

- Finding financial support to strengthen career and technical programs offered in the area.
- UCHS Industry Field Trips (attended by over 60 UCHS students; **field trip itinerary attached #1**).

WORK READY COMMUNITY: *Must be at 25 percent and present a plan to raise this to 32 percent within three years (KY average) and 39 percent within five years (national average).*

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Henderson Community College

In February 2015, Union County had 25% of Adults Ages 25-64 with an Associate's Degree or Higher. This has increased by 0.4% since the 2008-2012 Five Year Estimates.

To raise this percentage to 32% within 3 years and 39% within 5 years, Union County will continue to rely heavily on partnerships with local educational institutions. For example, in the past three academic years at Henderson Community College:

- 1,449 Union County students enrolled at Henderson Community College.
 - 542 of these students have at one time been credential-seeking during this time frame.
 - 242 of these students have taken one or more dual credit classes.
 - 68 students have completed an associate degree (AA, AS, AAS.)
 - 13 students have completed a diploma.
 - 99 students have completed one or more certificates.
- 180 total credentials have been awarded to 106 Union County students.

As the primary college serving Union County, Henderson Community College is working to boost their graduation rates. To do this they are: placing a stronger focus on student advisement, introducing a First Year Experience course, to help students succeed, and strengthening the college's transfer focus with four year institutions

Henderson Community College and Union County Schools are partnering on a number of initiatives, including dual credit offerings; pre-apprenticeships through the Tech-Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) program; and expansion of technical programs such as welding through agreements with the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Academy. Henderson Community College is working with regional officials to start a KY FAME chapter, creating a pipeline of emerging talent in a work-based Advanced Manufacturing Technology two-year degree program. While a time-to-goal date is difficult for this criteria, a variety of opportunities for higher education are being made available to Union County residents.

According to the KCEWS High School Feedback Report for 2013 (kwecs.ky.gov), Union County Public Schools saw an increase in the college-going rate of graduates. The 2013 Kentucky High School Feedback report for Union County states that the college-going rate for 2010-2011 graduates was 68.4% compared to an overall 62.6% college-going rate for the class of 2009-2010—an increase of 6%. This

increase in college-going rate and the district's strong focus on college and career readiness will continue to positively affect higher education attainment in the County.

The class of 2015 at Union County High School had the highest percentage of students ever graduate as "College and/or Career Ready;" 61.7% of projected graduates earned the College/Career Ready designation, compared to 60% in 2014.

Henderson Community College's graduation rate (based on the fall 2010 cohort, graduated in 2013 as reported in *US News & World Report*) is 21%, an increase of 1% since the original Work Ready Community application. This increase is due to several retention efforts taken at the college, including a focus on First Year Experience classes, increased student advising and other student engagement activities). The rate should continue to increase as these strategies are strengthened across each incoming freshman class.

Through Henderson Community College, students at Union County High School who are enrolled in dual credit classes (currently there are 85) can have the first 3 credit hours completely paid for by the college if the class is taught by an UCHS instructor. If the college classes are taught by an HCC instructor, then the students can receive two classes at half price. They may then take as many credit hours as works in their schedule. A number of students who qualify (free and reduced lunch) are assisted by the YSC Center with their book expenses and tuition. The YSC can provide \$100 to qualified students to help cover these costs. Students who qualify economically may also receive Mary Jo Young Scholarships, which cover tuition and books.

Union County High School continues to work with HCC to add additional certification processes to vocational programs the high school offers (i.e. certified nursing assistant, electricity, welding, plumbing). Recently, the high school health sciences program was moved into the Herron Center to offer more certified Nurse Assistant Courses. Having these certification will allow students to exit high school possessing a certificate that would enhance their marketability in a job field where secondary schooling may be a requirement. Having this certificate would also be an added bonus on a college application or resume.

Braves 2 College

A program that was implemented in 2014, (for the class of 2017 and beyond) that will greatly help improve our educational attainment rate is the *Braves 2 College* scholarship program. Eligible students must possess:

- at least a 2.5 GPA
- 96% attendance rate,
- NO Safe School Violations,
- Complete high school in 8 consecutive semesters or earlier (dual-credit)
- Take more than the state minimum number of credits to graduate

With *Braves 2 College*, students who meet these criteria will receive up to \$1,000 per semester for four semesters at Henderson Community College. This will put them in an excellent position to not only have

an Associate's degree, but be well on their way to attaining a 4 year collegiate degree. Currently, 66 freshmen and 31 sophomores are still eligible to receive B2C scholarship money when they graduate (brochure attached #2). To date, the Braves 2 College Scholarship Foundation has raised over 1.1 million dollars. The goal is to raise 2.5 million.

Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center Partnership

Union County Schools has successfully implemented dual enrollment opportunities through a MOU partnership with our local Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center. This agreement is now allowing UCHS students to receive training to obtain industry credentials and technical degrees. Currently, we have students enrolled in the United Auto Workers and welding areas.

Without question, with this MOU between UCPS and Earle C. Clements now a reality, the number of technically degreed workers will certainly increase in the future. In addition, the following program areas are also available at Earle C. Clements to our local students and youth ages 16-24:

- Tile Setting
- Facility Maintenance
- Network Cable
- Material Handling
- Nurse Assistant
- Medical Office Support
- Office Administration
- Computer Tech
- Electricity
- Deckhand
- Culinary
- Plumbing

In addition to the MOA between UCPS and Earle C. Clements, Henderson Community College is offering addition evening classes to meet employer demand. Beginning in August 2015, Union County students and adult community members had the opportunity to enroll in evening dual-credit welding classes provided by Henderson County College in partnership with Earle C. Clements. When completed, these courses will lead to direct certification in the welding profession. Presently, there are approximately 10 students enrolled for the fall semester.

Post-Secondary

For our post-secondary adults, Union County continues to partner with HCC, Lindsey Wilson College, and Murray State's regional campus in Henderson to promote the opportunities available for degree completion through these institutions. Research has identified a significant number of individuals in the region who are close to completing a degree but are just lacking a few credit hours. By promoting these opportunities and making students of all ages aware of the vast number of educational opportunities available in the region (reciprocation agreements are in place with nearby University of Southern Indiana and Ivy Tech), the community believes this will encourage degree completion and improve educational attainment.

Union County should be able to raise the educational attainment rate to 32 percent within three years and 39 percent within the next five years through

- The schools' improved focus on preparing students of all ages for post-secondary education;
- Continuation of the Braves 2 College scholarship program and its rigor and attendance requirements;
- The addition of more skilled trades programs being added to the high school's certification process in partnership with Henderson Community College;
- The strong partnership between Union County schools and the Earle C. Clements Job Corps to provide additional CTE programs;
- Collaboration between local learning institutions to promote degree completion; and
- HCC's plans to increase their retention and graduation rates.

WORK READY COMMUNITY: *Must present a plan 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. A map listing counties within the commonwealth and their population of adults without a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma can be found on the Kentucky Adult Education website (<http://www.kyae.ky.gov>)*

GED ATTAINMENT

To reduce the number of working age adults in Union County without a high school diploma or high school equivalency by 3% in 3 years and 5% in 5 years, 51 GEDs would have to be awarded by 2018, and a total of 84 awarded by 2020.

A recently-released report outlining GED performance across the state of Kentucky (attached #3) stated that Union County was 18th in percentage of academic performance and 10th in the percentage of GED goal attained. On June 24, 2014, Adult Education received approval for an \$8,000 grant to go towards GED testing (attachment #4). This money is accessible to residents in Union and Henderson counties.

With this grant, students (on a first come, first serve basis) must complete Adult Education's orientation, complete the TABE assessment, and pass the GED Ready test. Once these requirements have been met, students are then ready to take the GED test. Students will be required to pay for the first of four GED tests (\$30) and then the grant will cover the other three GED tests (\$90). This grant money will allow us to test 88 people. To date, only \$450 of the \$8,000 grant has been spent, because vouchers from the state have helped to offset the cost locally.

Kentucky also has a voucher system in place for GED testing. For a limited time students can take each of the four tests, for just \$10 each. Now that studying and testing for the GED can be done online, people with transportation issues can prepare from home and even schedule their own test.

The Union County Adult Education Office is also sending out flyers and attempting to reconnect with past students through the mail and the public school system. Staff are also positioning signs strategically across the county to promote the GED.

GED Results from 2012-2015

	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-2015</u>
Henderson Adult Education	13	6	2
Union County Adult Education	15	18	11
Total GEDs for Union County Residence	28	24	13

*65 Total GEDs obtained from July 2012-June 2015

Narrative 5: Soft Skills Program: Discuss your community program or programs to address work ethic/soft skills development and credentialing for both secondary school and post secondary adult populations. The program must meet the following minimum standards:

- *provide evidence of employer engagement in the program development process, including representation of the county's most prolific businesses and industries,*
- *provide evidence that employers recognize achievement of work ethic or soft skills or soft skills credential in their hiring/advancement process,*
- *programs must include measureable goals for annual improvement in the raw number and percentage of workforce credentialed,*
- *plans must include a strategy to assure employers of the sustainability of the programs, and*
- *programs must address, at a minimum, the following topical areas: attendance/punctuality, communication, teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking (four pages maximum).*

WORK ETHIC/SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

A number of programs working to instill soft skills are being implemented in Union County. In addition to the programs that are currently in place, we continue to work with Workforce Solutions to create further programs that meet the needs of local employers.

For the last four years, a Summer Youth Soft Skills Program has been developed for areas youth to attend (2013, 2014 & 2015 attachment #5.). At the elementary level, all schools across the county have incorporated the "Leader in Me" program into their classrooms. At the high school level, a Soft Skills course is currently being offered to seniors. Also, at the high school, Leader in Me is termed GRIT (Goal Driven, Resilient, Influential Teens). The Student GRIT Team develops advisory lessons pairing a current topic with one of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens and delivers the lesson to the student body.

Uchs Principal, Evan Jackson, is pursuing year two of Junior Achievement (JA) for incoming freshman. Last year, each freshman participated in Real Jobs, Real World through JA where volunteers from the