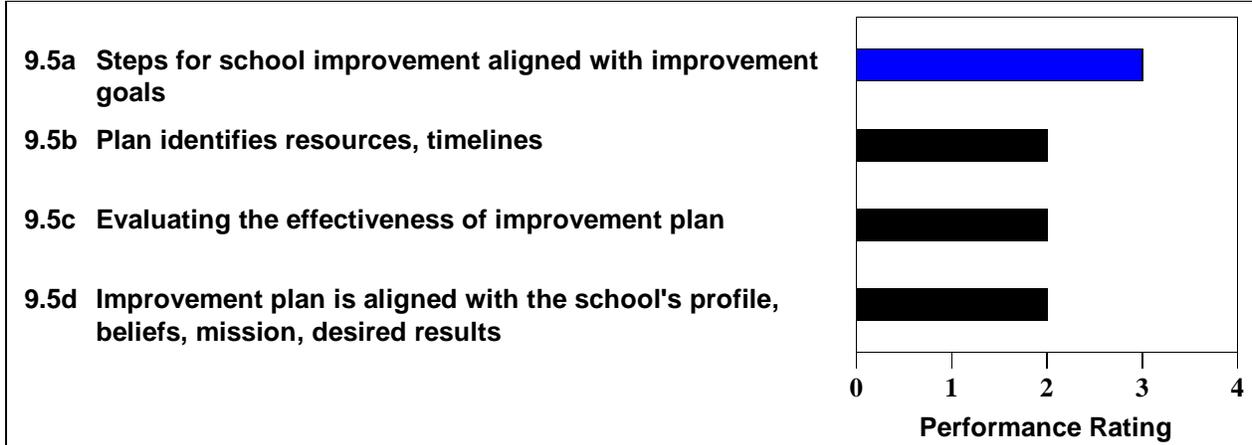
Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

9.5 Development of the Improvement Plan

Efficiency



District Leadership Assessment Summary Report

Knox County

School District

2/6/2011 - 2/11/2011

9.6 Implementation and Documentation

Efficiency

