



Executive Summary

Ockerman Elementary School

Boone County

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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?

Ockerman Elementary is one of 14 elementary schools within the Boone County School district and is located in Florence Kentucky. Ockerman Elementary is one of 5 elementary schools in the city of Florence. The city of Florence is the 2nd largest city in Northern Kentucky with an estimated population of just over 31,000 people and one of the fastest growing communities in the state with an estimated population increase of over 6% since the 2010 census. Ockerman Elementary is located in an urban area and sits amidst a mixture of residential areas and businesses. Students travel an average of 3.5 miles to and from school with the largest percentage of our students living in mobile home parks or apartment complexes. The current enrollment is 754 students ranging from preschool to 5th grade. Ockerman Elementary receives full school Title 1 services as we have 68% of our students who receive free or reduced lunch. 67% of our students are Caucasian followed by the next largest representation of Hispanic students at 22%. The remaining population is made up of less than 5% African American students, less than 5% two or more races, less than 2% Asian. Within our student population we have approximately 23% of our students who have a first language other than English and represent at least 8 other languages which creates one of our greatest challenges here at Ockerman. Within these families, many of the parents do not have the capability to communicate as their children typically have a better mastery of the English language than they do. We also face the challenge of a high percentage of transiency within our school and the neighboring schools. It is not uncommon for a student to withdraw and go to another elementary school within Boone County and then return again later in the school year. Typically the largest percentage of new enrollments come from schools within our own district and most often from schools within our same city. The level of transiency is due to the large number of our families that live in either the mobile home parks or apartments some of which move frequently due to socioeconomic challenges. Many of our families share homes with their extended families in order to meet the basic needs for the families. We have a very high percentage - over 60% - who are not considered ready for kindergarten based upon the Brigance Readiness test. In addition to these challenges, we have over 16% of our population that receive special education services, however we do have 24% of our students who were identified as gifted and talented which adds to the diversity of our building. Despite these challenges, we are proud to say that we continue to be rated a proficient school based upon KPREP and experience a high level of student academic growth yearly. This can only be done with an amazing staff which is what we have. Our current staff count is 57 certified teachers with an average of 11.5 years of teaching experience with 47% of teachers holding a master's degree and 11% percent holding their Rank 1. The largest change that this school has undergone in the last three years would be that of a change in administration. In 2014, the previous principal transferred to another school within the district creating a vacancy. Shortly before the beginning of the same school year, the then assistant principal also transferred out of state. This created a situation in which both the principal and assistant principal were both first year administrators. Changes to the building under the new administration have included the implementation of a new math and reading program, restructuring of the RTI program, enhanced implementation of school wide PBIS which has greatly increased positive student behaviors.

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.

The mission of Ockerman Elementary is to develop academically and socially prepared students who are responsible, independent thinkers possessing effective communication skills, self discipline and respect by providing an innovative learning environment supported by quality teachers and staff, involved parents and community partners. We emphasize various teaching modalities to meet a vast array of student motivational and learning styles. A high degree of collaboration is employed with district office support staff to analyze discrepancies in scores in identified populations, identify specific needs, develop a plan of strategies to address needs, train all teachers through professional development, implement strategies to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of ALL students. Ongoing collaboration between school staff, the parent teacher organization, Family Resource Center Coordinator, school counseling program, student intervention teams, school based decision making committee (SBDM) and other community stakeholders takes place in order to ensure that all student needs - academic, social, emotional and physical needs are being met. Recently, with the work of the staff members, SBDM committee and students, a new school vision acronym LEAD - was selected which exemplifies the journey of Ockerman Elementary. L - learn, E - explore, A - achieve D - dream. This visionary acronym is being supported through the implementation of unified arts/ special area programs for World Language and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) using the Project Lead the Way curriculum. In conjunction with new program, we have also increased the level of student accountability through the use of data binders and student led conferences.

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.

Ockerman Elementary continues to earn the proficient rating from KPREP and have been ranked as one of the top schools in the state in the area of science and feel confident that this achievement would have continued if this area continued to be included in the state assessment. Ockerman Elementary is recognized as a School of Contribution for our ongoing commitment to service learning in the Northern Kentucky area. To our staff, students and family members this is a significant accomplishment as can be evidenced by our demographics that many of our these same families that support their children with service learning have little themselves but willing give service to others.

Ockerman Elementary is currently a recipient of the Target Learning Grant which provides literacy support for students through financial and physical support for the school. Recently we applied for and were awarded a partnership with the Northern Kentucky Health Department as a participant in their REACH program for improving the overall health of students which can present a barrier for learning. This is a two year commitment that will enable us to address the various areas in which we can improve health for students and families. This program provides training as well as financial support to implement program changes. Additionally, Ockerman Elementary was recently awarded the Launch and Learn Grant awarded by KDE to address global competency. Global Competency is critical for innovation in the 21st century and is the next step for Kentucky's commitment to college- and career-readiness. The Launch and Learn Grant will assist with providing an in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues and an appreciation of and ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language and the skills to function productively in an interdependent world community. The grant provides the financial support to acquire the VIF International Education program which is an evidence based provider of support programs and services in the are of global competency along with support from KDE in order to design and implement a high level World Language program at the elementary level.

Over the next three years, it is the goal of Ockerman Elementary to reduce the number of novice students in all academic areas while increasing the number of students who achieve proficient / distinguished ratings. We will continue our work in the area of writing across all content areas. We will continue to increase the level of expectation for all students while providing support both physically and emotionally to address any barriers which may get in their way of achieving academic success. Our goal is to produce students who are on their way to being college and career ready and who attain the skills necessary in elementary school in order to become high achieving individuals as they continue their academic journey. We will also continue our work with increasing the level of parent and community involvement as this is an area that we have identified as vitally important in order to meet the needs of all students.

Additional Information

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

Ockerman Elementary School can best be described as a family. We work hard and set high expectations for ourselves as well as each and every student. We hold strong to the idea that "it takes a village" and will work tirelessly to ensure that we are providing the supports that students need to be successful. We strive to create an educational setting that is welcoming and inviting while still demanding high levels of expectation for students. Our goal is to provide an environment that meets the needs of all students as well as removes any barriers (socioeconomic, emotional, environmental) to learning so students are given every opportunity to become successful students who are College and Career Ready.