



Executive Summary

Wyoming High School

Wyoming City Schools

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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?

Wyoming High School is a comprehensive public high school, grades 9 through 12, located in Wyoming, Ohio, an affluent (albeit with socioeconomic diversity) suburban area of 2.87 square miles. According to the 2010 census, the city of Wyoming has 8,428 residents, 56 percent of which are college graduates. Because of the large number of families with children, 78.95 percent, the schools play an integral role in the community, and our community support cannot be rivaled, evidenced by the fact that Wyoming has not failed a levy in 40 years, and our last bond issue for the renovation of Wyoming Middle School in 2012 had a 73 percent approval rate. We are also a fiscally responsible district in that our current operating spending per pupil is \$10,763.00, and our percentage spent on classroom instruction is 75.9 percent, making us rank second out of the 282 schools in comparison groups for highest percentage spent on instruction.

In the district, we have three neighborhood elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Although the three divisions have approximately the same number of students, Wyoming High School's enrollment for the 2014-2015 school is 654 students, 53.8 percent which are identified as gifted. Our student demographic breakdown is as follows: 77.7 percent Caucasian, 12.7 percent African-American, 4.9 percent Multiracial, and 2.4 percent Asian or Pacific Islander. Of our student body, 8.1 percent are identified as Students with Disabilities (SWD) and 7.1 percent fall under the categorization of Economically Disadvantaged (ED). The latter statistic actually has been on the rise in that in 2010-2011 only 6.9 percent of our students were considered ED. We have 46 full time teachers, meaning a 14.2 student-teacher ratio. While all of our teachers have a Bachelor's Degree, 72.5 percent have earned a Master's degrees.

WHS operates on a 7 period day with 50 minute periods (second and sixth period are actually 52 minutes in length). On our most recent state report card, which is determined by our sophomores' performance on the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) (comprised of five sections: Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies), we received a performance index of 112.6 (out of a possible 120), earning us an "A" on the state report card. In order to graduate, a student also must earn 21 credits, which is one credit above the state minimum, and pass (a score of 400/proficient) all sections of the OGT. Currently, .7 percent of our students are enrolled in career technical concentrations through Scarlet Oaks, all of which are taken off campus. Furthermore, .3 percent participate in Post-Secondary Education Options (PSEO) at University of Cincinnati (Blue Ash Campus) and Xavier University. Our graduation rate is 98.7 percent, while our attendance rate is 95.7 percent. For the 2013-2014 school year, 93 percent of our graduates went to college (87 percent will attend a four-year college while 7 percent will attend a two-year college). Additionally, 4 percent headed into the workforce, 2 percent had a gap year, and 1 percent joined the military. Also, for the 2013-2014 school year, we had 23 students honored by the National Merit Corporation Programs. On average score on the ACT for 2014 was a 26.2 and on the SAT our average range in Critical Reading was a 520-670, in Math 500-680, and in Writing 490-650.

Wyoming High School prides itself on academic rigor, evidenced by the fact that we offer 25 Advanced Placement (AP) Courses: AP Literature, AP Language, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Statistics, AP Computer Science, AP World, AP Human Geography, AP Comparative Government, AP Government, AP Micro Economics, AP Micro Economics, AP United States History, AP European History, AP Biology, AP Physics I, AP Physics C, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP Spanish, AP French, AP Latin, AP Studio 2D Art, AP Studio 3D, and AP Drawing and Painting. During the 2013-2014 school year, we administered 940 Advanced Placement test, and just in the graduating class of 2014 alone, 900 Advanced Placement exams were given over four years. To put it in different terms, of the 169 seniors in the 2014 class, 149 of them took an AP class during high school. Of the students who took an AP Exam in 2012-2013 school year, 81

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percent scored a 3 or higher on the exam. Because of our continuous academic achievements, we are consistently ranked nationally amongst the best high schools by U.S. News & World Report and The Washington Post; last year, we ranked 106 and 111, respectively.

When one mentions academics, understanding this encompasses electives, specifically the arts, is paramount. We offer 12 visual art classes: Basic Metals, Advanced Metals, Basic Photo, Advanced Metals, Drawing and Painting, AP Drawing and Painting, AP Studio 2D, AP Studio 3D, Ceramics, Sculpture, Computer Graphics, and Graphic Design. Finding a school our size that offers three AP Art classes is not common, and only 2 percent of our students do not take a type of visual art class during the high school experience. In fact, the arts, both visual and performing, are such a way of life here in Wyoming City Schools that as we have tried to incorporate elements of the STEM initiative, we decided to change the name to STEAM, where the "A" encompasses the arts.

Education does not just happen in the classroom, which is why we offer 29 different extra-curricular clubs through which students' can garner additional experiences and leadership roles. However, extra-curricular activities also certainly encompass athletics. 425 of our 667 high school students participate in athletics (64 percent). We compete in 23 high school sports and 13 middle school sports. Of our 23 high school sports, 18 compete in the Cincinnati Hills League (CHL); the other 7 have independent schedules. In comparison to our seven other league schools, we have the most number of sports (tied with Indian Hill Exempted School District).

Another unique feature and challenge of Wyoming High School is our academic excellence in that while a blessing, our outside data shows little need for change, which in turn creates very little sense of urgency for modifications. This, coupled with our strong sense of tradition, can make support, whether that is from students, staff, or the community, for initiatives and change difficult.

The city of Wyoming is nestled between Lockland, Finneytown, Hartwell, Reading, and Woodlawn, areas that are more socioeconomically depressed, which causes our school to have issues regarding residency in that in order for a student to attend Wyoming High School they must reside in our community.

Wyoming High School is a public school, albeit with a private school mentality: we have a tremendous amount of parental and community support. In fact, most families move here simply because of the schools. We strive to educate the whole child and ensure students are college, career, and workforce ready. We truly believe in our mantra--where excellence becomes a way of life.

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.

Our building goals align with district goals so one would naturally assume that we all follow the same mission statement, the unchanging purpose of our district: Wyoming City Schools will promote academic achievement, self-worth, mutual respect, and multi-faceted student development so that our students will be positive contributors to society. We also have a vision statement, which serves a guiding light for the district: By 2017, we will foster 21st century habits and authentic learning, inquiry based experiences which will lead to all students reaching their fullest potential, responsible citizenship, global competency, and life-long learning. However, instead of reciting the aforementioned, one will often hear the administration, staff, and even students, say with regard to Wyoming High School, where excellence becomes a way of life. Furthermore, three years ago the 21st Century Task Force was formed and their goal was to create or capture the "habits" of our students, what qualities we hoped to instill in students at Wyoming City Schools: scholarly work, critical thinking, collaboration, adaptability, leadership, global awareness, entrepreneurship, influence, and coachability.

Our educational program supports this endeavor toward excellence in that we offer a myriad of AP course offerings, as previously listed in the "Description of the School" section. Although the AP curriculum is not a graduate requirement, 52.5 percent of students during the 2013-2014 school year enrolled in at least one AP class at Wyoming High School. When students are not enrolled in AP or honors curriculum, they still experience rich curriculum in our second level of courses work, College Preparatory. We are always looking to increase our offering: for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year, we will be adding AP Physics C. In 2013-2014, with the help of a Google grant, we introduced AP Environmental Science and AP Computer Science in the hopes of increasing minority students and females in AP science and mathematics courses. As stated earlier, not all of our students are AP focused, so in 2013-2014 we also increases English electives-- Documentary Film, Film Analysis, Creative Writing, and Best Sellers--that are actually Blended Learning, meaning an educational experience that occurs, at least in part, through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace. For the 2014-2015, we omitted offering our Foods program; however, we also recognize that our College Preparatory population needed an alternative elective, and based on our student enrollment each year, we added a new art elective, Sculpture.

When one mentions academics, understanding this encompasses electives, specifically the arts, is paramount. As mentioned in the "Description of our School", we offer 12 visual art classes; finding a school our size that offers three AP Art classes is not common, and only 2 percent of our students do not take a type of visual art class during the high school experience.

Our expectations for students are that they push themselves academically and attempt to obtain leadership roles. Yet, we want our students' scope to reach beyond classwork into the community, which would explain why during the 2013-2014 school year 38 students were recognized as Presidential Volunteer Award winners, meaning they had at minimum 50 hours of community services and at times a surplus of 200 plus hours. As stated in our vision statement, our expectation is for students' to reach their fullest potential--their individual excellence.

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.

Having had the state label of "Excellence" (now denoted as an "A") for the past 14 years, we strive to make our internal standards higher than the external standards (e.g. ACT, SAT, OGT, etc.) so that students are prepared for post-secondary options and the real world. Yet, while we need to have high internal standards, in the world of high-stakes testing, a school must guarantee its program of study meets external standards; therefore, we have aligned our curriculum to the Common Core standards. The process of ensuring that viable curriculum was in place for all students began in the fall of 2011 when WHS teachers piloted the alignment of curriculum in that teachers, by department, created pacing guides so that students had a similar experience from teacher to teacher of a course. In 2013, we created common second semester exams for every course, and then in 2014 we honed those as well as developed common first semester exams for every course. Not only are the pacing guides aligned to Common Core standards, but the questions on the assessments are also tagged to Common Core standards and indicators. Although we hope to improve in the area of data analysis, in that the district is currently contracted to produce an Assessment Generator, the common exams at least provided teachers with assessment data for each student by standard and indicator. Although the process could definitely be more formalized and routine, periodically teachers meet to analyze the assessment results in course teams in order to improve test questions, offer intervention to struggling students, and determine if gaps in the curriculum exist. Since the new PARCC and state assessment will be fully implemented during the 2014-2015 school year, we will need to further modify our assessments to include more PARCC like questions, meaning more scaffolded questions and higher level Bloom's Taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge questions.

Although we are honing and revising the pacing guides and common assessment developed in our efforts to vertically and horizontally align curriculum, teachers need time to share best practices within common courses after analyzing semester assessments; therefore, the administrative team will need to examine ways to create more time for departments to analyze and collaborate after common exams each semester. Furthermore, we need to ensure we have a systematic data analysis tool that helps disaggregate data efficiently and in various formats depending how what type of data is needed. Within the department analysis time, results of the common exams should be shared with our special education teachers to help with the intervention process.

As a building, we do not have a Response to Intervention (RTI) model that has proven successful in that we have tried guided study halls, but instead of skill remediation, these ultimately turned a time in which to complete homework. We do have a Success program, which is for our most at-risk students who are jeopardy of not graduating on time. Some students are full-time Success students, meaning they take all of their course work through APEX, an online computer program. However, some students do more of combination coursework in that they take general setting coursework as well as APEX coursework. On average we have around 12 students enrolled in this program, although our APEX coordinator sees approximately 28 students in total in that he assists some students when challenged by regular coursework. The administration needs to continue look at creative ways to use Title I funds, which support this program, perhaps by hiring a literacy coach or adopting a literacy program like Read 180 in that reading skills are imperative for success in all disciplines.

We also understand that intervention is not just needed in academics, but also in behavior, which is why in upcoming years, we hope to implement a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) system, which would be an extension of what already exists in the middle and primary levels. This system would help ensure evidence-based programs, practices and strategies for all students to increase academic performance, improve safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish a positive school culture.

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Three years ago we realized that our guidance counselors were inadequately equipped to deal with some of the mental health needs of our students and their transition back from hospitalization; thus, after about a two year process, during the 2014 school year, we implemented on-site mental health services through our partnership with The Cincinnati Children's home, who provides us with an on-site therapist. These services are not in lieu of any services, but an additional layer of support for our students, a Tier III approach.

With regard to our guidance office, two years ago, we realized a need for additional support or personnel with regard to college and career counseling; thus, instead of two full-time guidance counselors, we now have an additional part-time counselor. One counselor manages our freshman and sophomore students, while the other full-time counselors oversees all juniors and then seniors with last names A-L; our part-time counselors then meets with seniors M-Z. Over the past two years, we have tried to encourage students to take advantage of opportunities for learning, whether that be through the elimination of long lunch (an hour and half lunch break that seniors had until the 2014-2015 school year) or through eliminating the ranking of our students. In such an AP driven culture, we hope to instill in students that the experience of the learning is what is paramount, not the weight associated with a course.

During the 2013-2014 school year, we also began the district initiative of Design Challenges, otherwise known as Project Based Learning, in that by the end of the year, teachers were required to complete at least one Design Challenge, with components such as collaboration, real world component, and critical thinking. This school year, 2014-2015, teachers will be required to complete two Design Challenges, with the hopes of being more interdisciplinary.

Lastly, maintaining the aesthetics and unity of the our actual space has been an initiative over the past two years in that we reconfigured the artwork and created a central communication hub for extracurricular in the small rotunda. We currently have a three year plan with regard to maintenance, which includes painting lockers and the building and creating a guidance counseling suite to name a few. We certainly cannot overlook athletics in this regard in that we need to maintain what we have at the high school - track, stadium turf, softball field, gym. In addition, we also need to beautify our entrances with signage, new rugs, etc. We specifically need to determine needs to address issues related to baseball field re-build, wrestling team practicing in cafeteria, lack of locker room space and weight room equipment, size/safety.

While we certainly have notable achievements, we realize we are not perfect and need to continue to our programs, systems, and facilities. Our mantra--where excellence becomes a way of life--does not simply apply to the students, but all staff and faculty involved.

Additional Information

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

We do not have any additional information to provide.