



Executive Summary

Dixie Heights High School

Kenton County School District

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Introduction

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?

Dixie Heights is located off of I-275 at Dixie Highway in Crestview Hills, and also serves other surrounding communities, including Crescent Springs, Villa Hills, and Edgewood. The school has a current enrollment size of approximately 1,400 students in grades nine through twelve, and reflects the diversity of the surrounding community.

Dixie employs a teaching staff of approximately 100 educators who work tirelessly to offer a rigorous and relevant curriculum to every student. To this end, during the past three years, the staff and administration of Dixie have worked to continue to develop the Schools of Study, while simultaneously placing greater emphasis upon career/ college readiness for all and maintaining the current growth trends on state assessments.

The school has adopted the Springboard curriculum in math and English classes. This rigorous curriculum offers our students a challenging resource that will better prepare them for their future. In addition, our staff has begun MAP testing freshman and sophomores each trimester so that our staff can gauge student learning. The teachers use this information to identify students' specific skills they have mastered or are 'ready to learn.' This data proves useful to teachers who are planning differentiated lessons in the classroom and targets the skills that students are 'ready to learn.'

Although we serve a diverse student body and community, Dixie Heights strives to ensure that all students are given an equal opportunity to excel and be involved in all aspects of the educational process. In addition to a wide range of course offerings, a school to work program, academies, dual credit, and advanced placement courses are available to students. Students' diverse strengths and needs are met through a variety of clubs and organizations as well as Extended School Services, remedial, and gifted/ talented programs. Support services are available in special education, credit recovery programs, speech/ language therapy, ESL and occupational/ physical therapy.

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.

Dixie Heights High School is a community of learners dedicated to nurturing, challenging, and motivating students to meet high expectations. Through creative and rigorous teaching, we encourage students to work toward their potential success in the world tomorrow.

To assist students in preparing for future career choices, Dixie Heights High School (DHHS) has established specific career paths that provide guidance and appropriate curriculum. The teachers in this pathway flavor the curriculum with a teaching style that matches the learners' learning style and interests. The three career pathways that DHHS has selected are:

The teachers associated in the Law, Education, Health and Human Services (LEHHS) pathway met together and discussed their vision for this career path. They felt the students in this pathway needed instruction that was geared to promote social interaction in a service-oriented manner. Some of the courses offered in this pathway include: Ready-Set-Teach, Literature and Film, Debate, Creative Writing, and Hospitality. The teachers in this pathway collaborated and developed the following mission statement:

LEHHS Mission Statement: To develop informed and active citizens and to prepare them for careers in law enforcement, legal services, education, community and health related fields as well as to provide the necessary knowledge, skills and credentials for the students' success in post secondary studies.

The teachers associated in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) pathway met together and discussed their vision for this career path. They felt the students in this pathway needed instruction that was geared to promote analytical thinking. Some of the courses offered in this pathway include: Forensics, Physics, Radio Technology, Geology, and Anatomy. The teachers in this pathway collaborated and developed the following mission statement:

STEM Mission Statement: To prepare individuals to effectively communicate, to apply scientific principles and mathematical knowledge, and to develop critical thinking skills and technical skills in order to be successful in modern society.

The teachers associated in the Visual Performing Arts and Media (VPAM) pathway met together and discussed their vision for this career path. They felt the students in this pathway needed instruction that was geared to promote creative expression. Some of the courses offered in this pathway include: Chamber Choir, Guitar, Drama, Student Productions, Music Theory, Painting, Ceramics, and Drawing. The teachers in this pathway collaborated and developed the following mission statement:

VPAM Mission Statement: Students will be actively engaged in learning environments that will fulfill their academic needs, enhance their innate creative and performing abilities, and encourage wholesome relationships that will adequately prepare them to meet the needs of a changing society.

All elective course work at DHHS is matched with the appropriate career pathway and the core content curricula are modified for the career pathways when possible and appropriate. By doing this, each student has the opportunity to either enrich their knowledge in a specific area of study or to explore multiple career paths.

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In addition to specific curriculum offerings associated with career paths, DHHS also offers a wide variety of honors, AP, and dual-credit course options based on the needs of the student body. To ensure that the students are getting the most out of these offerings the staff and administration at DHHS work with local colleges to ensure that the advanced and dual-credit opportunities are appropriate. Additionally, all course work is continually evaluated to ensure that it is aligning with local, state and national standards.

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.

Dixie Heights has many notable achievements that give the students and staff pride. One area is that Dixie is a proficient school based on this year's accountability results. Dixie achieved a higher score than 77% of all other public schools in the state. We scored particularly well in the areas of Achievement and Growth.

The next notable achievement is that Dixie was not classified as a "School of Focus" as Dixie

- did not have a non-duplicated gap group score in the bottom 10% of the state (Dixie's lowest score was in math with a score of 57%)
- did not have any individual group of students scoring significantly low
- did not have a graduation rate of less than 60% (Dixie has 83.7%)

The next area is that we have qualified staff members as 90% of the faculty hold master's degrees. Six of our teachers are Nationally Board Certified teachers. Several of our staff members have been publicly recognized for their outstanding work in their content teaching.

- Kris Gillis- was awarded Ashland's Teacher Achievement award and with this recognition was also nominated 1 out of 24 teachers across the state as Teacher of the Year
- Jennifer Baldwin- was awarded KyAEA (KY Art Education Association) High School Art Educator of the Year
- Robb Duddey- was recognized as the KMEA (KY Music Educator's Association) District 6 High School Music Teacher of the Year

Dixie Heights High School emphasizes academic achievement and has students who attained notable accomplishments in this area. First, Dixie has averaged 12.5 Governor Scholar Program students over the last 4 years. Acceptance into this program is highly selective and we are proud of our students who have been selected to participate in the program. Second, Dixie has averaged 20.3 Commonwealth Diplomas over the last 3 years. The students attaining this elite diploma have met the high standards set by the state to achieve it. Third, Dixie has increased the number of students who are passing the Advanced Placement exams. Students who have taken the AP exams and received a 3 or higher on any Advanced Placement exam have increased from 44% in 2008 to 76.5% in 2012. Fourth, our PLAN and ACT scores have continued to improve over the last three school years. The graduating seniors of 2013 scored an average of 21 on the ACT. Fifth, our students leave Dixie prepared for the next phase in their lives. Sixty percent of our graduating seniors attend four year colleges/universities. Nine percent attend two year or technical/vocational college/universities. Approximately, two percent of our student body joins the military. It is important to us that all students succeed and our staff works hard with each student to help them attain the necessary skills in order to do this.

There is always room for improvement and we are no exception. Over the next several years, our focus will be improving our test scores in the areas of achievement gap and college/career readiness. First, we are looking to expand our math courses to include classes using the Hands-On and Equals Math curriculums. We feel these curriculums will expose our students to helpful resources to improve their math skills. Second, we are looking at ways to expand our business courses in order to build additional career pathways. We hope that providing these career pathways will assist our students in becoming career-ready. In addition, we plan to find ways to offer additional industry certifications, such as MOS and CPR certifications. We recognize these areas for improvement and have worked on creating plans in order to address these needs.

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Additional Information

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

Dixie Heights High School is very proud of other aspects about our school, including our extra-curricular opportunities as well as students' participation in the Kenton County Academies of Innovation and Technology. To begin, we offer many extra-curricular opportunities and have students who excel in these activities. We offer clubs, such as, Academic Team, All State Choir, Amateur Radio, AP Art, Art, Astronomy, National Beta club, National Honor Society, Odyssey of the Mind, Bridge, Colonels for Christ, Concert Band, Marching Band, Dance, Drama, Drug Free Club, Environmental, FBLA, Future Problem Solvers, German, Hanner's Heroes, Journalism, Mock Trial, Principal Advisory club, Roller Skating club, Science Odyssey, Science Olympiad Team, Ski club, Social Norms club, STLP, Student Council, Student Vision Team, Student Advisory Committee, Tech Olympics, TLC- Teen Leadership, Yearbook, and Young Writer's Club. We offer many sporting options, such as, baseball, fast pitch softball, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, tennis, track, volleyball, and wrestling.

Next, Dixie Heights High School has many students participating in both the Success Academy and the Kenton County Academies of Innovation and Technology. The district offers six academy options: 1) Sustainable Energy Technology Engineering, 2) Engineering, 3) Biomedical Science, 4) Informatics, 5) High Performance Production Technology, and 6) Media Arts. The Academies are geared to reach our 21st century learners as it facilitates the students' growth in their career field of interest giving them a competitive edge post-graduation. Dixie High School proudly hosts the district's Media Arts Academy and students from across the district travel to Dixie to participate in this Academy.