

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

MISSION: The mission of the Lee County School District is to foster trust, growth, and accountability in partnership with students, staff, parents, and the community.

Lee County School District Receives AdvancED, SACS CASI Full Accreditation

On October 18th, 19th, and 20th, of 2010, the Lee County School District hosted an AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Team that visited the district and each school to evaluate the district's adherence to the AdvancED accreditation standards and to make a recommendation for national accreditation.

Following the QAR Team visit, Lee County School District received notification that national accreditation with recommendations had been awarded through AdvancED and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). Within two years of the award, the district would be required to submit a progress report to AdvancED addressing the noted recommendations. These recommendations consisted of: 1) develop a system of data analysis and job embedded professional development to modify instructional strategies across all levels; 2) engage stakeholders in budget review; and 3) implement strategies that promote higher level thinking skills for all students.

At the beginning of 2014, Lee County School District stakeholders completed the Accreditation Progress Report as required by the five year accreditation

term. The Accreditation Progress Report was a self-assessment based on the five AdvancED Standards, which serve as the foundation of the AdvancED accreditation process. These five standards are: Standard 1: Purpose and Direction; Standard 2: Governance and Leadership; Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning; Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems; and Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement.

Last month, Superintendent Evans received a letter of congratulations from Dr. Barbara J. Remondini of AdvancED. On January 23, 2014, the AdvancED Accreditation Commission reviewed and accepted Lee County School District's Accreditation Progress Report granting continuation of the district's accreditation term. The status of Accredited on Advisement has been removed and the district now has the status of Accredited.

Dr. Remondini commended Superintendent Evans, Lee County staff, and the community on the district's continued commitment to accreditation and annual improvement; and congratulated the district for continued commitment to excellence in education.



School will be in session for Lee County students on April 2nd & April 3rd, 2014. These days have been included as instructional days for students as part of the amended 2013-2014 School Calendar. School will be dismissed for KEA Friday, April 4th, 2014.

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TEACHER FEATURE

Spotlights Superintendent James Evans, Jr., EdD

Please join our school district in congratulating Superintendent James Evans, Jr. for earning his doctorate degree in education leadership through Morehead State University. Dr. Evans has logged countless hours over the past three years in research, literature reviews, surveys, and personal reflection to grow professionally and strengthen his leadership skills to better serve the students of Lee County.

Following graduation from Lee County High School in 1986, Superintendent Evans began his post secondary education at Eastern Kentucky University that same fall. He worked full-time at IBM while also attending school full-time at Eastern until graduating in the spring of 1992.

Dr. Evans began his education career with the Lee County School district as an instructional assistant in 1992. He was employed as a teacher the next school year and taught until taking the position of assistant principal at Lee County High School in 1998. He worked in this capacity for two years, and became principal at Lee County High School in 2000. In 2007, Dr. Evans moved from Lee County High School to the Lee County Board of Education Central Office to fill the position of District Transportation Director. In the fall of 2008, he became Superintendent of Lee County Schools where he continues to serve at the present time.

I've often heard him say that he was thankful for the opportunity to serve the district in these different areas as it has given him an insight into the roles and responsibilities of each position and the way in which each contribute to the success of our students and the district as a whole. Dr. David Barnett, Professor of Foundational & Graduate Studies in Education at Morehead State University, shared the statement below with fellow colleagues following Superintendent Evans' successful Capstone Presentation.

"Colleagues,

This evening If you happen to look toward Beattyville in Lee County, you may see a glow radiating over that part of Kentucky. Dr. Jim Evans successfully defended his capstone project earlier today.

Dr. Evans' capstone, the "Role of the School Superintendent in District Turnaround" had three major components. After conducting a fairly comprehensive literature review focusing on effective leadership strategies in a turnaround process, Dr. Evans constructed a survey focusing on the themes identified in the research and surveyed all of Kentucky's practicing superintendents. When the results were analyzed, Dr. Evans found that the ideas identified by survey respondents were nearly identical to the themes he had identified in his research. The data collection then moved to a focus group activity in which he interviewed 7 practicing superintendents, once again emerging from the focus group with a very similar set of strategies followed by superintendents during turnaround. Finally, Dr. Evans completed a case study of his own district and his own behaviors during their turnaround efforts. Dr. Evans would be the first to say that the improvements made in Lee County represent a great team effort. Nevertheless, it's important to note that currently Lee County School District is classified as a proficient/progressing high progress district moving from the 32nd percentile to the 84th percentile.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Jim Evans!!

Degrees will officially be awarded at MSU's Spring Commencement scheduled for May 10, 2014."



Pictured above with Superintendent Evans are members of his Leadership Committee. Left to right are Dr. Rocky Wallace, Dr. Jeff Hawkins, Dr. James Evans, Jr., and Committee Chair Dr. David Barnett.

Operation Preparation to be Held @ Lee County Middle School April 8th, & Lee County High School April 9th

What Is Operation Preparation???

Operation Preparation is a one-on-one, college/career readiness advising month targeting every eighth (8th) and tenth (10th) grade public school student in Kentucky. March is the official month designated as College/Career Readiness Month and Operation Preparation is normally scheduled during that month. However, due to the number of school days missed for snow this year, Operation Preparation is scheduled at Lee County Middle School on April 8th, from 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., and at Lee County High School on April 9th, from 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Operation Preparation focuses attention on the importance of planning for

college and/or career by engaging students, parents, schools, and communities in the process of effective advising. Using the student's career interest inventory, Individual Learning Plan (ILP), and EXPLORE/PLAN Assessment results, a trained advisor will discuss with the student:

- ⇒ The student's career aspirations and required education/training;
- ⇒ Whether the student is on target to meet their goals; and
- ⇒ Whether the student is taking the courses recommended to prepare them for their future

Parents will receive information on how they can continue to support their stu-

dent on the path to college/career readiness.

Additional information regarding the planned advising sessions will be mailed to the parents of all Lee County 8th and 10th grade students. If you have any questions regarding Operation Preparation, please contact your child's school principal and/or counselor.



BUDGET BRIEF - With Superintendent Jim Evans

MONTH/YEAR	FUND 1 GENERAL FUND	FUND 2 SPECIAL REVENUE	FUND 310 CAPITAL OUTLAY	FUND 320 BUILDING FUND	FUND 400 DEBT SER- VICE FUND	FUND 51 FOOD SER- VICE FUND	% OF ANNUAL BUDGET
February 2014 REVENUE	\$455,813.73	\$21,165.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22,279.55	52.6% COLLECTED
February 2014 EXPENDITURES	\$473,592.49	\$108,615.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	46,450.61	56.5% USED

Integration Impact, *The Lee County Story*

By Mike York, Effectiveness Coach

"We are doing the work of the Integration Grant because it is good for our students." said Lee County Gates Integration Grant coordinator, Connie Smith when she was asked about the impact the Gates Integration Grant was having. Lee County has been working with the integration grant for three years and has quite a story to tell about the difference it has made for their schools, teachers and most importantly their students. Sharon Bush, Instructional Supervisor of Lee County Schools, indicated that Lee County staff applied and was selected as a pilot district for the Gates Integration Grant. "We thought it would help improve instructional strategies that would lead to improved student outcomes." She went on to say that Lee County has always tried to be on the leading edge of educational reform and would rather be a leader than a follower.

Lee County High School and Lee County Middle School jumped head first into the integration work of the Literacy and Math Design Collaboratives (LDC and MDC) and the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES). Lee County was also a pilot district for PGES. They started by taking the integration coordinator as well as the math and English language arts (ELA) lead teachers to the original LDC and MDC training sessions and quickly following that up by adding a content area teacher to the team to help develop the idea that this wasn't *just* about math and ELA. This core group began their development of the LDC and MDC by working and collaborating at the Gates Integration meetings and at the Teacher Leader meetings hosted by the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative. The teachers developed their early skills by coordinating this learning with support from their effectiveness coach provided by KDE. They quickly realized that if this work was to have any lasting impact it must be embedded in the regular instructional routine. It must become part of the way things were done.

The early efforts were on MDC due to the smaller numbers of teachers to train as well as the tighter focus of the work. Since LDC would involve many more teachers, it was decided to start with a small group to get some early success. The Gates Leadership Team wanted to develop a few classroom experts in LDC before it was rolled out to the entire staff. However, with so few math teachers, every math teacher was a lead; every math teacher became the local expert.

The leaders in Lee County knew they wanted to get every teacher in the middle and high school involved in the work, but they also knew teacher voice and input in the effort was important. To meet both of these needs, it was decided to have a three year roll-out plan where teachers could choose which year they wanted to be trained. After the success of the year one adopters, several teachers asked if they could be moved up a year. Success was attractive!

District leaders saw that developing teachers' skills in the areas of LDC, MDC and PGES would take intensive training and learning. To make this happen, funding was provided through the Gates Integration Grant and other district resources. Lee County used the typical summer trainings but crucially embedded learning into the year as well. Every quarter, teachers were provided with release time to continue to develop their LDC modules and

MDC formative assessment lessons (FALS). They used that time to map these new instructional strategies and lessons into their curriculum and to make sure they were aligned with the Common Core. Stipends were even available to promote teachers coming in on "snow days" to continue their learning and work! To add emphasis to this training the principals required the teachers implement modules and FALS into their instruction during the year. Training on PGES was built into the year as well. Teachers learned to incorporate the techniques, strategies and skills promoted by the Danielson Framework into their instruction. Connections were made between the modules and FALS and the instruction described by the framework. Ms. Smith shared that "PGES is just the way we do things around here."

The integration work in Lee County has already made an impact on teachers and most importantly students and Ms. Smith said that "For the first time we were really looking at our students' work with regards to our instruction." Debbie Smith, a middle school language arts teacher has "...become more thoughtful, intentional, and focused when planning instruction." She feels that "... since implementing LDC modules [her] instruction is more aligned with the common core than before. [She] can go more in depth whereas before [she] felt that [she] didn't have the time." Middle school math teacher, Ivalea Brooks indicated that FALS have helped her to "...see a whole new meaning of what is meant by productive struggle in students" and that "FALS have...allowed for deeper understanding of concepts, and created mathematically rich discussions."

The most significant impact of the integration work in Lee County has been on the students. Serita McCoy, a middle school math teacher shared that not only the way she teaches has changed, but "...the way my students think has changed. My students [have begun] to accept that they were required to think more..." Ms. Smith even shared that student confidence has grown and that "They feel secure enough to question their partners." Benefits in other content areas have been noticed as well by George Chaney, middle school social studies teacher. He asserted that "LDC has allowed [him] to take various literacy strategies and integrate them into [his] instruction of social studies." and as a result he has "seen and improvement in [his] students understanding of the content." Phillip Durbin, high school social studies/ELA teacher, said students "...have developed a common understanding of the fundamentals of writing. They have a shared vocabulary..., making it much easier to work through the writing process."

"The integration work in Lee County has already made a difference. It's brought us together as a faculty, and helped content teachers meet the literacy requirements of the common core." as indicated by middle school Principal Karen Angel. She continued to say "It also has improved the rigor in our instruction and is becoming sustainable." The work is now being expanded to the elementary schools with a rollout plan well under way.

Progress is being made. When asked about the success of the integration work in Lee County, Connie Smith said: "Are we there yet? No. But, are we ever 'there'?" They may not be 'there', but they are well on their way!

ATTENDANCE & T-TRUANCY T-TIDBITS BY RAY SHULER, DPP

The Lee County School District has missed 27 instructional days of the 2013-2014 School Calendar due to inclement weather. **During** the March School Board Meeting, the 2013-2014 School Calendar was amended to address instructional days missed. An updated School Calendar is attached below for your information. ***This Amended School Calendar replaces the one included in the February District Newsletter.*** Please keep in mind this calendar could change further if additional school days are missed.

**Lee County Schools
2013/2014 Calendar
Updated 3-17-14
Missed 27 days**

Aug. 1	Thurs.	Professional Development
Aug. 2	Fri.	Professional Development
Aug. 5	Mon.	Opening Day (No Students)
Aug. 6	Tues.	Planning Day (No Students)
Aug. 7	Wed.	Planning Day (No Students)
Aug. 8	Thurs.	First Day for Students
Sept. 2	Mon.	Labor Day Holiday
Oct. 24	Thurs.	Professional Development
Oct. 25	Fri.	School Dismissed
Oct. 28	Mon.	School Dismissed
Nov. 27	Wed.	School Dismissed
Nov. 28	Thurs.	Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov. 29	Fri.	School Dismissed
Dec. 20	Fri.	Last Day of School Before Christmas Vacation
Dec. 5	Wed.	Christmas Holiday
Jan. 1	Wed.	New Year's Holiday
Jan. 6	Mon.	First Day back after Christmas Break
Jan. 20	Mon.	School Dismissed
Jan. 29	Wed.	Planning Day (No Students)
Jan. 30	Thurs.	Planning Day (No Students)
Apr. 4	Fri.	School Dismissed (KEA)
May 20	Tues.	No School Election Day
Jun. 6	Fri.	Last Day of School for Students
Jun. 9	Mon.	Closing Day for Staff
Jun. 10	Tues.	Planning Day (No Students)
Jun. 11	Wed.	Professional Development (Flex)

CONGRATULATIONS TO SOUTHSIDE ELEMENTARY 3RD GRADE STUDENTS

Mr. Matt Coleman's third grade class has held the highest percent of student attendance district-wide for FIVE (5) months in a row!!!

