



2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Schools_Panther Academy

2021-22 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Schools

Panther Academy
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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?

Panther Academy educates preschool and kindergarten students for the Elizabethtown Independent Schools. The school is often characterized as "The Happy Place" in the school district due to the warm and cheerful culture and climate demonstrated by the staff. Learning and helping students succeed is the goal of the school; however, the teachers strive to do that in a fun and engaging manner. The total number of students in the school is 245. 185 kindergarten students attend school at Panther Academy. 60 preschool students are currently enrolled. The school has 12 classrooms. Currently, 8 of those classrooms are kindergarten classrooms while 4 are preschool. The school is centralized in the district and within close proximity to most of the schools in the district. The school is located in closest proximity to our district's high school, Elizabethtown High School. This walking distance between Panther Academy and Elizabethtown High School allows for a partnership between the two schools where high school students work and help as mentors in all of the classes. Instruction at Panther Academy is focused on the best practices and effective strategies for educating our early learner population. Certified staff turnover is very low. Panther Academy is a relatively newer school. The school has been established for 10 years only. Staff turnover is relatively low for certified staff. The breakdown for years in service for the 17 full-time teachers while teaching at Panther Academy is: 9 have taught for 10 years; 4 teachers have taught for 9 years; 2 have taught for 4 years; 1 has taught for 3 years and 1 has taught for 2 years. We have 3 part-time teachers that work with our intervention students. 2 of the teachers have helped the students for 2 years while 1 is a new hire this year.

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.

Panther Academy staff is currently in the process of identifying the core values for the school while updating the mission and vision statement for the school. The current mission statement is Passionate About loving to learn. The mission statement for Panther Academy explains why we exist as a school. One proposed revised mission statement is "We exist to help all students love to learn while building a strong foundation in reading and math for the EIS district." The vision

statement is a school family that provides a positive and nurturing environment for the whole child. The vision statement reflects on what the school needs to do in order to promote success for all students. An updated, a proposed vision statement is "All Panther Academy students will learn to read and understand math in a fun, engaging way." The ultimate goal at Panther Academy is to create lifelong learners in the district's youngest students through fun, engaging lessons, strategies and activities. The professional development plan and professional learning for the staff allow time for the staff to focus on the new strategies while refining those practices that have been proven to be successful. Students have access to the core curriculum in reading, writing, math, science and social studies as established by the master schedule. Time in the master schedule has been established for students to gain knowledge in related arts and special area curriculum such as library, art, music and PE, as well.

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.

One of the greatest achievements of the school is the school's reputation for being the happiest place in the district. The students like to come to school and enjoy participating in the lesson that the teachers have planned. The school team works well together to create a positive atmosphere and environment. Panther Academy was making steady yearly gains in kindergarten readiness from 2018 to 2020. The percentage of kindergarten readiness by year was 52.1% in 2018, 57.4% in 2019 and 62.4% in 2020. For the current year of 2021, that percentage has decreased below the previous 3 years low with 49.4% of the students demonstrating kindergarten readiness. Those students faced the most unusual year with half of the preschool year being offered virtually and many of the students staying home due to Covid concerns. The goal for Panther Academy is to increase the number of students who are kindergarten ready as the students move from preschool into kindergarten and increase the number of students reading at grade level as students transition from kindergarten into first grade. The school goals are aligned with the district plan for a balanced literacy approach. Preschool and kindergarten teachers are being trained to use Orton Gillingham for phonics instruction. Both grade levels use Heggerty for phonological awareness. Having a systematic plan and common resources allows the school determine instructional holes and to close gaps in more unified manner. Next year, the balanced literacy plan will be expanded to include reading fluency.

Additional Information

CSI/TSI Schools (including ATSI) Only: Describe the procedures used to create the school's improvement plan and briefly state the specific efforts to address the causes of low student

performance and resource inequities.

Panther Academy is not identified as CSI or TSI.

Additional Information

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

In addition to teaching students the content necessary for them to be successful as they advance through the district, the staff works to provide strong social and emotional support for our students. The teachers work to build strong relationships with the students and their families so that all of them can work together as a team with the common goal being the success of the child. From a school-wide perspective, each morning all kindergarten students participate in a grade level morning meeting. In that meeting, the students are taught a new character word every couple of weeks. The words are not simply just said to the students, but shown what the words mean through pictures, books or video examples. Panther Academy has a behavior interventionist who is referred to as our behavior coach. The behavior coach develops plans to help students work through issues and concerns facing the child so that the student can be successful at school.

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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