

Narrative 3: Educational Attainment

Present a plan to raise the Educational Attainment rate to 25 percent within three years and 32 percent within five years and 39 percent within seven years (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 3: Educational Attainment – Post-Secondary

Based on US Census data from the 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-year estimates, the current educational attainment level of adults 18-64 holding at least an associate's degree is 20.3%.

There are no higher education training institutions directly located in Webster County; however, the following SACS Accredited educational institutions directly serve Webster County and are within a 30 mile radius from most county addresses: Henderson Community College, Madisonville Community College, Murray State University, Lindsey Wilson College, Mid-Continent University, and Western Kentucky University. Daymar College, independently accredited, is also located in Hopkins County, an adjacent county to Webster County. Like the SACS accredited institutions, Daymar currently serves Webster County residents.

Plan to Reach 25% by 2015

The above mentioned colleges are working hard to ensure Webster County residents have access to education. To do this, our community took inventory of what was already in place to ensure that our residents have opportunities for advancing their education available locally. Listed below are the following strategies currently underway.

- **Fiscal Court Sponsored Dual Enrollment Opportunities (WEBSTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL)** –Working with Madisonville Community College and Webster County Fiscal Court, Webster County High School offers dual-enrollment opportunities on campus with Madisonville Community College. The course cost and partial book scholarship is paid through a grant from Webster County Fiscal Court through Coal-Severance Funding. Junior and Senior students will have an opportunity to complete six hours each semester.
- **Other Dual Credit Opportunities (WEBSTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL)** – Working with Western Kentucky University, students have the opportunity to receive 6 hours of credit for SPAN Chemistry when enrolled at the Junior/Senior level in high school. Although students have to pay for these class credits through WKU, financial assistance is available on an individual student basis. Furthermore, Murray State University offers 3 hours agriculture credit in conjunction with the Ag Dept. at WCHS. A reduced fee is charged to students enrolled in this opportunity.
- **Dual Credit Opportunities (AREA TECHNOLOGY CENTER)** – Working with the Webster County Area Technology Center, there are over 19 dual credit opportunities available each year in allied health and applied technology fields. High school students are able to take advantage of these opportunities at no cost. On average, over 350 duplicated

enrollments take advantage of these opportunities yearly. Students are awarded credentials at the end of the class as well as course credit through Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

- **JUMP START Program (WEBSTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL)** – Webster County High School seniors have the opportunity to participate in a JUMP START program with Madisonville Community College where seniors can leave ½ day of high school to pursue college classes/training.
- **College & Career Readiness Initiative** – Webster County High School has hired a College and Career Educator to help students understand the importance of college and career readiness. An internal school campaign has already been launched and a strategic media campaign (targeting community and parental awareness) will start later this year. This initiative is not only to make students aware, but an effort by Webster County Schools to ensure parents are aware of opportunities available.
- **WorkForce Transitions Program-** MCC Workforce Transitions and HCC Workforce program targets individuals trained in the workforce for enrollment in credit-bearing academic programs. Incentives such as credit for prior-learning and increased advising support will make the transition easy for students from training to academic courses. Since Madisonville as well as Henderson Community College offers credit and non-credit training programs to individuals as well as businesses throughout Webster County, residents can be targeted and individually marketed to for degree completion.
- **Scholarship/Funding Support-** A variety of scholarship opportunities are available for students from Webster County at all the postsecondary institutions in Hopkins and Henderson counties with both Madisonville Community College and Henderson Community College earmarking scholarship funding specifically for Webster County residents.
- **Flexible Learning Opportunities** – In an effort to meet the needs of a diverse population with diverse needs, programming is available to students at day, night, weekends, online, and through correspondence. Furthermore, many degree programs are all available online so that, regardless of a student's ability to come to class when offered, degrees can still be achieved.

In an effort to raise the educational level, the following new strategies have been adopted to continually place focus on the opportunities here locally for education at the associate's level and beyond.

- **Individual Student Focus Based on Earned Hours/No Degree** – As of Summer 2013, 679 names in Webster County were identified by Henderson Community College and Madisonville Community College as students (since 2000) with more than 40 hours of credit on record with no degree. Efforts are underway to individually evaluate each

student to determine how much is needed to obtain a degree. Once this is done, students will be notified individually and encouraged to finish.

- **Local Employer Campaign** – The Educational Attainment Committee will work to identify local employers with over 10 employees. We will schedule meetings with managers and HR executives to learn more about employment opportunities, education requirements, etc. We will work with our area educational partners to be on-site at least once monthly in an identified business with promotional materials for schools servicing Webster County.
- **Employer Focus on Tuition Assistance** – Given the state of our present day economy, getting individuals interested in investing in their education (when they do not qualify for grants) is often difficult. Our Educational Attainment Committee is working to identify each employer within Webster County that offers employer tuition assistance. Individual payment arrangements can be made for these qualified students that make paying upfront not a requirement to entice more to enroll in postsecondary training.
- **Finish It Webster County Campaign** – Modeled after Hopkins County's initiative, a strategic marketing plan will be developed to brand the idea of college completion for the residents of Webster County. Efforts will be made with all local media outlets, and partnerships will be made with other business and industry organizations to promote this campaign each Spring in connection with local job fairs and college aid and application deadlines with a more developed campaign to be on-going. Special effort will be made to promote degree completion opportunities to students with several hours and no degree and employed by a company with a tuition reimbursement program.
- **Unsatisfactory Academic Progress/Financial Aid Alternatives** - Federal regulations have resulted in changes to federal financial aid and Workforce Investment Act monies have been cut. As a result, many individuals are not able to return to school because they lack the ability to receive financial aid and do not have the resources to return to school at the community college level. These students will be individually counseled on alternative funding methods (like the Badgett Education Scholarship) as well as the benefit to transferring to a four-year institution and do concurrent enrollment with the community college to gain access to funding.

With all the above mentioned initiatives, we are confident that Webster County will meet the standards of a Work-Ready Community in the next couple of years. The academic partners have joined forces to make a concentrated effort to raise the educational level of Webster County. Working together, we have the infrastructure in place for success.

Narrative 3: Educational Attainment – GED

Based on 2010 US Census data (Ky. State Data Center), the population of Webster County is 13,621 (10,457 age 18 and older). Of the population 18 and older, approximately 25% do not have a high school diploma or GED (2,614).

GED

This table shows GED attainment among Webster County Adult Education students for the past three fiscal years. (County goals are set by Kentucky Adult Education).

Fiscal Year	Attainment Goal	GEDs attained	Percent of goal
2012-2013	46	29	63%
2011-2012	38	24	63%
2010-2011	41	22	53%

We are proud to demonstrate that Webster County's percentage of GEDs attained, based on the goal, increased 10% between 10-11 and 11-12 and was 63% for both 11-12 and 12-13. Contributing factors to this growth include a new, dedicated county staff, scheduled (managed) enrollment and classes, increased offerings of classes at the Webster County Detention Center and amongst the Hispanic community, and improved relations between Webster County Adult Education staff, Webster County Public Schools, and other community organizations.

Plans to Continue Growth

- **Fiscal Court Funding for GED Test for Webster County Residents** – Webster County Fiscal Court has given Webster County Adult Education \$3,000 to be used for GED testing. This money will be available to residents to cover the cost of testing as long as the grant lasts.
- **Awareness/Marketing Campaign** - To continue this % goal improvement, we plan to market more in the local communities with flyers in church bulletins, distribution of flyers through the Webster County School System, posters at the post offices, and informational stories in the newspapers. We will also work with the Work Ready Communities Committee and the Finish It-Webster County Campaign to encourage educational attainment at all levels throughout Webster County. We will also use information gained from employer visits to better understand the needs of the community we serve and market specifically to those individuals.