

# Kentucky Work Ready Communities

## Narratives and Plans – Instructions:

1. All applicants must complete Narrative 1.

**Narrative 1: High School Graduation Rate:** Present a plan to reach 98% by 2022.

### Narrative 1: Boyd County Graduation Rate

Boyd County Schools' 2013-14 Cohort Graduation Rate is 95.4%. The Boyd County Work Ready Community Education Committee, in partnership with the three school systems in Boyd County have developed the following plan to increase the graduation rate to 98% by 2022.

#### Overview

This committee was represented by educators from public and private school systems as well as business and industry and higher education. To meet the goal of 98%, a holistic approach encompassing growth from preschool to lifelong learning was adopted. Best practices currently in place were aligned with additional support and oriented with workforce programs as well as development of business and industry needs for employees now and in the future.

#### Leader in Me Program

Boyd County Public Schools has adopted the Leader in Me Program for schools. This year, the first school in Boyd County, Summit Elementary, is coordinating the Stephen Covey whole school transformational model that equips students with the self-confidence and skills needed to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This program was facilitated last year in Argillite Elementary in Greenup County with stellar success. The program was also presented for support from The Ashland Alliance at its September 2014 board meeting with the request that the Alliance, as the regional chamber of commerce and economic development organization, help build connections of the program with the business community for a pathway of growing future leaders.

It is the intent of the Boyd County Work Ready Community Education Committee to foster the development of this new and exciting program for additional adoption within the school systems of Boyd County. This strategy provides a solid foundation for continued improvement across all socioeconomic groups for higher graduation rates.

#### Career Pathways

Just as it is important to build solid foundations for youth, career pathways are needed to guide and sharpen the focus and direction for opportunities in development. Both Boyd County Public Schools and Ashland Independent School district are implementing student-focused career pathways and counseling for all types of diploma, certificates and degrees.

The traditional designation of either college-bound or career or technical education model has been adjusted to meet the opportunities and reality for the current workplace. Students who are on current career and technical education path need high level skills just as those on traditional college bound track need the opportunity to earn wages while they pursue their higher education. The Education Committee

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discovered a need for a blended approach which recognized the individual needs of students and included components that promote lifelong learning with a path to success.

Boyd County and Ashland Independent school districts both require individual learning plan to develop student focus and pathways. This pathway encourages the search for discovery. Along with this individual approach is a testing and certification that seeks to show career and technical as well as college readiness. Examples of Boyd County Career and Technical Center success are the partnerships with local labor unions and the apprentice trades, where students attending the Career and Technical Center can earn their first year apprenticeship while in high school and start with 10% higher earnings than other first year apprentices.

In addition, the State Registered Nursing Assistant Certificate earned from the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standard Assessment (KOSSA) can prepare students with a direct pathway to work in medical fields. This is highly successful for those that need direct pathway to employment. Boyd County has over 5,000 direct medical jobs with King's Daughters Medical Center and Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital.

### Youth Services Mentoring

TENCO Workforce Investment Board and the TENCO Youth Services Council provide targeted support and mentoring to high school seniors who are economically disadvantaged. Services are managed locally through the Kentucky Career Center with overarching goals to create a plan and action path for post-secondary education.

Services geared toward youth (age 17-21) are basic skills remediation, summer employment, career counseling, paid work experience, training funds for post-secondary, job readiness training, help to accomplish goals and referrals to other resource providers. Youth services, when applied with the career and technical education centers, create and promote the continuum of services for additional success.

### Ramey-Estep High School (Grade 6-12)

Ramey-Estep High School is considered to be an alternative school because the populations of youth are state agency children who have been placed in the Ramey Estep Home, a treatment facility. This facility develops a strong sense of respect throughout the entire school. This has resulted in improved self-esteem and attitudes and students who place a higher value on education. Ramey-Estep is an important building block to make sure no students are left behind regardless of their situation.

The Boyd County Work Ready Education Committee felt strongly about including Ramey-Estep because of the potential for partnerships and opportunities this facility represents. Recently, the school was awarded \$1,521,744.00 for a dedicated residential substance abuse program and outpatient program. This grant, as well as the opportunities for youth to acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding to empower them to become responsible adults, will help increase the graduation rates for Boyd County and the region.

Holy Family's Early College Partnership with Ashland Community and Technical College - Holy Family School (HFS) and ACTC formally agreed in spring 2014 to collaborate on an early college program at the Catholic school in Ashland, marking the first time HFS has had high school since 1985. The program targets highly motivated students who'll take freshman and sophomore courses at Holy Family and regular college courses their junior and senior years at ACTC. When students graduate from HFS, they will have sufficient college credits to earn two-year associate degrees from ACTC. Credits earned will transfer to four-year colleges and universities with which ACTC has agreements. Students will be tested to ensure they can stand up to the academic rigors and social maturity demands of the program. During 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, coursework will be college level. HFS students attend classes with adult college students, taught by ACTC professors. Tuition in the junior and senior years is at college rates. Students who complete the

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program also will be better positioned to enter the work force and command higher wages with less student debt burden.

### Truancy Diversion Program

The Boyd County Education Steering Committee has sought to build on positives first in these efforts to create a cultural change for higher graduation rates. It is recognized, however, that a strong collaborative effort with the Boyd County Court Designated Worker and Family Judge along with County Attorney is necessary. Tracking and administering the pre-complaint and complaint phase of truancy along with counseling and treatment all must be embraced and used accordingly to ensure students do not get behind but understand the accountability they have for proper attendance.

2. If your county meets the Educational Attainment rate of 25 percent but is less than 39 percent you must complete Narrative 2.

**Narrative 2: Educational Attainment:** Present a plan to raise the Educational Attainment rate to 32 percent within 3 years [KY average] and 39 percent within five years [national average] (three pages maximum). A separate plan must also be presented to reduce the percentage of working age adults (18-64) in your county without a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma (e.g., GED®) as based on the American Community Survey by 3% points in three years and 5% in five years.

### **Narrative 2: Boyd County Educational Attainment**

American Community Survey data indicates 28.3% of Boyd County's population (age 25-64) has an associate's degree or higher. The national percentage is 39.1%. The overall Kentucky percentage is 31.4%. (ACS, 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, Table B15001).

The Boyd County Work Ready Community Education Committee met to discuss and develop a plan to support the WRC goals for educational attainment and increase the number to 32% in three years and to 39% within five years (national average).

Ashland Community and Technical College, an accredited provider of post-secondary education and one of 16 institutions in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System has two (2) campus locations in Boyd County (College Drive Campus and Roberts Drive Campus, both located in Ashland.) ACTC's main technical education campus is located in nearby Carter County (Technology Drive Campus at EastPark.)

Morehead State University-Ashland and Lindsey Wilson College also offer classes on the ACTC College Drive Campus. Located in a tri-state area which includes southern Ohio and western West Virginia, Boyd County residents also have easy travel and access to these post-secondary institutions: Ohio University-Southern, Ironton, OH; Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, OH; Marshall University, Huntington, WV; Mount West Community and Technical College, Huntington, WV; Kentucky Christian University, Grayson, KY. Students may also access distance learning (online education) as another post-secondary option from many accredited institutions. This mode of learning is convenient for working adults and others with family/ life commitments that may impede participation in traditional classroom learning. Additionally, MSU-Ashland provides a staff member working with the Educational Opportunity program