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Commissioner of Education and Chief Learner

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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July 12, 2022

Demetrus Liggins, Superintendent
Fayette County Public Schools
450 Park Place
Lexington, KY 40511

Dear Superintendent Liggins:

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

During the 2021-22 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in the Fayette County School District. During this process, KDE program staff, utilizing program-specific monitoring tools, conducted on-site visits for the following programs:

- Title I, Part A
- Title II, Part A
- Title III, Part A
- Title IV, Part A
- Preschool
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Alternative Education Programs
- Gifted and Talented
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

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

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These programs and the others engaged in consolidated monitoring can work together to achieve more collaboratively than any of them could alone.

This report is the result of what can be best described as a “snapshot” of the district taken during our visit. It begins with identifying “effective practices.” These are individual program practices that the team felt were effective, and in some cases innovative. We strongly suggest that the practices identified be submitted to the KDE Best Practices [website](#).

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

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Foster". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

Kelly Foster, Ed.D.

Associate Commissioner

Office of Continuous Improvement and Support

Kentucky Department of Education

KF/TR/ES/vb

Attachment: Consolidated Monitoring Report for Fayette County Public Schools

2021-2022 Statewide Consolidated Monitoring Report

District:	Fayette County
Date(s) of Visit:	April 26-28, 2022
Team Leads:	
<i>Title I, Part A – Erin Sudduth, Erica Tipton</i>	<i>Career and Technical Education – Karla Tipton</i>
<i>Title II, Part A – Kris Jarboe</i>	<i>Gifted and Talented (GT) – Kathie Anderson</i>
<i>Title III/English Learners (EL) – Neil Watts</i>	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – April Pieper, Erma White</i>
<i>Title IV, Part A – Lalah Brewer</i>	<i>Preschool – Andrea Bartholomew</i>
<i>Alternative Education – April Stanley</i>	

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 1

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A		Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A		Career and Technical Education	
	Title III/English Learners (EL)	X	Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	X
			Preschool	
<p><u>Parent and Family Engagement</u></p> <p>The Title III monitoring team commends the district for implementing a hotline for families with limited English proficiency. The hotline provides instant access to interpreters in many languages. This support is particularly important to have in place due to the number of languages represented within the community. Fayette County remains committed to ensuring that all families have access to information in an equitable manner.</p> <p>The district places value and importance on parent and guardian involvement in the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meetings and decision making. Consistent opportunities are provided for parent/guardian involvement and arrangements are made to accommodate families in the process.</p>				

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 2

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A		Career and Technical Education	
	Title III/English Learners (EL)	X	Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	X

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			Preschool
<p><u>Student Services and Plans</u></p> <p>The Title I literacy specialists provide robust programming and support, particularly in the area of reading recovery and intervention strategies. Services provided by specialists are not only critical supports for all students, but also for teachers across the district.</p> <p>The district has a process in place to ensure timely identification of students in need of English language services. The district develops Program Service Plans for EL students to ensure appropriate services are delivered and clearly communicates plans with families which results in very few families opting out of services.</p> <p>IDEA student plans are consistently developed and implemented based on the Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KARs). The district's IDEA staff exhibit strength in their knowledge and implementation of compliance and have strong internal controls and processes in place. Principals are engaged in the process of developing student plans when necessary, as well. The transition strategy in place when IDEA leadership changes ensures continuity of care for students.</p>			

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 3

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A		Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A		Career and Technical Education	
	Title III/English Learners (EL)	X	Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	
			Preschool	
<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>The district's organization of Title III financial documents allows the district to ensure expenditures align with the intent and purpose of the grant. Necessary evidence was made easily accessible and purchases and uses of funds were allowable and aligned to needs.</p>				

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 4

	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A		Career and Technical Education	

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Programs Addressed	Title III/English Learners (EL)	X	Gifted and Talented	X
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	
			Preschool	
<u>Equity Initiatives</u>				
<p>The refugee ambassador assignments within schools actively engage parents and community members in the education process and ensure that cultures are respected while barriers to learning and engagement are broken down, thereby creating environments of inclusion.</p> <p>The district has worked with schools in the development of multicultural libraries that have books representing cultures of EL and immigrant students specific to each school.</p> <p>The district developed procedures for identifying students, especially students from underserved populations, for gifted and talented (GT) services. Student identification evidence is reviewed by committees at the school and district level to ensure the identification process is equitable for all students.</p>				

Opportunity for Improvement No. 1

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A	X	Career and Technical Education	X
	Title III/English Learners (EL)		Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	
			Preschool	
<u>Community</u>				
<p>The Title I, Part A monitoring team noted that stakeholder engagement currently does not take place with all required stakeholders in the development of the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP). The district does not offer stakeholders the opportunity to provide input in the design of the services provided by Title II, Part A. Information shared in interviews did not align with what was reported in the approved Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A applications regarding stakeholder engagement activities.</p> <p>Although districtwide advisory committee meetings for Career and Technical Education (CTE) were held, there was no evidence that the school programs participated in the meetings or that the information discussed was made available to the school programs.</p>				
Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)				

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Title I, Part A identified community partnerships as a strength for schools within the district, as schools have formed partnerships with community organizations such as churches, the Gray Line, the University of Kentucky’s Real Men Read, local garden clubs and the Rotary Club of Lexington After Hours, to address specific needs for students. The preschool program engages in regular collaboration with community organizations, businesses and stakeholders as they work to improve outcomes for young children.

The district should develop practices that ensure parent, student, teacher and community voice are recognized when developing plans. Title I and Title II program directors should partner with other program directors who have already established community relationships specific to student and family needs. Encouraging principals to be active participants in providing input as valued stakeholders for the district will allow them to make connections between district plans and school programs. It is recommended that the district provide opportunities for principals and the wider community such as families, students and local businesses/industry to take part in activities to develop the CDIP.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 2

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A	X	Career and Technical Education	
	Title III/English Learners (EL)		Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A	X	IDEA	
			Preschool	

Policies and Procedures

The district does have internal procedures for the Title I, Part A program which are understood by staff already working with the program. However, many procedures remain unwritten, creating risk for the district. Documenting procedures, such as how the district monitors spending to ensure that no more than 15% of grant funds are carried over from year to year or the process for collecting time and effort documentation, ensures that effective processes created by the district remain operational in the event of staffing changes.

The district does not annually evaluate the effectiveness of its Title II, Part A program to address current student and educator learning needs. Similarly, the district does not evaluate the effectiveness of the activities supported with Title IV, Part A funds for the district or for the private/non-public schools.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)

Developing written procedures is an internal control necessary for ensuring that even through

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leadership changes, the district maintains compliance with federal requirements and programming can continue uninterrupted. Policies and procedures, to include procedures for evaluation, should be developed across all federal programs. Written policies and procedures should also be viewed as an opportunity to more clearly define roles and responsibilities within programs ensuring an equitable distribution of duties. The district should consider emulating some of the established practices of individual programs such as the detailed Lau Plan created by the Title III program and the meticulous communication regarding policy and procedural updates provided by the preschool program.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 3

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A		Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A	X	Career and Technical Education	X
	Title III/English Learners (EL)		Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A		IDEA	
			Preschool	

Professional Development

Professional learning activities funded by Title II, Part A, particularly conference attendance, were not aligned with identified needs. Staff interviews revealed that most principals were unaware of the purpose and availability of Title II, Part A funds and did not know how the program was organized in terms of professional learning support.

CTE interviews revealed that teachers in several schools reported they were not given the opportunity to attend CTE sponsored professional development.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)

The district developed a New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) to ensure that all new teachers in the district are supported through ongoing professional learning and mentoring. New teachers participate in the program for three years which has allowed the district to develop a more comprehensive and detailed system of support. The program is an effective tool for helping to ensure educator equity. The district also provides many opportunities to help ensure school staff are equipped with skills specific to providing effective instruction to EL students.

All professional learning opportunities across the district should be intentional, evidence based and related to staff responsibilities and needs. Stakeholder input is critical in determining needs and staff should be informed of the process through timely, ongoing, two-way consultation. A process should be in place to ensure conference-related registration fees and travel expenses are

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reasonable, necessary and directly related to identified professional learning needs. It is recommended that the district take advantage of local trainings that provide opportunities to reach a larger number of staff rather than sending a select few staff members to trainings out of state. Increasing the number of staff attending trainings will help ensure all teachers within the district receive equitable opportunities for professional learning. The district should develop a comprehensive needs assessment process and should take advantage of all planning activities to clearly identify the learning needs of teachers and staff.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 4

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A	X	Career and Technical Education	
	Title III/English Learners (EL)		Gifted and Talented	
	Title IV, Part A	X	IDEA	
			Preschool	

Leadership

The Title I-A, Title II-A and Title IV-A monitoring teams all noted that better collaboration among district leadership is needed to effectively coordinate funds and programs to meet student needs. In addition, the Title IV monitoring team noted the district has undergone leadership turnover including the Title IV, Part A coordinator position. Funding for Title IV-A is being divided at the district level but there is no clear vision for how to best utilize funds to support student success and academic achievement.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)

The Title II, Part A monitoring team commends the Title II, Part A-funded leadership coaches that have supported several principals in the district. Services provided by the leadership coaches were impactful, particularly during the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff interviewed spoke highly of this support and KDE would strongly recommend not only its continuation, but expansion as well, in order to provide opportunities for all principals to take advantage of this support.

The district should develop a plan to formalize regular meetings of all district program leadership, which is an important activity toward coordinating all available funds and making purposeful decisions on effective uses of funds. Implementing consistent leadership meetings and recording progress through agendas and meeting minutes will help prevent the district from working in silos and ensure compliance with federal requirements. District leadership should remember the

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importance of collaborating with leadership at all private schools served as well. An organizational chart to share with schools and district leaders could help to more clearly define roles and responsibilities.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 5

Programs Addressed	Title I, Part A	X	Alternative Education	
	Title II, Part A	X	Career and Technical Education	X
	Title III/English Learners (EL)		Gifted and Talented	X
	Title IV, Part A	X	IDEA	
			Preschool	

Communication

The district does not regularly consult with the private/non-public schools outside of the initial consultation meeting regarding services provided under Title I-A, Title II-A and Title IV-A. An intentional and ongoing plan of communication between the district and non-public schools eligible for and receiving equitable services is needed to establish and support services in those schools.

The purpose of the Title II, Part A program is not effectively communicated with school staff. Schools are not being consistently consulted during professional learning plan development and not all school staff are aware of the appropriate district staff to support them during this process.

There was inconsistent communication to the schools from central office regarding the CTE and GT programs. For example, the academy schools reported receiving CTE-related communication while the other high schools did not. Interviews indicated that some parents of GT students were unsure if they had received a Gifted Student Service Plan (GSSP) or a report of progress as it relates to the GSSP. Additionally, some parents were unsure if students were receiving GT services.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s)

Communication should provide consistent, proactive guidance so that public and non-public schools can tailor implementation of programs to their specific needs and avoid gaps in services. The district may consider appointing one person in a leadership position to focus on equitable services consultation to ensure timely, effective and ongoing support and eliminate disjointed services. The district should initiate frequent check-ins and establish a calendar of regular meetings to provide support to non-public schools and ensure that services are occurring, streamlined and continuous. Communication should include a review of the consultation plan and an evaluation of

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the effectiveness of services.

The Title II, Part A coordinator should regularly consult with schools in the development of their professional learning plans. A process should be in place to ensure all teachers, principals and other school leaders are aware of the purpose of Title II, Part A funds and are aware of who to contact regarding Title II, Part A questions and/or needs. The district should develop a process to ensure information about the CTE program is communicated to all applicable schools. It is recommended that the district follow up with parents regarding notification of the GSSP and progress reports which will ensure parents are receiving them as well as provide an opportunity for parents to voice concerns about services. Effective procedures for communicating with parents regarding the preschool and IDEA programs could be modified to focus on communicating program information between district and school staff.

Final Overview

The Fayette County school district is committed to special programming and equity initiatives that serve students and families, and particularly those in vulnerable populations. Innovative ideas abound and the district is fortunate to have many passionate leaders who explore creative ways to solve problems and meet student and family needs. School principals are supported by leadership coaches and the district would benefit greatly from extending the services of these to include additional schools.

Fayette County has the tools, staff and funding in place to provide excellent services, but the key to further success is organization, collaboration and communication. The preschool and IDEA programs have strong processes in place for leadership and communication that could be emulated across the district to help improve other programs.

The district should establish regular ongoing leadership meetings with formalized agendas so that all program leadership is working towards a common goal and can effectively collaborate to coordinate all available funds. When developing processes and procedures, be sure to include multiple stakeholders and representation from schools to help develop a district plan. Filtering communication down to the teacher level will ensure that students can best receive available services. Evaluating programs will identify whether student goals are being met and should also help to identify further student/teacher needs to be addressed.

Collaborating with private schools on a consistent basis and with fidelity will ensure that Fayette County students attending non-public schools and in need of intervention services receive the appropriate supports to ensure success.

Fayette County is focused on strengthening the programs and services provided to students in

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order to increase student success. The monitoring team is confident that the district's commitment to quality student services will allow them to transform opportunities for improvement into strengths.