Executive Summary

Fentress County School System

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction .......................................................... 1
- Description of the School System .......................................... 2
- System’s Purpose ............................................................ 4
- Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement .................. 6
- Additional Information ....................................................... 10
Introduction

Every school system has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school system makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school system 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 system, and the kinds of programs and services that a school system implements to support student learning.

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

Describe the school system'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 system serves?

The Fentress County School System encompasses grades PreK-12 and consists of 5 traditional schools, including four PreK-8 schools and one traditional high school (grades 9-12). Additionally, Fentress County includes an Adult Learning Center and a Adult High School, a non-traditional school for students 18 years of age or older and lacking credits to graduate. The district currently serves over 2300 students within these school facilities. Schools are situated within the communities of Pine Haven, Allardt, Jamestown, and Clarkrange. A very unique thing about our county is most of the high school students attend the only 100% state-supported high school in the nation. Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute is named in honor of World War I Hero, Sgt. Alvin C. York. Therefore, most of the high school-age students from our system attend a different system within our county.

The Fentress County schools are located 127 miles from Nashville and approximately 30 miles from an interstate highway. Fentress County borders Putnam, Pickett, Cumberland and Morgan Counties. The county seat of Jamestown is 25 miles from the Kentucky state line. The Fentress County Airport is a very small, rural airport. Roane State Community College has a satellite campus located in Jamestown. This satellite campus is housed in portables provided by the Fentress County Board of Education. The portable set-up was paid for by the Pinckley family. The Pinckley family also subsidized dual credits for students at Clarkrange High School and Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute. Fentress County had the highest percent of dual-credit classes in the state of Tennessee. Mr. Pinckley passed away last December. We are currently searching for additional funding for maintaining the dual-credit studies.

Fentress County Board of Education has two members per district. Each board member must run for reelection every four years on staggered elections. The school board is responsible for the appointment of the Director of Schools and setting policy for the system. Board members are paid $100.00 per month. The board consists of 3 retired teachers (one a former principal), one current teacher in another system, one hospital CEO, two nurses, one business person, and one pharmacist. The board maintains membership in the Tennessee School Board Association and actively participates in training. Two of the board members have completed all 5 core modules required by Tennessee School Board Association. The others are close to achieving this.

The student population consists of 99% white and .5% African-America. According to the federal criteria for free and reduced meals, 77% of our students qualify as economically disadvantaged. Additionally, 17% of our students received special education services and 1% of the students are identified as English Language Learners (2013 Report Card). The student membership of each school is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult High School (18 years+)</td>
<td><em><strong>8</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allardt PreK-8</td>
<td><em><strong>376</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Haven PreK-8</td>
<td><em><strong>507</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Fentress PreK-8</td>
<td><em><strong>612</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Elementary PreK-8</td>
<td><em><strong>479</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarkrange High (9-12)</td>
<td><em><strong>298</strong></em>____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fentress County Schools is a public school system and is the county's largest employer. It employs approximately 360 individuals. Approximately 90% of the system's employees are white females. There are 192 certified teachers and 20 administrators. Approximately 50% have a Master's Degree or higher. There are 99% highly qualified teachers in our system.

The students at Clarkrange High School are served by additional CTE classes (welding and automotive) at Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute.
A health service class is planned for next year at Clarkrange High School. The state of Tennessee ranks 45th in the nation with 75% of residents having a high school diploma. Fentress County has 59% with a high diploma. The state has 20% of its population with a Bachelors degree. Fentress County has 8% with a Bachelors degree. Our staff has realized we have one of the least educated communities in the nation. We have decided to change a culture. Our system honors all A-AB students with a banquet for them and their parents. Our schools' Plant-the-Seed Program was developed as a post-secondary incentive plan. The program has been recognized throughout the southeast. Students develop a graduation plan in 6th grade. Teachers post on their doors what college they attended and their degrees received. We do this to instill a post-secondary attending culture in our schools. Our Plant-the-Seed Program was recently recognized at the Appalachian Rural Schools Conference in Asheville, NC in June 2014.

Fentress County economy has experienced a global competition that has really impacted the county. Like most rural counties with low socio-economic and a low educated workforce, most jobs were in the textile industry. We live in a community of fewer than 200 manufacturing jobs. Fentress County has an unemployment rate of 8.5%. Aside from Fentress County Board of Education, local employers are Walmart, local government, public utilities, and healthcare. The workforce forecast in our county is very bleak.
Provide the school system’s purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school system embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The Fentress County School Board, in September 2014, voted to review and revise our system’s Mission and Vision Statements. This process will take place in the spring of 2015. All participants will be afforded the opportunity for input - be it acceptance, revision, or suggestions for change. Again, this process will take place in the spring of 2015.

VISION:
The Fentress County School District will work in a synchronizing directed effort to ensure that all students are progressing toward obtaining a high quality education.

MISSION:
Fentress County School District will strive to provide opportunities for students to become socially responsible, life-long learners through a safe, nurturing, and challenging learning environment.

BELIEF STATEMENTS:
All people have worth and value,
All children should be given the opportunity to achieve proficiency and beyond,
All children should be given the opportunity to succeed to their fullest potential,
All children should receive high quality instruction,
That learning and success can best be accomplished in a disciplined environment,
All children should be challenged,
Learning should be enjoyable,
All children should be taught social responsibilities and encouraged to be productive citizens,
Self-esteem impacts learning,
All children learn best when parents and teachers work for the mutual benefit of the child,
High expectations should encourage high achievement,
The school environment should be nurturing, challenging, and safe,
Quality education is the responsibility of families, schools, communities, the nation, and involved shared decision making of all parties
Schools must have adequate resources to educate students for our challenging world, and decisions that affect children’s learning will be data driven and based on sound research.
Purposes through Program Offerings and Expectations.

Evidential Practices.
Goal One: Provide excellence of Programs
1) Provide a rigorous curriculum
2) Provide excellence in instruction, including high-quality methods and strategies
3) Offer educational opportunities that provide a broad range of experiences

Goal Two: Provide World Class Educators
1) Recruit qualified staff for hard-to-fill positions
2) Provide top quality professional learning for all employees

1) Secure and clean facilities
2) Provide access to current technologies
   a) Expand Broadband
   b) 1-to-1 Educator Laptops
   c) I-pad use in Special Education Classes
   d) Begin Parent Portal in Skyward

Goal Four: Maintain fiscal stability, responsibility and accountability.
1) Focus Expenditures in Instruction
2) Focus on energy-efficient projects

Goal Five: Investigate best World Class Practices in the pursuit of Excellence.
Describe the school system's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school system is striving to achieve in the next three years.

The school system has experienced many changes in the past few years, transitioning to state standards, Diploma Project standards, Race to the Top, and Common Core implementation. Six years ago, Fentress County Board of Education had the lowest pupil-teacher ratio in the state, the highest debt in the history of the county and a moderately low fund balance. We had other infrastructure needs, a teacher resource center in irreparable condition, a bus garage that was purchased 40 years ago with old tires placed on the roof to hold it down and the roofs on two schools were in need of replacing. We began a study of our infrastructure needs. A building was purchased from a bank to serve as a resource center. The bus garage was remodeled and both schools have been reroofed. The last payment will be made on one school this spring and our fund balance has been upgraded. Our infrastructure is in the finest shape that it has ever been in.

With the passage of common core standards and the possible beginning of PARCC, our system has been constantly working to prepare both staff and students. However, our state assessments are based on older standards, presenting a challenge of operating on separate expectations of what students should know. Additionally, the level of rigor established by the revised standards is in itself a challenge. Some content previously found in upper grades now have been pushed down to lower grades, not only increasing the level of rigor in classes, but also creating gaps in student learning. Along with new standards, coupled with the fact that PARCC is now in question, the uncertainty of new assessments creates a difficult task for all schools. A majority of professional development has been focused on Common Core Standards and provided by the Tennessee Department of Education. All districts are challenged to allocate time for teachers to comment and collaborate across the system.

The challenge is further exacerbated in the development of Pacing Guides as teachers are expected to teach the higher rigor and are held accountable to the lower expectations on the TCAP tests.

Notable Achievement and Areas of Improvement:
Clarkrange High School has been awarded the bronze award from US News & World Report as a model school. Some of their recent achievements include:
1) Award-winning CTE Program
2) Installation of drop ceiling and new lights
3) Science labs remodeled
4) Credit Recovery Classes and Graduation Coach hired
5) Excellent growth and achievement on 2014 EOC's

Improvements have been made at all schools including:
1) Flash masters in Grades 1-4
2) Literacy grant of $340,000 to update all libraries.
3) Highly-trained Instruction Coaches in all schools.
4) Revised Curriculum and Pacing Guides
5) All K-12 teachers are furnished a laptop
6) Plant-the-Seed Program for a post-secondary growing culture
7) Most classrooms have Smartboard Technology
8) Beta Clubs in all schools
9) Valedictorians and Salutatorians are honored by having pictures placed on a billboard
10) Broadband installed at all schools
11) Lighting has been upgraded at all schools
12) Honors Banquet for students and parents
13) Fifth-grade Math teachers had highest TVAAS Growth in the Upper Cumberland District in 2013
14) Eighth-grade English, Language Arts teachers had highest TVAAS Growth in the Upper Cumberland District in 2014.

TEIS Program
In April of 2010, Fentress County Schools entered into a contract with the State Department of Education to pilot a center-based program to provide developmental therapy to children 15 months to three years of age. This program is 100% funded by the Tennessee Early Intervention System.

In June of 2010, we opened a classroom at Allardt Elementary School, and moved to a new facility at York Elementary School in 2011 where the program is currently housed. The Early Learning Center provides developmental services for students who have a delay of at least 40% in one domain or a delay of two domains at 25%. We also provide speech/language services.

As family involvement is a huge piece of this program, parents learn how to implement activities with their children, in the home environment, to stimulate their child's development. These students/families are able to receive OT and or PT services here as well. This program allows our youngest learners to receive the services they need close to home without having to travel out of town. Since its beginning, we have graduated approximately 63% of the children we have served that no longer qualify for school-age services. The Early Learning Center was recognized in 2012 as Exemplary Program of the year at the Best Practices Conference by the Tennessee Early Intervention System.

Ready for Kindergarten Program
In 2013-14, Fentress County Schools began a parent training program to help parents develop skills to prepare their children for school readiness. The Ready for Kindergarten program was implemented with families of 4-year-olds to model and provide learning tools to help children be better prepared when they enter school. In 2014-15, these classes will expand to families of 3-year-olds as well.

Nutrition
Fentress County School Nutrition provides a nutritious Breakfast and Lunch to students in PreK-12 daily throughout the school year. We partner with East Tennessee Human Resource Agency to provide Summer Food Meals to children age 18 and younger with no applications to fill out. This year, 2014-15, the Fentress County Board approved the implementation of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). This program provides free breakfast and lunch to all students enrolled in Fentress County Schools and has no income restrictions.

Coordinated School Health
The Food for Kids youth program of Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee has partnered with Fentress County Schools and Coordinated School Health to provide many of our children and their siblings with easy-to-prepare food to take home on weekends. Approximately 158 children in all 5 of Fentress County Schools, who have been identified by school personnel, benefit from this program.

Community organizations, churches and local youth programs assist in the assembly and distribution, as well as funding for the backpacks in Fentress County Schools. There were approximately 3,792 bags with 3 meals per bag distributed for a total of 11,376 meals given to children last year. This program has benefitted our students for the past seven years and this year, Second Harvest, has also provided us care packages that can be used for families in need.

Coordinated School Health screens K, 2, 4, 6, 8 and high school students for blood pressure, height and weight, and 6th grade students for scoliosis. We also screen Pre-K, K, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10th grade vision and hearing. We have been able to help students receive eye glasses and refer students with high blood pressure.

Fentress County Schools are a Level 4 School System. South Fentress Elementary and Pine Haven Elementary are both Level 5 Schools, and Clarkrange High School is a Level 4 School. Clarkrange High School EOC had phenomenal growth last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EOC Subject Tested</th>
<th>2014% Prof/Adv.</th>
<th>% Growth from 2013</th>
<th>District Rank in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>61.720.3</td>
<td>tied for 2nd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>4229.63d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English I</td>
<td>78.418.92nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English II</td>
<td>65.8 9.8</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other achievements include:

Last year, Clarkrange High School Boys and Girls Basketball and Boy's Baseball won District Championships.

Contracted with Evan Newton for Benchmark assessments and coaching services for math improvement

Benchmark assessments in English and Math in elementary schools

To increase College & Career readiness, Benchmarks with case assessments to increase ACT scores and to provide remediation for improvement

College summits hosted to create college-going culture

Creation of Algebra I Boot camp for 8th grade students (taught by Clarkrange High School and Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute teachers).

Creation of summer reading list per grade level and part-time opening of all school libraries for students during summer break

McDonald's Summer Reading Program

Contracted with Vinson Group for Reading Coaching

Fentress County's K-3 Reading Initiative

Fentress County School District is in the second year of an "Academic Reading Initiative". Our leadership team, principals, teachers and paraeducators have made a commitment to reaching an ambitious yet attainable goal by spring 2019. Our goal is 90% of third grade students in Fentress County will read at or above the 50th percentile on a nationally normed reading test within six years.

Data from NWEA is used in our K-3 classrooms to determine appropriate small group placement as well as to determine the number of students at grade level (50th percentile) and growth by student by class. Classroom data is particularly revealing as students starting three years behind need to make a year of growth each year plus gain another 10 national percentiles in ranking. By identifying classrooms where this growth occurs or fails to occur is a critical first step in providing targeted instruction to the students and encouraging teachers to improve their instructional methods and embrace the curriculum.

Tier I Core Reading Instruction occurs for 150 minutes each day of which 120 minutes are specifically outlined for teachers. During the 120 minutes, students receive 60 minutes of whole group instruction focusing on grade level standards and 60 minutes of small group "workshop" focusing on reteaching, extending or enrichment. Our curriculum explicitly teaches letters, the alphabetic principle, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. We have explicit instructional routines in place at each grade level focusing on each of these critical components of reading. By using these routines, teachers are using the same language and all students are receiving high quality instruction.

All principals, teachers and paraeducators have had training on how to deliver effective reading instruction through the TN Core Reading and Intervention Courses. They also receive support from our consultants and instructional coaches. Mini training sessions and hands-on demonstrations on how to effectively implement program instructional routines and core curriculum occur throughout the school year. We are extending this intensive support and training during the 2014-15 school years through fifth grade.

Fentress County is committed to breaking the cycle of poverty by reaching our 90% goal by spring 2019. We believe all children can learn at high levels. There are no exceptions and no excuses.

Mr. Jones was chosen Upper Cumberland Superintendent of the year. He was chosen amongst the 20-county area of the Upper Cumberland
District. He competed for the state superintendent of the year. He is the first director from our area to be chosen for this honor.

Creation of stem camp for elementary students.

Provided health insurance for classified employees (first time ever)

Creation of Fine Arts Camp teaching art, music and drama to elementary students.

This year, we will make final payment on two schools, resulting in all major debt paid in full.

Additionally, two schools were reroofed, last summer a new education service center was purchased, we remodeled our bus garage, maintenance and infrastructure plans were developed, school safety upgrades were implemented, and Response to Intervention for grades K-12 were implemented, and our Differentiated Pay Plan was approved by the state (our's was one of the first in the state to be approved).
Another challenge of our system is monetary. The past several years, there has been discussion of transitioning Alvin C. York Institute back to the county. Absorbing another school, with the maintenance of effort by the local government only increasing a few thousand dollars, would be devastating. The school could only be funded on state funds only. The transition has been delayed, and it is still a problem to ponder. The Fentress County School System receives only 28 cents of a $1.99 tax rate. The percentage of property tax allocated to the schools is only 14%. Out of 136 state school systems, we rank last in the state in the percentage of property tax allocated.

Education has to become a priority. We have to change this culture. Our per-pupil expenditure is 9,034 per student. The state average is 9,293 per student.

The expiration of Race to the Top Federal funding is a challenge to our system. Also, as technology continues to evolve and advance, the school system is struggling to keep up with the demands of infrastructure, equipment, and software. Our Central Office staff performs many tasks and is overworked. Academic coaches have been placed in all schools. Response to intervention presents a unique challenge, both academically and financially, to our system.

As stated earlier, we are in the process of revising our Vision and Mission Statements as well as our Strategic Plan. The focus of the Central Office Program is to redesign the organizational chart and system, so that all schools and students are provided the appropriate level of support in achieving academic goals.