Executive Summary

Ankara Elementary/High School

Europe South

Mr. David Tran, Principal
DoDDS, PSC 89
Unit 7010
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Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.
Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Before becoming a city of over 4 million where political and business decisions impact policies and economies throughout the world, Ankara was a tiny village of fewer than 25,000. Ankara's entire transformation has taken place in the 90 years since Mustafa Kemal Ataturk formed the Republic of Turkey and moved its capital from Istanbul to a village in the mountains on the Anatolian Plateau. The remoteness and relative anonymity of the village Ankara became its greatest attribute. Ataturk chose Ankara as his capital for being central in Turkey adding both logistical and nationalistic benefits. This village with a previously largely homogeneous population drew new residents from around Turkey. Ankara is uniquely Turkish in that it blends all elements of Turkish culture. It also hosts the world's leading heads of state, captains of industry, and scholars. Finally, Ankara is a host to numerous embassy personnel, NATO military attachés, and their families. While it is hardly an international cultural melting pot, Ankara is a place where new ideas are considered, old ideas are remembered, and both are done with great passion.

The 717th Air Base Squadron is geographically-separated from the 39th Air Base Wing, Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. The base is located on a Turkish Military Base in Ankara, Turkey. The 717th Air Base Squadron operates the Ankara Support Facility proving support to the American community in Ankara including the military community and the United States Embassy. The Ankara Support Facility is like any other Air Base, just on 12 acres of land. The facility has a Base Exchange, commissary, DoDDS school, fitness center, community center, picnic areas, library, Laundromat, chapel, and barber shop. 10 United States Air Force military members are assigned to the Air Base Squadron. There are U.S. civilians and Turkish employees, as well as more than 100 contract personnel.

Ankara Elementary/High School is a kindergarten through twelfth grade school located in one building. This unique school structure has created a warm and welcoming atmosphere which can be seen during the change of classes with the interaction between the older and younger students. Our students' families come from Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marines. There are also family members of the U.S. State Department, American Embassy, and Office of Defense Cooperation. The school accepts non-American citizens which allows for a unique population among Department of Defense Schools in having the majority of our students being non-American.

As of September 11th 2015, there are 222 students from 32 different countries. These countries are: Afghanistan, Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Croatia, Finland, France, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Moldova, Poland, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, and Uzbekistan. With this diverse population, 37% of our students are part of the English as a Second Language program.

At this time there are 28 faculty members, including two full time counselor, two and half English as a Second Language teachers, and a reading teacher to educate and inspire these students. Staff members also have diverse backgrounds having lived and worked all of the world including Cuba, Japan, Korea, United States, Belgium, Italy, and Spain to name a few The length of time teaching at Ankara ES/HS ranges from two years to more than 20 years.

As a support facility we do not have access to large base services including teen and youth centers, and after school care. Staff members provide many opportunities for after school activities to compensate for these limited services. These include nutrition/cooking, Junior Rangers, tutoring, ESL club, get moving, middle school intramurals, Math Counts, middle and high school student council, Student2Student.
Junior Leadership, academic games, middle and elementary school games, music, and computer clubs. We also have science fairs for elementary, middle, and high school, STEMPosium, Junior Science, and Humanities symposium. Guest speakers and study trips are also used to enhance the classroom curriculum.

Since we are located on a small base in Asia, there are a few challenges. Our base access is limited by time (0630-1930 Monday through Friday and 0800-1800 on the weekends and holidays). Our U.S. Support Facility base is in the middle of a Turkish base which requires three security check points to gain access. We also have complications with our internet connection, electricity, water, and computer servers.

Traffic and demonstrations in Ankara can be a hindrance to travel. Teaching materials, especially electronics, can be delayed at customs for long periods of time. Even with these difficulties, the staff, students, and community work together to provide the best education for all of our students.
School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Ankara Elementary/High School mission statement follows DoDEA's mission statement to educate, engage, and empower each student to succeed in a dynamic world. The school's vision statement is the same as DoDEA's vision statement: To be among the world's leaders in education, enriching the lives of military connected students and the communities in which they live. Our school's purpose statement is to: Provide challenge and success for all students in a nurturing environment. Teachers have the mission, vision, displayed outside their classroom doors for all to view.

The mission vision and the purpose statement represent all that the professional staff members do on a daily basis for the students. Our goals, strategies, and teaching methods exemplify our mission and vision as we strive to provide the best education for all of our students, every day throughout the school year. Staff members use differentiation to create lessons for these students to provide challenges to those above the standards and re-teaching for those below the standards. Educators document students' test data on a comprehensive spreadsheet for efficient and effective means of reference to track the strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement. Modern technology is used in our classrooms such as Smart Boards, Elmos, smart responders, recording programs, TI84 calculators, laptops, science probes, Prezi, Photo Story, Photo Shop, Creative Suite, and Note Flight. There is a one-to-one student computer ratio allowing students to work on technology projects, take assessments online, create newspapers, and participate in virtual courses.

The elementary, middle, and high school students coexist in a multicultural environment. Upper class students take care of younger students, while younger students look up to older students as role models. We encourage our students to show respect to each other at every level. Since this is a kindergarten to twelfth grade school, they have to learn to be together in the same building, as well as show respect to each other's beliefs, religions, and ethnicity. This is a once in a life time experience for the students to know more than thirty different cultures at such young ages. Assemblies, International Day, Field Day, Night of the Arts Talent Show, Academic Award Ceremonies, Straight "A" Café, Friendly Focus with administrators, reflection lunch, college nights, embassies, and music programs bring all age groups together. International Day is the culmination and celebration of our understanding of all the cultures at our school. During this day, students are given the opportunity to learn about more than 30 different countries, developing respect for and awareness of these cultures. The international students also gain knowledge of American culture through Thanksgiving feast, Character Day parade, homecoming, prom, and Dr. Seuss Day. Every year the music department and host nation classes work together for the Spring Concert where elementary students sing Turkish songs in the program.

Our students are highly motivated to become better learners in the nurturing environment our school provides. They are hard-working and willing to embrace challenges. This can be seen in our school's Terra Nova, SAT, and PSAT scores. Ankara students challenge themselves by enrolling in multiple Advanced Placement classes and honor classes.

In addition to classroom settings, learning is also taught in a variety of locations. Ankara's after school programs provide skills to complement what we do in the classroom: patience, concentration, following directions, interacting with one another, and working as a team with a common goal. Our students have an equal opportunity to participate in cheerleading, tennis, volleyball, basketball, cross country, and soccer. The school's international student body learns about sports they may not have in their home country. This teaches cultural awareness in addition to rules of the sport.
Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school’s notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

One of Ankara's notable achievements is the majority of our grade levels meeting the Department of Defense School's Community Strategic Plan. This plan that 80 % of the students perform at or above the standard on the TerraNova. 2015 Spring TN results were:

Reading - 82.50% of grade levels met the standard
Language Arts - 87.67% of grade levels met the standard
Math - 91.83% of grade levels met the standard
Science - 86.33% of grade levels met the standard
Social Studies - 85.33% of grade levels met the standard

We are proud of keeping our tradition of International Day for more than 30 years. This event not only brings international parents to the school and the opportunity to participate it also pulls all the different cultures together in an informative and festive atmosphere. The beginning of the day is reserved for speakers from the community including archeologists, news reporters, pilots, architects, ornithologists, and paleontologists. The second half of the day begins with parade of nations when all the students walk across the stage with their country’s flag. We end the day with the different embassies sharing cultural information, international food, games, dress, and dance.

Areas of improvement in the last years have included incorporating Smart Boards and Elmos. Student computers are available in classrooms along with computer lab access. We also have Pro-Tools for recording and Sibelius composition for our music classes. The video department creates videos focusing on students, classes, community, clubs, and school's vision and goals. Students’ work and projects are also videotaped. These videos are showcased at the front entrance of the school on a large screen television for the students, teachers, parents, and visitors to view.

Students participate in Honor Choir, Honor Band, Creative Connections, International Student Leadership Institute, and Illuminations to inspire them while enhancing rigor in the arts. There is AP Saturday study session for World History, English, Environmental Science, and Calculus to help prepare students for the AP exams. Middle schools students who are part of Junior Leadership Seminar create and organize community service projects. Additionally, our Math Counts team has been successful in Math Counts State Competitions, including a recent DoDEA Championship. The team has consistently placed in the top four in the Mediterranean District Competitions. Multiple graduating seniors received scholarships to universities and colleges all over the world. To show our pride, we display our student achievement throughout the school in showcases.

The faculty works together to create an at-risk student analysis document. This student analysis gives us the opportunity to collect data including Terra Nova, BAS, SRI, local writing assessment, and PSAT. Teachers meet to discuss different strategies that are used for each of the at-risk students. Students are regularly assessed through formative assessment strategies to determine growth. Those students not showing growth may be reported to the student success team to develop further strategies to assist.

Areas of improvement Ankara Elementary/High School are striving to achieve in the next three years include:

Required Actions
1. Expand the academic support system for English Language Learners (ELL) by ensuring that every teacher is adequately trained in ELL strategies that are aligned with the Common Core and implemented with fidelity to improve students' overall linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Evaluate the overall program and modify as necessary.

Action Complete: Faculty was provided with an extensive Professional Development in SIOP for two years. Faculty was offered graduate credit. Bi monthly meetings were conducted to practice SIOP strategies using student work.

2. Analyze disaggregated standardized test data that reflect accurate academic group gains across time.

Action Complete: School analyzed cohort data and uploaded results to AdvancED. The number of students who stayed more than 2 years were too small for significant analysis.

The following three years Ankara Elementary/High School are striving to achieve in the next three years include:

Ankara EHS School will follow district guidance and directives in the college and career readiness implementation.
Additional Information

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

Ankara Elementary/High School faculty takes pride in the fact that Continuous School Improvement is embedded in our school culture. Staff combines Using Data to Differentiate Instruction, the Continuous School Improvement process, CSILT, and department chairs to best meet the needs of every student at our school. This year we are using "Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners-The SIOP Model" by Echevarria, Vogt and Short to drive our instruction through ELL practices using the SIOP protocol. The faculty has a common professional growth plan based on our CSI goals. In addition, our school has maintained a very high trend of academic achievement across all of DoDEA's system wide assessments (Terra Nova, PSAT, SAT). The performance expectation for In order to utilize research based practices for the year and plans it as a university course. The teachers are offered the option to earn graduate credit for their participation in the meetings. During these bimonthly CSI meetings, in-house expertise is shared and professional development is ongoing. At the beginning of the year teachers are provided with a binder that outlines the focus of the year along with a school calendar. As the school year progresses and teachers try out new activities, they collect student work in their binders to share with other faculty members and departments. The school calendar outlines the focus for the school year, CSI meeting days, in-services, sports' trips, collaboration days, testing dates, and holidays so teachers can plan their lessons with minimal lost to instructional time. Teachers follow DoDEA standards but have an ownership on the classroom structure, lesson, and creativity in meeting the standards. Performance on the PSAT is also quite stellar where our 10th and 11th graders perform well above National averages across all three subjects every year by 3-8 points above the Nation.

Friendly, collaborative faculty works together toward common educational goals. We support each other’s charities and functions in the broader Ankara expat community. The support of each other helps create a professional and warm working environment here at Ankara Elementary/High School. While we are very proud of each of our student's success; however, there still remains plenty of opportunity for growth, instructional change, and intervention (with a majority of effort needed at the elementary and middle school levels). Ankara EHS consistently monitors data and targets areas of weaknesses to identify and re mediate. To this end, all K-12 at-risk students are identified based on sequenced benchmarks so that teachers can meet to discuss different strategies that are used for each of the at-risk students. Students are regularly assessed through formative assessment strategies to determine growth. Those students not showing growth may be reported to the student success team to develop further strategies to assist.