

## NARRATIVE/PLAN 1

### High School Graduation Rate

*Present a plan to reach 98% by 2022.*

The 2012-13 Graduation Rate for Boone County is 92.9%. There are two school districts within the county; Boone County School District and Walton-Verona Independent District. 21,573 students are enrolled in public education in Boone County. As evidenced by the current graduation rate it is reasonable to assume that reaching the goal of 98% by 2022 is both realistic and obtainable.

It is important to note that while the graduation rate in Boone County is exceeding expectations we must also recognize that Boone County, just as every county in the Commonwealth has a GAP population. This group includes students with membership in the following groups as required by federal guidelines: African-American, Hispanic, Native American, students with disabilities, poverty (qualified for free or reduced price lunch) and limited English proficient.

Boone County is one of the fastest growing counties within the Commonwealth and has demonstrated the fastest growth among the 6 northern most counties. With a growth spurt the demographics of the county have been slowly changing overtime and Boone County is not without challenges. Increases in children who qualify for Free and Reduced lunch and children who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) are on the rise. Currently the County serves over 500 children who are LEP and 36.7 % (7,917) of the students qualify for Free and Reduced lunch.

In order to ensure that progress continues in Boone County we are taking a collective community approach to expanding the supports needed for all children and youth to be successful and graduate on time from high school intentionally focusing our efforts along the pipeline from birth to career. The Northern Kentucky Education Council (NKYEC) is the backbone organization for alignment of education initiatives in Northern Kentucky. The Council works with business, community and education leaders to build broader partnerships, promote alignment and increase communication and collaboration across the entire continuum from birth through career. The Council formed six Action Teams to develop and implement strategies which are effective, measurable and meet the needs of our children, youth, young adults their families. The following strategic data-driven initiatives serve as a guarantee that our youth in Boone County are equipped with the necessary skills to not only succeed in the classroom and graduate on time from high school but also be ready for college, career and life.

NKY has been the pilot for the Nation using the Enhanced Gallup Student Poll that measures hope, engagement and well-being for students in grades 5-12. Over 10,000 students in Boone County participated in the poll. These data are used in triangulation with other academic and non-academic data to help build on individual student strengths, and address both needs and barriers to learning. Intentional programming for students are being offered through the districts and their partners after-school, on Saturdays and during the summer along with individual short and long-term mentoring to enhance academic and social - emotional growth with a focus on goal setting and problem solving.

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In addition to using the Gallup Student Poll to address student support systems the Council's Action Team 1, *Reducing Barriers to Student Learning* has aligned partners and stakeholders to maintain a continued focus on Kindergarten Readiness, addressing root causes of absenteeism, increasing quality summer learning opportunities and access. These intentional focus areas are supported through a Read ON! Campaign.

Research indicates that if a child is not reading proficiently by the third grade, chances of future academic success are significantly diminished and are four times more likely to drop out of high school than those who are. The problem is particularly pronounced for low-income students, who are 13 to 17 times less likely to graduate high school if they cannot read successfully by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Nationally, 80% of low-income 3<sup>rd</sup> graders miss this milestone every year. Boone County currently has approximately 1,786 students enrolled in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. According to the most recent state level reading assessment approximately 72% (1,285) of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students are reading on grade level and 28% (501) are not reading proficiently on grade level.

The Read ON! Campaign's goal is every child reading on grade level by 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. The following strategies are being implemented across the county where the need is greatest to create a successful pathway for every child birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:

- Ensuring that every child is ready for Kindergarten in partnership with United Way's Success by Six® Initiative
- Addressing the root causes for chronic absenteeism
- Expanding Summer Learning opportunities and access
- Engaging Families through *bornlearning academies* and the Commonwealth Institute for Parents (CIPL)
- Community Literacy Support through the *One to One: Practicing Reading with Students*.
- School Literacy Support through the *Response to Intervention model*

Unique to the Boone County School District is the Families and Schools Together team. This team works directly with families, school agencies and community resources to support families in assuring that their children attend school. The FAST team monitors and tracks truancy and chronic absenteeism. The team focused on proactive measures to address attendance issues early on with consistent procedures, and support to keep students in school. The team is comprised of the Director of Pupil Personnel and Social Workers who are district employees.

Action Team 2, *College and Career Readiness* lead by the Boone County School District's Deputy Superintendent has successfully developed a Dual Credit Consortium across our three post-secondary institutions whereby our counselors, families and students have access to requirements, cost and registration. The earlier our students are enrolled in dual credit the more engaged they are in charting their course and graduating on time. "EdCamps" a strategy that emerged from the Boone County School District are scheduled across the region 3 times a year to help teachers learn about instilling 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in students through an engaging classroom. These "Camps" are designed by educators, for educators in grades K-12.

Boosting school connections with business is the focus of the Action Team 5, *Business Engagement and Service Learning*. This team increases business engagement within our schools by facilitating School Tours for business, recruiting business members to serve as mentors and tutors, offer internships, and participate in Business Education Success Teams

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(BEST) all with the intention of providing our students with real-world experiences and strong role models from the business community while improving their knowledge of career and educational opportunities.

Service Learning helps build communities for the future. It enables students to study an issue, develop and execute a plan of action and reflect on what they have learned. The research is clear that students who participate in service learning grow in self-confidence, discover that they can make a difference and see the relevance of what they are learning. Children, Inc. provides training to teachers across Boone County on how to integrate projects into their core curriculum and supports teachers and classes throughout the entire process.

NaviGo Scholars is an example of a distinctive one-to-one mentoring and coaching program for high school students in NKY. Students who are NaviGo Scholars have the opportunity to work through a multifaceted, tiered curriculum designed to address the challenges of transitioning to college or career after high school and to empower and enhance students on their path to success. NaviGo Scholars is designed to guide high school students to determine realistic options for college or a career based on their personal interests, academic preparation, and financial realities.

The NaviGo curriculum – written by professional counselors and administrators – uses an innovative approach to explore the interests, talents and passions of each student and utilizes many resources for students to explore. The entire scholar curriculum is 44 units, designed to be spread out over four years of high school to lead the Scholar to possible career clusters, and eventually to a point of three viable, affordable and achievable post-secondary career paths.

The Northern Kentucky Education Council has called upon its corporate partners to support this program. The entire cost of the program has been underwritten by Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing, NA; Duke Energy; Citi; Bank of Kentucky; and Heritage Bank. In the inaugural year, 34 Scholars were selected from over 100 applications. The program serves 12 school districts in NKY. 7 Scholars were selected in Boone County. While the application has specific criteria it is not tied to GPA but rather students who will benefit from the services and whose families are not otherwise able to afford these services. NaviGo Scholars is designed to complement, not replace, existing serves such as statewide career and college readiness programs and school counselors.

NaviGo Scholars already has ongoing commitment from corporate partners. Looking ahead plans are already in place to expand and include even more opportunity youth in Boone County each year.

Signature initiatives within the districts include STEM activities in partnership with Gateway Community and Technical College STEM Days and Northern KY University's Center for Integrated Science and Math (CINSAM). These initiatives both motivate and engage students in learning that occurs both inside and outside of the classroom. The Lego Robotics League in NKY has the largest participation of students from Boone County, beginning with elementary programs and continuing through high school. It is programs such as these that keep children and youth engaged in learning and provide the impetus for students to not only graduate on time, but also take higher level math and science classes.

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To address students who have demonstrated that they are struggling with Math in the primary grades *One to One: Practicing Math with Students* will be available fall, 2014. The program is modeled after the highly successful *One to One: Practicing Reading with Students*. Deficiencies in Math and Reading that are not addressed during the earliest years in school tend to remain deficiencies across a child's academic life. Specific goals of *One to One* are to:

- 1.) help place students on a desired trajectory in their reading and math skills,
- 2.) affect reading and math attitudes, self-efficacy and motivation with reading and math.

By providing trained tutors that complement the established instructional programs it allows children to practice skills, gain confidence and increase proficiency.

A critical component necessary for increasing the graduation rate was the Kentucky General Assembly passage of Senate Bill 97, which increased the compulsory attendance age to 18, in its 2013 regular session- both districts in Boone County were early adopters of the policy. By becoming early adopters the districts qualified for monies to be used in the planning stages for design and implementation of opportunities and alternative programs that will support students with unique learning needs including credit recovery and remediation. These programs will provide a safety net for students who otherwise may have dropped out.

Both school districts in Boone County have remarkable academic and instructional programs and initiatives that are too numerous to list; however the two districts are noted for programs that drive success for students by ensuring a high level of rigor for every student. Many project based and experiential opportunities exist within the districts so learning is viewed by students as both relevant and engaging. By establishing high expectations for students and providing needed support the students in Boone County are flourishing as noted by the strong Graduation Rate.

National data suggests that students make the decision to drop out of school mentally and emotionally long before dropping out physically. They disengage in learning for a variety of reasons. The two school districts in Boone County through alignment with the NKYEC have intentionally expanded collaborative partnerships with social service agencies, the Boone County Public Library, post-secondary institutions, mental health providers, and multiple key businesses who have all become true champions for the children, and youth in Boone County. These partnerships target academic, social – emotional growth and provide wrap around support for the children, youth and families who reside in Boone County in an effort to ensure continued progress toward meeting the goal of 98% of students graduating on time by 2022.

### 2013 Kentucky Graduation Rate (Cohort Method)

State Average 86.1%

<u>County</u>	<u>Grad Rate</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Grad Rate</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Grad Rate</u>
Adair	89.8%	Grant	90.7%	McLean	86.4%
Allen	91.0%	Graves	91.8%	Meade	94.1%
Anderson	96.5%	Grayson	92.9%	Menifee	90.7%
Ballard	92.4%	Green	95.0%	Mercer	96.6%
Barren	86.1%	Greenup	94.0%	Metcalfe	87.3%
Bath	86.9%	Hancock	95.5%	Monroe	95.3%
Bell	88.7%	Hardin	89.0%	Montgomery	92.4%
Boone	92.9%	Harlan	86.9%	Morgan	87.3%
Bourbon	91.3%	Harrison	90.3%	Muhlenberg	87.8%
Boyd	93.8%	Hart	96.6%	Nelson	86.8%
Boyle	90.2%	Henderson	88.5%	Nicholas	92.0%
Bracken	97.0%	Henry	88.2%	Ohio	88.0%
Breathitt	87.5%	Hickman	100.0%	Oldham	96.2%
Breckinridge	91.3%	Hopkins	88.6%	Owen	86.7%
Bullitt	85.2%	Jackson	87.0%	Owsley	94.7%
Butler	92.0%	Jefferson	76.5%	Pendleton	91.1%
Caldwell	90.8%	Jessamine	81.0%	Perry	85.9%
Calloway	93.6%	Johnson	96.0%	Pike	90.3%
Campbell	91.6%	Kenton	88.9%	Powell	93.5%
Carlisle	95.4%	Knott	87.7%	Pulaski	90.0%
Carroll	88.4%	Knox	88.3%	Robertson	95.8%
Carter	96.6%	Larue	98.7%	Rockcastle	92.1%
Casey	93.3%	Laurel	79.3%	Rowan	92.5%
Christian	81.3%	Lawrence	95.0%	Russell	88.9%
Clark	90.3%	Lee	88.1%	Scott	84.1%
Clay	82.9%	Leslie	99.2%	Shelby	84.5%
Clinton	82.4%	Letcher	92.1%	Simpson	92.4%
Crittenden	83.5%	Lewis	96.7%	Spencer	92.9%
Cumberland	95.2%	Lincoln	89.6%	Taylor	99.0%
Daviess	90.6%	Livingston	94.9%	Todd	93.0%
Edmonson	90.4%	Logan	90.3%	Trigg	91.8%
Elliott	89.0%	Lyon	97.0%	Trimble	74.6%
Estill	95.7%	Madison	92.2%	Union	88.9%
Fayette	82.7%	Magoffin	92.4%	Warren	91.6%
Fleming	94.2%	Marion	93.2%	Washington	98.5%
Floyd	90.1%	Marshall	91.9%	Wayne	87.9%
Franklin	83.6%	Martin	91.9%	Webster	83.2%
Fulton	90.0%	Mason	90.8%	Whitley	91.8%
Gallatin	90.8%	McCracken	86.6%	Wolfe	92.2%
Garrard	92.4%	McCreary	93.5%	Woodford	97.2%