



2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary

2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Schools

Graves County High School
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. 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?

Graves County High School is a four-year public secondary school located in Mayfield, KY. Its enrollment of students in grades 9-12 is around 1,150. The consolidated, district-wide high school takes its students from the consolidated, district-wide Graves County Middle School, with an enrollment of approximately 700 students in grades 7-8. Seven community-based, P-6 elementary schools, each with enrollments between 200 and 500, also are part of the district of approximately 4,700 students. The 1985 consolidation of these six small high schools into GCHS laid the foundation for the tremendous growth that has followed allowing us to educate students with shared support that reminds us that tomorrow's success results from the investment we make today. That support provides opportunities for Graves County students to soar like Eagles! GCHS offers a small school atmosphere and big school opportunities. A Freshman academy and career pathways each serve their students as "a school-within-a-school." We provide the strong academic foundation students need in order to successfully transition to post-secondary study, career training, or the workforce. In preparing students to meet the challenges of a diverse job market, all students complete a career major, but also have the opportunity to pursue many interests in their 26 high school credits. The college prep curriculum, expanding AP program, and dual credit and college bridge opportunities provide students an opportunity to jump start their college careers. Geographically, Graves County is one of the five largest in Kentucky. It is a rural area with a total population of approximately 37,000. Within the past decade, a Spanish-speaking population, comprised primarily of Mexican nationals, has emerged where there was none before. Spanish-speaking individuals now comprise approximately 10 percent of the county's population. Most of them are Mexican nationals whose primary language is Spanish. The majority immigrated to western Kentucky over the past decade to work in agriculture and poultry processing. The county is one of Kentucky's top three agricultural producers. Graves County's has lost hundreds of manufacturing jobs to other countries. The manufacturing growth index over the past few years stands at negative 41 percent, according to Chris O'Brien, executive director of the Graves Growth Alliance, the economic development agency that works to recruit industry and improve the local economy. Agriculture and its related businesses comprise the other major factor in the county's economy. Change is significant there as well with the phasing out of many tobacco farms. Additionally, farming operations have changed dramatically in

recent years with a far greater emphasis on high-tech equipment and other techniques that require far more in-depth knowledge and skills. Clearly, Graves County's economy is declining and its poverty level is rising. While many in the community realize that adaptability to change is necessary, many lack the education to compete favorably in the new economy. Tom Welch recently retired as the director for Seeding Innovation for the Kentucky Department of Innovation and Commercialization for a Knowledge-Based Economy. He presents statistics showing 24.4% of Americans aged 25 and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 12.6% of Graves County residents. Some 80.4% of Americans have earned a minimum of a high school diploma, as compared to 73.4% of Graves County residents. Nationally, only 7.4% of Americans of age have obtained less than a 9th grade education. In Graves County, that statistic has risen to nearly 11%. Historically, jobs in Graves County have required skills training, but not necessarily higher education. Today's knowledge-based, global economy requires higher learning for all. Clearly, education is key to adapting Graves County's economy to modern challenges and opportunities.

. 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.

In adhering to our mission statement "Striving For Excellence: No Exceptions, No Excuses," the goal of GCHS is to produce students who are able to successfully compete and meet the challenges of the 21st century. Graves County High School career pathways provide students the opportunity for career exploration. Graves County High School's "LEAD Academy" provides more individualized attention and hands-on learning for students who struggle in the more traditional high school setting. Students chose the academy's name, an acronym for Leaders Excelling through Apprenticeships and Determination. The college prep curriculum, expanding AP program, and dual credit and college bridge opportunities provide students an opportunity to jump start their college careers. The school fields 24 athletic teams - including the 5-time National Champion co-ed cheer squad, provides a strong fine arts department - with the only strings program in Western Kentucky, and the two-time National Champion broadcasting department, as well as many other specialized interest clubs and activities. Dual-college credit opportunities include attending classes on college and university campuses and more than 20 Advanced Placement courses. Some 325 students, one quarter of the high school's entire population use hands-on learning of career-ready trades at the Mayfield-Graves County Area Technology Center. They prepare for future careers through hands-on learning and professional assessment in construction, residential electrical, machine tool, welding, health sciences, and office technology. More than

100 students sample the military through Jr. ROTC. The Graves County High School Jr. ROTC program engages many students who otherwise might not have found their niche in high school. The program also encourages self-discipline and offers a preview for those exploring the military career. The Graves County High School Agriculture Department's innovative curriculum embodies relevance to the working world by featuring an expanded nursery, vineyards, hydroponics, aquaculture, a tissue culture laboratory, and a livestock center. Project Lead the Way, a national, research-based program geared toward students who enjoy hands-on learning seeks to direct students, including many female students, toward careers in engineering. Collaborators on the project include MSU and the University of Kentucky's College of Engineering, Paducah campus. Vocational education classes in Kentucky offer certification through testing. In recent years, increasing percentages of GCHS students have taken and passed those tests. Cisco testing for computer training is one example of such certification. Graves County High School's participation in West Kentucky Community and Technical College's dual -college credit opportunities allow students to earn attend classes on college and university campuses and more than 20 Advanced Placement courses. Extended School Services are offered during time periods that otherwise would be breaks during the school day. Across the curriculum, teachers and students collaborate on remediation of concepts with which those individual students have struggled. Guidance and advisement have experienced a paradigm shift at GCHS in recent years. We are strategic with how we schedule and counsel students at GCHS in order to find their career interests. Often, career interest and other assessments are used to guide the process. Another guiding factor is the clear comparison with specific postsecondary plans the student has so that necessary future requirements are met in a timely manner. Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Graves County High School students specifically prepare for postsecondary education. Together, they work with financial aid and scholarship applications as well as other means to prepare for college. Focused professional development opportunities have increased exponentially in recent years. Rather than merely complying with professional development requirements, today, those opportunities are fully embraced. They occur "in-house" far more often so that all teachers benefit from the same training and insights. In some cases, presenters are brought into the schools from outside. In other cases, expertise from within the district is shared. In any event, the district's Instructional Leadership Team guides the training decisions that are made. The district's Central Office influences instruction and curriculum broadly from creation and participation in the Instructional Leadership Team. Another source of influence is the reading and discussion of pertinent education and business books at monthly district-wide administrators' meetings that include principals.

. 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.

GCHS has been designated a four star high school after the 2018-19 school year. Prior to this we were named a Distinguished school in both 2015 and 2016. We have made massive jumps in the number of students that graduate being prepared for college or a career. ACT scores for both juniors and seniors have steadily increased over the past three years, and our junior scores are higher than they have ever been. The primary area of improvement moving forward will be to close the achievement gaps that are present in our building. We still have too many students that are below proficient in both reading and math. We are also below the state achievement in the area of science, too. Along with this, we would like to see our number of students that graduate ready for college and career continue to increase.

. **CSI/TSI Schools (including ATSI) Only:** Describe the procedures used to create the school's improvement plan and briefly state the specific efforts to address the causes of low student performance and resource inequities.

N/A

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

N/A

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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