

**Kentucky Department of Education
Program Review**

**Morehead Youth Development Center
Rowan County School District
April 25, 2012**

Dr. Lynn McCoy-Simandle and Lonnie Watts served as the Alternative Education Consultants for KECSAC (Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children) and submit this report to the Department of Education.

Introduction

The Alternative Education Consultants from KECSAC, acting on behalf of the Kentucky Department of Education, conducted a review of Morehead Youth Development Center (MYDC) on April 25, 2012. The purpose of the site visit was to review MYDC to determine if its program could be considered as a 2012-2013 Alternative Education Best Practice Site, which was nominated for Best Practices in Academic Performance, Learning Environment and Efficiency.

Established in 1972 and formerly known as Baptist Children's Home, Morehead Youth Development Center is a residential treatment DJJ facility serving female youth from fourteen (14) to seventeen (17) years of age. All of the current eighteen (18) students and three are students with identified disabilities are from districts outside Rowan County. The average length of stay is seven (7) months, however the length of stay is determined by the court system. The ethnicity of the student population includes 53% white, 33% black, 6% Hispanic, and 6% other. MYDC employs three full-time teachers. The current teaching staff is certified in History/Political Science, LBD (special education), and Mathematics/Earth Science. Additional staff includes a school administrator, a lead teacher, vocational faculty, one instructional assistant, and one administrative assistant.

Students attend from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. daily. Attendance is recorded daily and maintained at the A6 School. Students' state test scores are sent to the state department of education. Students earn credit towards graduation and can participate in a graduation ceremony that may occur at any point during the school year.

Note: The administrative/classroom building underwent renovation last year. The renovation is now complete, resulting in a much-improved educational setting, with new carpet, fresh paint, new desks, in addition to the installation of an elevator. Both academic and vocational classrooms are now in the same building. As well, aesthetic murals in the classroom area hallway reflect the creative genius of mural artist, Emmanuel Martinez and the students of Morehead YDC.

Review activities included:

1. Review of the program questionnaire
2. Interviews with school administrator, lead teacher, Rowan County superintendent, teachers and students.
3. Review of the school's KECSAC Program Improvement Plan, curriculum materials and samples, discipline and safety plans, test data, professional development offerings and other pertinent documents
4. Walk-through observations
5. Observation of supervision practices and procedures during lunch and student transition times
6. Classroom observations

The Program Report was based upon the examination of the documents provided by the program, as well as the consultants' experiences and observations. The specific findings and recommendations are organized under the heading of Academic Performance, Learning Environment, and Efficiency. Each of the nine standards for success in Kentucky schools is addressed in the following pages:

Academic Performance

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment and instruction.

Standard 1: The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.

Standard 2: The school utilizes multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

Standard 3: The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve student performance.

Learning Environment

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture, student family and community support and professional growth, development and evaluation.

Standard 4: The school/district functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

Standard 5: The school/district works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students.

Standard 6: The school/district provides research-based, results-driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school structure, resources and comprehensive and effective planning.

Standard 7: School/district instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture and developing leadership capacity.

Standard 8: The organization of the school/district maximizes use of time, all available space and other resources to maximize teaching and learning and support high student and staff performance.

Standard 9: The school/district develops implements and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 Curriculum

Based on interviews, classroom observations, and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that the curriculum for grades 7-12 consists of computer-assisted instruction and teacher-driven courses aligned with district/state standards. A variety of curriculum resources is used to meet the needs of a diversified multi-age, multi-ability level classroom for core curriculum, credit recovery, and general education development (GED) needs (i.e., Novel Stars, Achieve 3000/Teen Biz, computer). Students have access to entire Microsoft Office suite of products and the internet. In addition to the core academic curriculum, through Workforce Development, classes in office technology and horticulture are offered as electives, as well as a workforce principles class taken by all students.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 2 Assessment

Based on interviews, classroom observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that assessment of student learning is frequent and aligned to Kentucky's Core Content.

Formative and summative assessments are used to guide continuous improvement at both the individual and program level. Classroom formative assessments are used to identify areas of strength as well as to establish goal areas for growth.

Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate learning on assessments similar to those demonstrated on the KCCT assessment through open-response and writing portfolio development. Teachers use various assessments to determine how well they are meeting core content goals and how to differentiate instruction to assist in meeting those goals. The team at MYDC, which includes both academic teachers and the DJJ vocational teachers along with district/administrative support disaggregate student data. This team analyzes data from ACT, PLAN, EXPLORE and The Test of Adult Basic Education and state assessment data to identify program strengths and areas to improve.

Teachers develop scoring guides (rubrics) and share them with students. Formal and informal assessments are used to identify causes of behavior, reasons for the behaviors, replacement behaviors, student interview/involvement, and as multi-component interventions that influence students.

The performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Based on interviews, classroom observations and inspection of available documents and materials, it was concluded that varied instructional strategies (that are aligned with state and Rowan County School district learning goals and assessment expectations) are used in all classrooms to address academic, social and behavioral needs.

All Morehead YDC teachers meet the requirements to be considered highly qualified and they supplement their instruction with computer-based software, supplemental teaching materials, current textbooks, and other teaching manipulatives. All teachers participate in sustained, classroom-focused professional development, as well as use technology as an integral part of instruction in all content areas. The administrative staff provides feedback and support to the teachers to assist them in their instructional technology practices.

Computer technology exceeds a 1:1 ratio with forty-three (43) laptop computers. Other technology resources include Promethean Boards, flash drives for individual student use, classroom sets of active expression kits, and two wireless printers. Academic and vocational teachers collaborate on unit development that focuses on activities providing enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Based on interviews, classroom and facility observations, and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that there is leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment. MYDC core belief is that a positive, supportive learning environment must be in place before academic achievement will occur. The administrative staff and teachers set high academic and behavioral standards for all students and support a climate conducive to performance excellence.

Providing a clean, safe and orderly environment is paramount to Morehead Youth Development Center's organization. It was evident that the students take

pride in their facility, with beautiful landscaping, mowed lawns, immaculate classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, and kitchen.

The professional culture includes a daily morning meeting that involves the academic teachers, the DJJ vocational instructors, and the vocational coordinator. There is a belief that the entire child must be considered – holistically integrating treatment and education.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 5 **Support**

Based on interviews, observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that Morehead YDC is involved in significant ways to remove barriers to learning. The community is an active partner in the educational process and work together with the school to promote programs and services for all students. Morehead YDC extends classroom experiences to include various outside resources/service learning projects (i.e., Morehead State University partnership/veterinary program, Greyhound Rehabilitation with Cross Lanes Dog Track in West Virginia, volunteering twice a year for clean-up at University of Kentucky Arboretum in Lexington, service learning at the Frenchburg dog pound weekly after school, bake sales and car washes for fundraising, distribution of commodities, trout stocking in the Red River Gorge area, and participation in the Pride Group for roadway litter pick up).

Chafee Life Skills program for 16 years olds and up is utilized as a social skills curriculum and students can earn \$50 per completed packet up to \$250.

There is evidence that the Rowan County superintendent and board provide invaluable support for the students and staff at the Morehead YDC.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 6 **Professional Development**

Based on interviews, observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that professional development is ongoing with an emphasis on sustained and continuous growth. Professional development planning considers both the identified needs of individual staff members and the program-wide focus for improvement. Professional development opportunities include ActivInspire (for Promethean interactive white boards), Quality core Introduction, *Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning* book study, and Program Review Area overviews. A KEDC trainer has been instrumental in providing staff development for technology. All teachers have been trained to facilitate the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) process.

The principal is responsible for evaluating the staff and provides meaningful feedback to teachers as an integral part of the evaluation process to challenge teacher thinking and to change behavioral and instructional practice. Each staff person is required to have a growth plan which is an integral component of the evaluation process. MYDC teacher and staff evaluations comply with the Rowan County Schools' policies.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 Leadership

Based on interviews, observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that effective leadership exists at all levels (district office, program principal and administrators). Paula Stafford, a Rowan County district administrator is assigned to the Morehead YDC. This administrator conducts classroom observations, evaluates staff, chairs ARC meetings, develops budgets, coordinates professional development, oversees purchasing, and collaborates with the lead teacher who oversees day-to-day operation of the center. The center's staff is vigilant about maintaining student records and especially transcripts for the high school students.

Morehead YDC maintains a strong relationship with the Superintendent and School Board of Rowan County Schools. District leadership visit and offer assistance and support on a regular basis. The Center's leadership is included in all administrative activities in the district. Additionally, there is a strong, positive relationship between treatment staff and education staff that work towards the common good of the students rather than recognizing separate roles.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 8 Resources/Organization

Based on interviews, observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that the program equitably allocates resources to encourage high student and staff performance. Students have equitable access to all classes. The instructional six-period day is maximized by the scheduling of group and individual counseling sessions at the end of the school day. The thirty-three day extended school year calendar includes a six-hour instructional day, rather than the minimum four-hour day. All MYDC teachers meet the requirement to be highly qualified. Funds from multiple sources are integrated to maximize student achievement and support identified student needs. Educational staff volunteers time through fundraising for library resources.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Standard 9 Planning

Based on interviews and inspection of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that the school engages in a yearly planning process that includes collecting, managing and analyzing data to define programmatic strengths and weaknesses. The program improvement plan, developed collaboratively, is a living document and is reviewed quarterly for implementation and impact. This yearly program improvement plan, implementation and impact check, and transition plan is submitted to KECSAC annually.

The Performance Level was found to be: **Fully Functioning**

Conclusion:

Based on interviews, observations and inspection of pertinent documents and materials by the Alternative Education Consultants for KECSAC, it was concluded that Morehead Youth Development Center is recommended as a Best Practice site for Academic Performance, Learning Environment and Efficiency for the 2012-2013 school year.