

A yellow spotlight beam shines down from a dark blue lamp icon at the top center, illuminating the title and the school name below it.

# Spotlight School

**duPont Manual High**  
*Jefferson County*

**GRADES SERVED: 9-12**

duPont Manual High School is a magnet school in Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), located in the heart of Louisville, Kentucky. The school is situated just a few blocks north of historic Churchill Downs, home of the Kentucky Derby.

Established in 1892 with support from Victor duPont of the duPont Chemical Company, duPont Manual High became a magnet school in 1984 and was soon recognized as a National School of Excellence. The school enrolls over 1,900 gifted and talented students through five highly selective magnet programs. Admission is competitive, considering factors such as academic achievement, test scores, personal essays, extracurricular activities, teacher recommendations, visual art portfolios and performing arts auditions.

duPont Manual High School offers a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum that allows students to excel across all disciplines while emphasizing their selected magnet program. Courses are available at the Honors, Advanced and Advanced Placement levels. The school also provides the Advance Program, the most challenging high school curriculum within JCPS. This program selects students from the top 3% of the district based on national test scores, academic achievement and teacher recommendations. Participants must maintain a 3.0 GPA and complete at least 12 credits in Advance Program or higher-level courses, with enrollment in a minimum of three such courses per year. Additionally, duPont Manual High School offers multiple opportunities for students to engage in dual credit coursework through partnerships with colleges and universities. These options include school-based dual credit courses taught by dual-certified high school faculty, dual enrollment at partner institutions, and online courses led by college or university instructors.

**PRINCIPAL AND CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

**25.3% Economically Disadvantaged**

**3% Students with Disabilities**

**0.7% English Learner Students**

## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS SCHOOL:

- 1.** How to develop and establish foundational systems that are supported by data and monitored consistently to support academic achievement and overall school improvement
- 2.** How to create a streamlined system for data management, communication and other school leadership operations

## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS SCHOOL CONTINUED:

3. The importance of voice and opportunities for feedback from multiple stakeholders (school staff, students, parents, community members, district staff) including but not limited to school-based decision-making councils (SBDMs)
4. Instructional rigor in the classroom
5. The management of Advanced Placement (AP), Dual-Credit and Magnet Programs for high school students

## SERVICES AND STRATEGIES USED TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

The staff at duPont Manual High School prioritize six key systems of school improvement to support student success: (1) Standards and Curriculum Implementation, (2) Effective Use of Data, (3) Collaboration, Planning and Instructional Practices for Deeper Learning, (4) Progress Monitoring and Analysis of Student Work, (5) Academic and Behavioral Support and (6) Instructional Feedback and Professional Learning. Through intentional system design, evaluation and continuous adjustment, the school maintains a strong focus on ongoing improvement.

Teachers engage in the professional learning community (PLC) process to review, deconstruct and design lessons based on approved state standards. With three course levels—Honors, Advanced and Advanced Placement/Dual Credit—the school meets students at their individual skill levels while allowing them to pursue core subjects based on their interests.

duPont Manual provides professional development for teachers through an embedded professional development (PD) plan that fosters collaboration and the sharing of best practices. Instructional strategies are informed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Bloom's Taxonomy and The Artisan Teacher Strategies. Additionally, educators cultivate a learning environment centered on the Five Pursuits: Identity, skills, intellect, criticality and joy, encouraging students to find fulfillment in their academic journey.

duPont Manual High Teachers use a balanced, comprehensive school assessment system that effectively uses (a) universal screeners, (b) common formative assessments, (c) district common assessments (optional), (d) summative assessments and (e) demonstrations of learning to continuously inform teaching and improve learning for every student. Assessment practices are consistent with the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS). Teachers collaboratively design and use assessments to demonstrate mastery of key concepts and skills, to track and communicate student progress, and to provide students with additional learning opportunities toward mastery and proficiency. Students are routinely engaged in setting goals, monitoring their own progress and using descriptive feedback to adjust their own learning. Classroom assessment criteria/standards (e.g., using rubrics, scoring guides, models and exemplars) are provided to students prior to assessments to encourage students to demonstrate rigorous work that is developmentally appropriate. Following each assessment, students receive any rubrics/scoring guides with teacher feedback to clarify their performance toward proficiency and understand areas for future growth. In the event students need additional support or enrichment, duPont Manual offers extended school services (ESS) during the day, after school and throughout the summer. Additionally, duPont Manual provides Tier III intervention for students yet to achieve benchmark/mastery on universal screeners and/or specific instructional standards.

duPont Manual has established a comprehensive multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to provide academic, behavioral, social-emotional and attendance support for students. This system identifies students in need of assistance through classroom-level referrals, including individual and PLC recommendations, as well as administrative-level analysis using meta and narrative

data during MTSS Committee Meetings. The MTSS framework encompasses tiered intervention, academic enrichment, course recovery, positive behavior interventions, mental wellness activities, trauma-informed care supports, mentoring group activities, and a Name and Claim system, all designed to ensure students receive the necessary support for success.

duPont Manual is dedicated to supporting teachers and staff in effectively communicating student progress with families, providing practical strategies for parental involvement in learning, and fostering strong partnerships with parents and community members in decision-making. Transparent communication between school administration, teachers, students and guardians is a key component of these efforts. Students and parents are encouraged to participate in SBDM committees throughout the year to contribute to school improvement initiatives. Additionally, duPont Manual benefits from five distinct external support organizations that address the unique instructional needs of each magnet program. The school also maintains partnerships with local colleges and universities to offer Dual Credit opportunities and collaborates with local businesses to enhance Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction through real-world learning experiences.

## WHAT DATA SUPPORTS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICES AND STRATEGIES OFFERED?

- Overall Performance Rating: Blue (highest performance)
- Combined reading/math: Blue (very high)
- Combined science/social studies/writing: Green (high)
- Quality of School Climate and Safety: Blue (very high)
- Post Secondary Readiness: Blue (very high)
- Graduation Rate: Blue (very high)
- duPont Manual showed an overall increase of reading/math combined scores, with increases in White, Hispanic and Asian subgroups.
- duPont Manual showed an increase of science, social studies and writing combined scores for African American and economically disadvantaged subgroups.
- ACT performance:
  - duPont Manual is the #1 - A1 School (Regular Comprehensive Setting) in the state.
  - Average Composite ACT is 25.2 with the following Content Averages:
    - English - 25.2
    - Reading - 26
    - Math - 24
    - Science - 25.1

## WHAT CHALLENGES HAS THE SCHOOL FACED? HOW WERE THEY OVERCOME?

duPont Manual was not immune to the impact of COVID-19. Like many schools, they faced significant challenges when helping students through loss of instruction, lack of socialization and decreases in emotional wellness. Along with the COVID-19 concerns, they also had vacant teaching and instructional support positions that created lapses in supports for students. Another challenge the school has faced is a declining daily attendance rate which led to the implementation of an Attendance Committee consisting of multiple stakeholders to work through this challenge. A new challenge for this year includes the loss of bus transportation for students. However, each of these challenges served as motivation to improve their MTSS plan and implement strategies for improvement. By maintaining a historical look at improvement practices, they were able to implement new action plans to measure the impact of their efforts. Those systems and actions that resulted in improvement are now embedded and recorded as active effective practices.

## WHAT ADVICE DOES THIS SCHOOL SUGGEST TO SCHOOLS ON THEIR JOURNEY TO SUSTAINED ACHIEVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION?

The principal at duPont Manual has served as a principal at one of the lowest performing schools in the state as well as now the highest performing school in the state. His advice for sustained achievement includes the following:

- Have a clear vision that families, students and teachers are emboldened to support.
- Build efficient and sustainable systems that are both comprehensive for overall improvement and strategic for isolated/specific areas of support.
- Ensure you can regularly monitor and measure the indicators of success for your school and systems, even the small indicators that show incremental growth on a specific area of your vision.
- Be communicative...and transparent. Great leaders must celebrate the wins and be humble when improvement needs to continue.
- Be present. Get to know your staff, students and families personally and be responsive when they need help.
- Promote “work-life” balance for your staff, your students and....you too!



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