

## **Narrative Number One**

### **Graduation Rate**

Present a plan to raise the graduation rate to 82.32 percent (state goal) within three years.

Current Graduation Rate: 83.2%

Trigg County Public Schools' current graduation rate is 83.2 percent, per the 2010-11 school year data. The following programs have been initiated by the Trigg County Public Schools and its partners to continue to increase the graduation rate above the current rate:

#### District Wide College and Career Planner

Trigg County Public Schools was among the first Kentucky school districts to embrace college and career readiness by developing a district-level coordinator of efforts. TCPS' College & Career Planner works with each school to develop and implement strategies to inform students about the benefits of post-secondary education and how to access that education. This comprehensive approach includes college visits for all students in grades 3 – 8. Students visit one of our region's many community colleges or 4-year universities. Middle school students are benefiting from the GEAR-UP grant programming, which provides for classroom instruction and additional services to help students gain college knowledge. An advisor/advisee program at Trigg County Middle School builds upon what is being taught through GEAR-UP and uses information from the Individual Learning Plan/Career Cruising system to help students learn more about career and education options. Our expectation is that the College and Career planning activities will assist all students in reaching their potential and realizing the value of high school graduation.

Operation Preparation was fully implemented in Trigg County Public Schools in 2012 and plans are underway for the 2013 event. Local business representatives volunteer their time to meet individually with 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students to discuss their college and career plans. TCPS plans to continue this valuable effort with hopes to expand upon it in the future by allowing for a continuing mentor/mentee relationship among the students and volunteers. By having this opportunity to work with a community mentor, students will see that high school graduation is just the first step towards their success after high school.

Trigg County High School and Trigg County Middle School use the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to help students plan for their futures. Students work with their ILP throughout the year to establish their career goals and explore opportunities related to this goal. Students use the career matchmaker to see what careers are best suited to their personal likes/dislikes and also rate their current skill sets in order to see if their skills are adequate in order to pursue those careers. They can also search for any career and see how high school graduation is critical to being successful.

#### PALS Mentoring Program and Power for Life Mentoring

The Horizon Youth Service Center coordinates mentoring opportunities for middle and high school students who are at-risk. The goal is to provide students with a positive community role model who can provide support and encouragement to the students. The students and their mentors meet on a weekly basis during the school day. They often discuss the student's goals, current academic progress, and other concerns that the student may have. In partnership with the Horizon Youth Service Center, the Cadiz Rotary Club has a dedicated group of members who participate in Power for Life mentoring. This program includes once monthly programs on Saturday to provide a more intense mentoring experience. The pairs often have guest speakers or special programs to address the needs of this at-risk group of students. The program provides specific support for a small group of middle school students and the mentors have committed to working with the students until high school graduation.

### Credit Recovery

One barrier than often leads to a drop-out is lack of credits. Some students experience academic difficulties and it is important to provide additional opportunities to regain credits not obtained due to failures, excessive absences, etc. Trigg County Public Schools uses the A+ Online Learning System to provide a well-designed curriculum to allow students the opportunity to earn credits anywhere, anytime. Additional online learning opportunities are being researched in order to best meet the needs of students.

### Persistence to Graduation

Each of the schools in the Trigg County Public Schools system is utilizing a screening tool to identify students who may have factors that contribute to failure to graduate from high school. This begins in kindergarten and is reviewed throughout the school year. Identification factors include absenteeism, disciplinary issues, and academic failures. Students with a higher score are identified at risk. Each school has developed a system of support for these students including additional academic support, working with families to eliminate attendance barriers, and provide positive reasons to attend school.

### Harbor Academy

In an effort to reduce the number of suspensions that often leads to the decline in academic success Trigg County Public Schools established Harbor Academy. The academy is designed to serve middle and high school students. Keeping students connected to the classroom and the curriculum is imperative to student success. Students often function better in a smaller setting with more individualized help. This gives students an opportunity to maintain current grades and to earn credits that might be lost due to suspension.

### Tutoring/Remedial Services at Trigg County Public Schools

Both Trigg County High School and Trigg County Middle School are utilizing all available time to provide continued support and academic intervention for struggling students. Wildcat Weeks at Trigg County High School are implemented at regular intervals during the school year. During this time, students can attend before- or after-school tutoring sessions with teachers to address specific weaknesses and fill gaps in the students' content knowledge. At Trigg County Middle School, the staff has developed "Flex" time at the end of each day to provide daily support and intervention to each student depending upon their individual weakness.

### Dual Credit Opportunities

In addition to the traditional high school course offerings, Trigg County High School is offering a number of dual credit opportunities by utilizing both Murray State University and Hopkinsville Community College. This is typically through an online course. One of the potential barriers for students to attending post-secondary educational experiences is expense. The Cadiz Trigg County Rotary Club has chosen to provide tuition expenses for these courses up to \$210 for each student who reaches the ACT Council for Post-Secondary Education benchmarks. In an effort to help more students participate in dual credit college courses, the Cadiz Trigg County Rotary Club will pay for each sophomore student to take the ACT at no charge once during their sophomore year. Having an opportunity to see that college credit is obtainable is the first step towards post-secondary training and graduation.