



Robin Fields Kinney
Interim Commissioner of Education

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

300 Sower Boulevard • Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Phone: (502) 564-3141 • www.education.ky.gov

April 11, 2024

Michael Melton, Superintendent
Elliott County Public Schools
PO Box 767
Sandy Hook, KY 41171

Dear Superintendent Melton:

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 2023-2024 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in the Elliott 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 IV, Part A
- Title V, Part B
- Gifted and Talented
- Preschool

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.

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

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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 the [KDE website](#).

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

Sincerely,

Kelly Foster, Ed.D.

Associate Commissioner

Office of Continuous Improvement and Support

KF/TR/ES/vb

Attachment: Consolidated Monitoring Report for Elliott County Public Schools

2023-2024 Statewide Consolidated Monitoring Report

District: Elliott County

Date(s) of Visit: Jan. 23-25, 2024

Team Leads:

- Title I, Part A – Jennifer White
- Title II, Part A – Laura McCullough
- Title IV, Part A – Lalah Brewer
- Title V, Part B – Shashawna Williams
- Gifted and Talented – Kathie Anderson
- Preschool – Tammy Rutherford

Effective Practice No. 1: Student Services and Plans

Program(s) Addressed: Title V, Part B

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 1

The district has utilized its Title V funds to purchase intervention software for both the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. The coordinator expressed that data indicates a correlation between the intervention program and student success. Teachers are unified about its efficacy related to student achievement. The Title V coordinator continues to seek out effective means of monitoring student growth and achievement.

Effective Practice No. 2: Professional Development

Program(s) Addressed: Title II, Part A

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 2

Title II, Part A observed an acceptance of multiple alternative certification routes. As a district facing teacher shortages, Elliott County's recruitment strategy of utilizing multiple paths to certification has allowed them to fill some vacancies and reduce class sizes.

Effective Practice No. 3: Culture and Climate

Program(s) Addressed: Title I, Part A

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 3

School leadership expressed feeling supported at the district level. While critical staffing shortages present hardships and at times overwhelm existing staff, district leadership demonstrated dedication to meeting students' academic and social emotional needs. The district has taken proactive steps to address student safety through a vaping intervention program.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 1: Finance

Programs Addressed: Title II, Part A; Title IV, Part A; Title V, Part B

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 1

Federal programs observed a lack of alignment between the approved spending plans and actual spending in MUNIS reports. Title IV, Part A observed that spending did not meet program spending requirements as outlined in Section 4106(e)(2)(C-E) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as the district did not spend at least 20% of the Title IV allocation in the Safe and Healthy Students category, which is required of districts with Title IV, Part A allocations greater than \$30,000. The district does not have a process in place to review and revise budgets regularly to ensure timely spending that aligns with the activities in approved applications.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s) for Opportunity for Improvement No. 1

The district should ensure that spending is intentional, tied to documented needs and monitored through

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the life of the grant. Spending should reflect each school's needs and should follow the approved budget closely. A recommended best practice is to align MUNIS and Grant Management Application and Planning (GMAP) application budget quarterly for all federal applications. The district should explore additional resources and trainings on federal grants compliance to ensure staff understand all the requirements of purchasing with federal grant funds.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 2: Policies and Procedures

Programs Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A; Title V, Part B; Preschool

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 2

Federal programs observed a lack of formally written procedures and internal controls for finance and program oversight. Federal purchasing procedures did not address whether purchases are reasonable, allocable, necessary and documented as required by ESEA 8306(a)(1) and Parts 76 and 200 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). The preschool program observed that the district was not following state regulations for teacher certification in state funded preschool classrooms. The teacher serving as the lead teacher inside the blended preschool classroom does not have an IECE teaching certificate.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s) for Opportunity for Improvement No. 2

The district should review requirements surrounding policies, processes and procedures listed in the individual program reports to ensure programmatic compliance and effectiveness. Staff should work together to identify overlapping program requirements that may be addressed with a common policy, process or procedure. Once the policies, processes and procedures are in place, the district should provide training for staff to familiarize themselves with the documents to ensure they are implemented with fidelity.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 3: Leadership

Programs Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title IV, Part A

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 3

The district leadership is supportive and willing to go above and beyond their regular duties to support students and district functions, however the individuals carry additional duties due to critical staffing shortages. As is common in small districts, staff who have multiple job titles are often pulled in different directions and balance multiple responsibilities which may result in limited formal and informal communication. This additional burden may cause a reduction in fidelity of federal requirements and processes. Time constraints due to staffing shortages also limit the district's ability to collaborate effectively among all programs.

Common Solution(s)/Recommendation(s) for Opportunity for Improvement No. 3

The district could consider conducting a needs assessment of leadership duties to evaluate the workload on existing staff and the sustainability of the current leadership structure. This could involve reassessing workload distribution, considering hiring additional staff where feasible, implementing strategies to streamline processes, and providing professional development opportunities to enhance efficiency.

Final Overview

The Elliott County administration and staff are driven by a shared commitment to meet the academic and social emotional needs of students. Intentionally allocating funds to align with approved

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applications aimed at meeting student needs will enable the district to better support its students and bridge any existing achievement gaps. By formalizing processes and procedures, the district can demonstrate program compliance and ensure the consistent implementation of effective practices. Reassessing individual workloads for sustainability could significantly enhance overall efficiency. Fostering open communication channels and actively addressing staff needs and challenges can contribute to a more sustainable and supportive work environment.