



2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for
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2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Districts

Elizabethtown Independent
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Description of the District

Describe the district'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 district serves?

The Elizabethtown Independent School District was established over 200 years ago with a past mission statement, "Tradition of Excellence: High Standards, Each Student, Every Day" that still resonates deeply with stakeholders and a new evolving mission statement, "We exist to help all students achieve excellence within an equitable learning environment". EIS has consistently ranked in the top tiers of all school districts across the commonwealth. All EIS schools have been accredited by SACS CASI for decades with the most recent accreditation in 2016. The district is currently in the accreditation process with Cognia/Advanced Ed, which should conclude at the end of January 2022. Elizabethtown High School has been accredited with SACS since 1918, making it one of the very first accredited schools in Kentucky. Our "Tradition of Excellence" is reflected in our extracurricular activities as well, both academic and athletic. The district values its small size with a district enrollment of approximately 2,400 students in Preschool through grade twelve giving it a family feel that is closely knitted to the community. The district is comprised of 6 schools: Panther Academy Preschool and Kindergarten Center, Helmwood Heights 1st-5th grade elementary school, Morningside 1st-5th grade elementary school, T.K. Stone 6th-8th grade middle school, Elizabethtown 9th-12th grade high school, and Valley View Alternative Education Center. Being relatively small affords unique benefits, fosters the development of meaningful relationships with all of our stakeholders, and offers students the opportunity to be more involved in school-sponsored activities and extracurricular events. The community and the school district encompass a diverse population with approximately 34% of the district student population representing minorities, and 50% of the district student population receiving Free and Reduced Lunches. The district employs 182 certified staff, 12 teachers holding National Board Certification, and 159 classified staff. Elizabethtown Independent is proud of the fact that the student-teacher ratio in classrooms is as low as 15:1. One unique characteristic of our district is in our numbers of contracted and non-contracted tuition students. We currently have 64 students paying \$4,000/year in tuition, 201 contracted students, 35 reciprocal students residing in neighboring counties, and 124 students of staff members who reside outside of the district. We are located in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, the county seat of Hardin County, with a current population of approximately 101, 000 people, which is Kentucky's 4th largest county. Forty-four miles south of Louisville, with a

population of 30,157 people, the city is often referred to as the heartland or the "Hub City" because most of the major interstates in Kentucky intersect in Elizabethtown. The city's central location in the state, coupled with easy access to major interstates, has drawn a number of major industries to the community enhancing its commerce, employability, economy, and growth. Recent news revealed to the community, school system, and industry leaders that Ford Motor Company would be building an expansive battery factory a small distance outside of the city of Elizabethtown in quiet, Glendale, Ky in the next 5 years which will provide 5,000 jobs to the community and countless opportunities for growth, commerce, and opportunity. As a school district we are in the beginning phases of planning for ways in which we can support our students in preparing for the job opportunities this factory will offer. Residing close to Fort Knox, the community has also been impacted by the ebb and flow of the military service members as the focus and mission of the post has changed over the years. The district population has been impacted by these changes over the last few years as well. At this time the district serves approximately 137 students whose families are associated with the military. The Elizabethtown community offers a wide variety of post-secondary education opportunities through Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) as well as satellite branches for Western Kentucky University and Campbellsville University, located on the ECTC campus. This has afforded residents the opportunity to secure both two and four-year degrees and trade skills in Elizabethtown without having to relocate which has been a tremendous asset, not only for students, but to the military installation and local corporations seeking a high-educated, highly-skilled workforce. As a district, we have worked to expand our CTE pathways, co-op opportunities, apprenticeships, dual credit classes, certifications, work ethic certification, essential skills curriculum, post-secondary readiness, transition readiness, work-based experiences, and Panther College participation. We have also strived toward building partnerships with our community stakeholders, industry leaders, other school districts, and colleges to share resources and offer more opportunities for our students. The community maintains a rich history that includes a link to Abraham Lincoln, the establishment of the Louisville/ Nashville Railroad, and a Civil War battle in 1862. The county's historical museum is in the city of Elizabethtown and is a center of attraction to both residents and visitors to the city and county. The city also maintains a community center and numerous parks including Freeman Lake Park, Elizabethtown Sports Park, Elizabethtown Nature Park, American Legion Park, Ring Road Softball Complex, Haycraft Neighborhood Park, Gates Field, Greenbelt Trails, Michael Carroll Soccer Complex, Nicholas Street Soccer Fields and University Drive Park to name a few. These parks offer families, residents, and visitors the opportunity to picnic, attend concerts and events, paddleboat, fish, walk, run, hike, explore, fish, exercise, participate in community sports, and many other activities.

Our most notable park, the Elizabethtown Sports Park, is a 150-acre sports complex that opened in the summer of 2012 and hosts major sporting events for the state and region and draws thousands of people to the community each year. In addition, the Bluegrass Sportsplex, a 103,000 square foot indoor sports facility opened in 2019 with a multi-use indoor turf field, 3 full-size basketball courts, 5 volleyball courts, party rooms, concessions, and much more drawing in additional visitors to the community and enhancing our economy. Medical and professional services of every type are available in the city; this includes a 300 plus bed hospital, Baptist Health Hardin, which continues to enhance its services and expand its facility and ranks in the top 25% nationwide for quality of services. Several shopping areas including "superstores" and strip malls as well as a fully enclosed mall are all located within the city limits. A revitalization of Elizabethtown's downtown area has occurred within the last five years with the establishment of restaurants, boutiques, clothing stores, boutiques, coffee and ice cream shops, and more. In addition, a large number of major restaurant and hotel chains host successful establishments in the community and accommodate our ever-growing needs and the increasing number of visitors to the area. COVID 19 has presented unique challenges for our district and districts across the state, the nation, and the globe. We have learned exponentially when it comes to the use of technology, instructional technology, distance learning, blending learning strategies, and hybrid teaching practices. While this time has been challenging, we are committed to embracing a "change, challenge, opportunity" mindset where we find silver linings each day that will make us better, stronger, and more effective post-pandemic. We are examining policies, practices, pedagogy, and how we do business every day to see what we can learn from this experience to make us better. We know we have established deeper, more meaningful, more collaborative relationships with our families and our community during this time that will only make us better in the future. We know we have grown closer through our struggles, learned to collaborate more, learned to trust one another more, and learned the value of working together for the good of all. Throughout this time we have been presented with changes daily, through those changes we are presented with many challenges, however, those changes and challenges afford us the opportunity to learn and grow closer for the benefit of all as we work through this difficult time.

District's Purpose

Provide the district's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the district embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The district adopted a mission statement in 2012 that states, "A Tradition of Excellence: High Standards, Each Student, Every Day." While this mission statement

is deeply rooted in many stakeholders, the district is in the process of updating our Vision, Mission, and Core Values to represent relevant changes and needs in our district since the 2012 mission statement was developed. The current draft Vision Statement is, "Every EIS student will learn and grow according to their own goals both academically and socially." paired with a current draft Mission Statement of "We exist to help all students achieve excellence within an equitable learning environment." and six Core Values that consist of the following: respect, kindness, integrity, collaboration, accountability, and equity. District policy ensures a district planning committee, representative of the community and the school district consisting of teachers, principals, council members, central office administration, board members, classified staff, parents, community representatives, and high school students will develop, monitor, and annually update the district's Strategic Improvement Plan. In 2016, former superintendent Jon Ballard, worked with stakeholders to develop this plan with strategic objectives, targets, and strategies. The vision statement is as follows: 1) Students who are motivated, challenged, and empowered to be lifelong learners prepared to succeed in a changing, diverse, technological society 2) A school district that is willing to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of each student and ensure each child's educational and personal success 3) Parents who are active partners, equipped to participate in the learning process of each student. and 4) A community who is an active partner in securing resources and tools that will assist each child in discovering his or her greatest potential. "A Tradition of Excellence: High Standards, Each Student, Every Day" is the mission that is demonstrated in every Elizabethtown Independent School. This philosophy of placing students and families first, as the primary customer, is foundational to sustaining the "Tradition of Excellence". The district plans to work through the process in the near future of revisiting and revising the EIS Strategic Plan to align to the new Vision, Mission, and Core Values to meet the everchanging needs of our students, staff, and community while keeping our core beliefs about education and the purpose of our district. EIS consistently ranks in the top 15% on state achievement assessments, has a variety of outstanding extracurricular activities and programs, and has earned several academic and athletic awards and recognition. None of this would be possible without the district's focus on building and maintaining healthy relationships with its community, staff, students, and families. This collaboration between school and community is the heart of this unique small school district and a source of community pride. The high value placed on relationships among all stakeholders (students, staff, families, community members, etc.) embodies the essence of what is meant by "A Tradition of Excellence". It is foundational to the Panther Pride that is felt in the community and across the school district.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the district's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the district is striving to achieve in the next three years.

The district is proud of many accomplishments as a result of conducting everyday school business with the "Tradition of Excellence" mission in mind and an emphasis on customer service among students, families, the community, and our staff. The district website showcases most of these, however, this list notes a few: increase in CTE Pathways through the district's ACES program; an increase in co-op/ apprenticeships/work-based experiences for our students; increases in Work Ethic Certification and College/Career Readiness; increase in partnerships with other districts/colleges/community partners to grow our CTE program and opportunities for our students; 12 National Board Certified Teachers; ExCEL Award participant for 30 years; small accredited schools and classrooms with as few as a 15:1 student to teacher ratio; state and nationally recognized Project Lead the Way programs at the elementary, middle and high school; AP course completion rate of 92.4%; all-day preschool for 4-year-olds; high-quality professional development for teachers; a district Instructional Technology team of Digital Learning Coaches to meet the growing needs of our teachers; and EIS Staff Landing page for all things curriculum, instruction, professional learning, assessment and instructional technology; a Kagan Cooperative Learning Leadership Team; a Structured Balanced Literacy Team; a District Writing Team; a PLTW cadre; a Social Studies Cadre; active/smart boards in all classrooms; 1 to 1 Chromebooks for all students K-12; to name a few. EHS holds 13 athletic championships and 22 state runner-ups; an active alumni association; an active Elizabethtown Education Foundation who has awarded over \$300,000 in teacher grants to EIS; summer enrichment programs for at-risk students; summer reading programs for elementary students; partnerships with Communicare and Brighter Futures; community partnerships with Wesley Hilltop House, Haycraft Park, and ECTC; grant partnerships with GRREC, KY Abri, and Project Prevent; and CTE partnerships with LaRue Co schools, ECTC, and Campbellsville University. With a transition in student enrollment demographics in the last 5-10 years, the district has encountered challenges that arise with a changing and more transient population. Many students that now enroll in the district deal with multiple poverty issues. We've also experienced an increase in the enrollment of special education students. These changes coupled together have driven us to shift our focus for improvement to areas like understanding poverty in our students, implicit bias, cultural proficiency, and trauma-informed instruction. We also have a professional learning focus or priority in PBIS/RtB plans and processes as well as Restorative Justice practices. To address our at-risk students and our academic gap areas we've increased our focus on student engagement through Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures, positive behavior supports through PBIS/RtB, small group and

collaborative instructional models to support student needs to include Station Teaching/Co-Teaching/Parallel Teaching, college and career readiness pathway and partnership expansion to increase opportunities for students, and foundational literacy skills with a 5-year literacy plan that includes Structured Balanced Literacy in the areas of Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension and Writing in our elementary schools. We've also learned and grown exponentially with the use of technology, instructional technology tools, distance learning, and blended learning and hybrid strategies that will transform the trajectory of instruction and education not only in our district but across the state, nation, and across the globe.

Additional Information

Districts Supporting CSI/TSI (including ATSI) Schools Only: Describe the procedures for monitoring and providing support for (a) CSI/TSI school(s) so as to ensure the successful implementation of the school improvement plan.

N/A

Additional Information

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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