



Dr. Robbie Fletcher
Commissioner of Education

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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July 7, 2026

Chris Brady, Superintendent
Marion County Public Schools
755 E Main St.
Lebanon, KY 40033

Dear Superintendent Brady:

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 2025-2026 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in the Marion 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 III, Part A
- Title IV, Part A
- Alternative Education Programs
- Preschool
- Procurement

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 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
Kentucky Department of Education

KF/TR/ES/vb

Attachment: Consolidated Monitoring Report for Marion County Public Schools

2025-2026 Statewide Consolidated Monitoring Report

District: Marion County

Dates of Visit: April 28-30, 2026

Team Leads:

- Title I, Part A – Jennifer White
- Title II, Part A – Jason Howard
- Title III, Part A – Brandy Neal
- Title IV, Part A – Lee Bowling
- Alternative Education Programs – Leticia Porter
- Preschool – Tyler Forsythe

Effective Practice No. 1: Professional Development

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

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 1

Marion County School District utilizes a coordinated approach to professional development across Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A programs. The district prioritizes curriculum consistency and instructional alignment. The curriculum initiatives are supported by subject specific professional learning communities that enhance collaboration. The district has established a professional development plan that emphasizes ongoing, year-over-year learning rather than isolated training events. The district has strategically focused its professional learning for key content areas such as reading, mathematics and science. Staff are also provided with opportunities for individualized targeted professional learning based on their roles and needs.

Effective Practice No. 2: Leadership

Programs Addressed: Title I, Part A; Title IV, Part A, Alternative Education Program

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 2

The Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A coordinator serves in a dual role and actively engages with schools by conducting site visits, attending monthly administrative meetings and providing direct technical assistance. Principals across the district consistently reported the coordinator's helpfulness and willingness to assist, noting her strong visibility within the schools. The district leadership provides support to principals in the development and implementation of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), reinforcing alignment and continuous improvement across schools. Alternative education program staff feel supported by the building principal who prioritizes fostering meaningful relationships with students and families. The efforts reflect responsive leadership that helps to create a culture of continuous growth.

Effective Practice No. 3: Climate and Culture

Programs Addressed: Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; Preschool

Highlight of Effective Practice No. 3

Marion County School District demonstrates a positive and supportive climate across multiple programs. Interviews with staff indicate strong, respectful relationships among colleagues. Teachers express overall satisfaction and positive perception of their work environment. Preschool classrooms are welcoming and student-centered, with staff demonstrating a deep understanding of their students and willingness to ensure educational goals and needs are met. The district is intentional about providing outreach to special populations such as English learner (EL) and migrant students. Through events such

as open house, families are given opportunities to connect with district personnel and community partners. Staff have taken additional steps to support EL students by ensuring access to scholarship opportunities to promote continued education beyond high school. These coordinated efforts help to strengthen communication, foster collaboration and respond to the diverse needs of its student population.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 1: Community

Programs Addressed: Title II, Part A; Alternative Education Program

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 1

The district provided minimal evidence of stakeholder and community involvement in the development and implementation of Title II, Part A program. The district was unable to produce documentation such as meeting agendas or minutes demonstrating consultation with stakeholders. Alternative education program interviews indicated limited efforts to engage community groups or partners or to involve volunteers in supporting program initiatives.

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

To address gaps in stakeholder engagement and documentation, Marion County School District should leverage effective practices already established in other federal programs such as Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A. For example, the district should consider holding regular meetings during which activities are routinely reviewed and discussed, with opportunities for stakeholder input. Expanding intentional outreach to community partners and volunteers, particularly in the alternative education program will further strengthen the program. Successful practices such as agenda documentation and meeting notes can be expanded and customized to meet the requirements of other programs. By coordinating these efforts across programs, the district can create a more cohesive system that will promote stakeholder engagement and support overall program effectiveness.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 2: Finance

Programs Addressed: Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 2

The Title II, Part A monitoring team identified unallowable purchases made using Title II, Part A funds which the district had to move to another allowable funding source. Documentation revealed inadequate guidance was provided to private schools participating in the Title II, Part A program regarding allowability. Enterprise ERP (EERP) reports were not aligned with expenditures in the approved Title III, Part A Grant Management Application and Planning (GMAP) application.

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

To address inconsistencies in fiscal oversight within Title II, Part A and Title III, Part A, it is recommended that the district develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure allowability and alignment with approved applications. This could include strengthening collaboration between the finance officer and federal program coordinators, such as increasing the frequency of meetings. Additionally, effective practices that are currently in place for Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A such as regular meetings between the program coordinator and finance officer to review budget sheets, expenditures and approved program applications should be implemented across all federal programs. This will help maintain alignment between EERP reports and the approved program applications in GMAP. This practice provides ongoing monitoring and accountability for both programs and

emphasizes intentional use of funds to support program goals. By standardizing these processes, the district can improve financial accuracy and strengthen overall fiscal management.

Opportunity for Improvement No. 3: Policies and Procedures

Programs Addressed: Title II, Part A; Alternative Education Program

Summary of Opportunity for Improvement No. 3

Policies and procedures across federal programs are not consistently implemented in Marion County. While evidence of allowability procedures were evident in Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A, similar procedures were lacking for Title II, Part A. Formal behavior data is not collected or used to inform decision-making in the alternative education program and clear consistent expectations for student behavior are not established across program components. Evidence and interviews indicate the absence of a consistent program-wide approach to behavior management. Variability exists between Marion Virtual and Extended Learning (MARVEL) and Hugh C. Spalding programs, with more structured supports evident for students in the MARVEL program. While staff demonstrate efforts to address students' social and emotional needs, approaches lack consistency and are not always grounded in evidence-based practices.

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

The district is encouraged to promote collaboration among leaders to share practices and align policies and procedures across settings. It is recommended to make sure there is consistency between all schools in the district including A1 and A5 schools. Establishing clear expectations and monitoring implementation across program will help promote consistency and fidelity. Ongoing reviews of data and practices will further encourage continuous improvement and allow the district to make informed decisions.

Final Overview

Marion County School District demonstrates a commitment to supporting students and staff through intentional planning, hands-on leadership and a focus on continuous improvement. The district has established effective systems of stakeholder engagement, professional learning and financial oversight across some of their programs. It is recommended that the district expand these positive practices across all federal programs. Staff across the district highlight positive working relationships, a collaborative culture and shared focus on meeting diverse needs of students. Throughout the review process district leadership and staff were receptive to feedback and demonstrated a willingness to reflect on and improve practices. The district maintains a strong focus on professional development that is intentional to district goals and initiatives. By building on existing strengths and increasing consistency across programs, Marion County is well prepared to continue advancing implementation and supporting positive outcomes for all students.