



Executive Summary

Haralson County School System

Dr. Jerry Bell, Superintendent
299 Robertson Avenue
Tallapoosa, GA 30176

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Introduction

Every school system has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school system makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school system stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school system, and the kinds of programs and services that a school system implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school system with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the community will have a more complete picture of how the school system perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school system to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School System

Describe the school system's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school system serves?

Haralson County School District is a learning community of 473 professionals serving approximately 3500 students in Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Haralson County is a rural community with a population of approximately 28,641, located in the hills of Northwestern Georgia at the base of the "ABC Triangle," formed by the suburbs of Atlanta, Birmingham, and Chattanooga. The community places an emphasis on attracting new industry and fostering strong relationships between existing commerce, local government, and the school district. Haralson County is truly where location builds industry. Dynamic industry and technology leaders, such as Honda Precision Parts of Georgia, Honda Lock- America, West Georgia Technical College, and Higgins General Hospital (Tanner Health System) currently support significant employment in Haralson County and are interested in supporting the district's efforts to build a solid local workforce with strong 21st Century Skills in the areas of technology, science, and math, as well as "soft" skills such as work ethic, social skills, and responsibility. Agriculture and lumber are two other significant industries in Haralson County that are looking for employees who have drive, initiative, and strong problem-solving skills.

Over the past five years the recession hit hard in Haralson County, but slowly the community is rebuilding, and the unemployment rate has decreased from a high of 13.3% in 2011 to the current rate of 5.4% in December 2015. The school district is committed to working together with the community to improve this rate even further by providing viable and capable employees. In order to improve our unemployment rate, we need to examine our community demographics as a whole. An unusually high percentage (26%) of people living in Haralson County (compared to 16% for Georgia) did not graduate from high school. Fourteen percent (14%) of Haralson County citizens have a Bachelor's degree or higher (compared to a state average of 28%). The median household income for Haralson County citizens is \$39,993 compared to a Georgia median income of \$49,179. Haralson County School District is a high poverty district as evidenced by a free and reduced lunch rate of 81.54%. Demographically, our student population is made up of 90.5% White, 2.3% Black, 2.2% Hispanic, 4.2% Multiracial, and less than 1% from all other ethnicities, which closely mirrors the demographics of the community, and approximately 16% are students with disabilities. Haralson County School District has an enrollment of 3,538 students (Pre-K to 12th grade) and the school district has six schools: two primary schools (PK-2); two elementary schools (3-5); a middle school (6-8); and a high school (9-12). Programs include: Standards-Based Instruction (Pre-K to 12); technology integration and STEM instruction (Pre-K to 12); Georgia Lottery Pre-kindergarten; School Wide Title I (K-12); Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) (PK-12); Career Tech and Agricultural Education (CTAE, 9-12); Advanced Placement (9-12); Move On When Ready (MOWR) and dual enrollment(9-12); Southwire's 12 for Life; Work Based Learning (11-12), JROTC (9-12); HOPE Academy (9-12); and Ombudsman Educational Services (6-12).

Since our last AdvancED review, we have gone through both the strategic planning and Charter System planning processes to communicate with and include the voices of all our stakeholders in the teaching and learning process. The stakeholders revealed four priority areas for Haralson County students: a) to earn credit through work and community-based experiences, b) increase rigorous academic opportunities to challenge all students, c) ensure smooth transitions from Pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade and beyond into post-secondary options and employment, and d) increase employability skills, including "soft" skills and technology. Our continuous improvement process allows all stakeholders to be included in creating a collective vision and focus for all students in Haralson County.

System's Purpose

Provide the school system's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school system embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The system's vision, "Haralson County Schools will be recognized as a leader in improving student achievement for ALL students," demonstrates an on-going commitment to student achievement and academic excellence for all students through a continuous improvement process of collaboration with internal and external stakeholders who share accountability for a high-quality education.

The system's mission, "Haralson County Schools will produce high-achieving students who will graduate and become productive and responsible citizens," ensures that our students will benefit from a commitment to a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum that will prepare them to compete in a global economy and improve the quality of life within their community, making it possible for graduates to secure a sustainable occupation wherever they so choose.

Haralson County's belief statements encompass our commitment to high expectations for all students and a committed community of learners and stakeholders working together for success in school and the community through continuous improvement:

- We believe all students deserve to be held to high expectations that reflect individual abilities.
- We believe every person deserves to be treated with respect.
- We believe the health, safety, and welfare of all students and employees are a prerequisite to student success.
- We believe students must be taught academic and life skills, including technology, to succeed in an ever-changing world.
- We believe school experience should be relevant practice for adulthood.
- We believe regular attendance is fundamental to learning.
- We believe all stakeholders share the responsibility for educating students.
- We believe effective communication is essential for all stakeholders.

In order to realize our vision and incorporate our beliefs into the daily work of Haralson County School District, we pursued becoming a Charter System. Being a Charter System allows for greater flexibility in serving students using state and local resources, greater community and parent involvement in decision making, and innovative and supportive solutions for students who may be falling behind or may need more acceleration. With this flexibility, Haralson County School District is able to provide a seamless schooling process that supports the wider community of Haralson County and greater accountability to the community in meeting our local outcomes.

The framework for all continuous improvement efforts is highlighted in the five goal areas of the 2013-2016 Strategic Plan. These goal areas include: Student Achievement; Student Support; Teaching & Learning; Student, Staff, Parent and Community Engagement; and Operational Support. Additionally, measurable performance objectives are consistent between the district strategic plan and the school improvement plans. The district maintains a focus on preparing students to be college and career ready. This includes a rigorous focus on meeting Georgia curriculum standards and offering students a wide variety of learning opportunities, including fine arts, Advanced Placement, dual-enrollment opportunities, honors and gifted classes, and multiple career and technical offerings. Industry partnerships also enhance the application of standards to support students finding success beyond graduation.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school system's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school system is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Haralson County School District's focus on continuous improvement is the foundation for our continued success in several areas of achievement. Our progress is driven by our Mission: Haralson County Schools will produce high-achieving students who will graduate and become productive and responsible citizens. A culture of success and high expectations is sustained through a targeted and intensive focus on student achievement and support, teaching and learning, community engagement, and operational support.

Notable achievements for the Haralson County School District include, but are not limited to:

- 2015 Georgia School Boards Association Exemplary Board Status (Haralson County School Board)
- 2014 Georgia School Boards Association Distinguished Board Status (Haralson County School Board)
- 2013 Georgia School Boards Association Quality Board Status (Haralson County School Board)
- 2011-2016 System Accreditation (AdvancED)
- FY16, FY14, FY13 High Progress Reward School - Buchanan Elementary School
- FY15 High Progress Reward School - Haralson County High School
- FY15 PBIS schools - Emerging - Buchanan Primary School, Buchanan Elementary School, Tallapoosa Primary School and Haralson County Middle School
- FY15 PBIS schools - Installing - West Haralson Elementary School and Haralson County High School
- 2016 First Lego League Georgia Coach of the Year - Ms. Debbie Huckeba, Haralson County Middle School
- 2015 Regional 1st Place in One Act Play- Haralson County High School
- 2015 GHSA 5AAA Championship Region Literary Team - Haralson County High School
- 2013 Georgia School Nurse of the Year - Mrs. Martha Lang, Buchanan Primary School
- 2013 Georgia Middle School Principal of the Year - Dr. Brian Ridley, Haralson County Middle School
- 2014 Georgia Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year - Mrs. Jodi Cash, Haralson County Middle School
- 2013 Breakout School named by the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals (GASSP) - Haralson County Middle School
- 2014 Thinking Maps National Spotlight School - Haralson County Middle School
- 2015 GASSP Team of the Year - Team 6-1, Haralson County Middle School
- 2014 Georgia Educational Technology Fair- Three 1st place winners and two 2nd place winners, Haralson County Middle School
- 2014 Georgia Student Media Festival - Six gold medalists and two silver medalists, Haralson County Middle School
- Various state and regional recognitions for high school athletics, fine arts and Skills USA (CTAE skills).

Our students and staff regularly receive a wide variety of recognitions. School-level achievements are highlighted on the individual schools' websites and featured on social media. Those who have earned regional, state, or national recognition are spotlighted during the regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings, and pictures from the presentation are shared on the district website and social media.

Haralson County School District has recently seen an increase in high school graduation rate. The 2014 four-year graduation rate for Haralson County High School was 65.2%, the 2015 four-year graduation rate for HCHS was 81.3%, a notable increase and exceeds the state's graduation rate.

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comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and communication platform used to promote college and career readiness for all Georgia public schools' students. The schools and the system track progress with the CCRPI reports which includes achievement points, progress points, achievement gap points, challenge points and a school climate rating. Below are the highlights from the CCRPI reports from 2012 to 2014:

- Haralson County's district score has increased each year and exceeded the state score for the first time in 2014.
- Buchanan Primary and Tallapoosa Primary Schools exceeded the state elementary school score each year.
- Buchanan Elementary School exceeded the state elementary school score each year and increased over 7 points from 2012 to 2014. The achievement points increased every year.
- West Haralson Elementary School exceeded the state elementary school score in 2014 and increased over 20 points from 2012 to 2014. The achievement points increased every year.
- Haralson County Middle School exceeded the state middle school score in 2012 and 2014 and increased over 10 points from 2013 to 2014. The achievement points increased every year.
- Haralson County High School's 5-year cohort graduation rate increased 4 points from 2011 to 2013 and the 4-year cohort graduation rate increased over 16 points from 2014 to 2015 which exceeded the state.

Although our accountability system has changed drastically this year from CRCT and EOCT to Georgia Milestones Assessment System, we still have significant achievement to note in many areas when compared to the state scores on the Milestones. Since this is the first year of Georgia Milestones data, we analyzed our performance as compared to the state percentages. Traditionally, our students have done well in the area of science and social studies, exceeding the state percentage in several grade levels, and this continues to be true with the Georgia Milestones. The list below highlights the areas which were at or above the state percentage when looking at a combination for the three performance levels of developing learner, proficient learner, and distinguished learner:

Buchanan Elementary School

- 3rd grade science and social studies
- 4th grade math and social studies
- 5th grade science and social studies

West Haralson Elementary School

- 3rd grade math and science
- 4th grade science and social studies
- 5th grade science and social studies

Haralson County Middle School

- 6th grade math, science, and social studies
- 7th grade ELA, math, science and social studies
- 8th grade science

Haralson County High School

- Physical science
- Biology
- Economics

The list below highlights the areas which were at or above the state percentage when looking at a combination for the two performance levels of proficient learner and distinguished learner:

Buchanan Elementary School

- 3rd grade science
- 5th grade science

West Haralson Elementary School

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- 3rd grade social studies

- 4th grade science

- 5th grade social studies

Haralson County Middle School

- 6th grade science

- 7th grade science and social studies

- 8th grade science and social studies

Haralson County High School

- Physical science

- Biology

Since Georgia Milestones data is in its first year, there is no trend data; however, as pointed out in the above paragraph, many scores from this first year of Georgia Milestones are above state percentages. Over the years we have tracked trend data with the CRCT and EOCT. Positive trends in performance exist in every grade (3-8) in every content area (reading, ELA, math, science, and social studies) tested on the CRCT from 2010 to 2014. There also were positive trends in performance in all content areas on the EOCT from 2010 to 2014 except the math assessments (Math I which was replaced by Coordinate Algebra in 2013 and Math II which was replaced by Analytic Geometry in 2014). During this same time period, there were multiple years in which we exceeded the state percentage and in most of the content areas where we did not exceed the state percentage, we closed the gap between our system and the state. From 2011 to 2014 we exceeded the state every year in science in 3rd, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades and from 2010 to 2014 in social studies in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade.

Challenges:

We continue to strive to have high achievement in all content areas and provide targeted and intensive instruction for all students to ensure their success in K-12 education and beyond into college and career settings. While we are above the state in many achievement areas, we still have room for improvement in all areas. We continue to examine our instructional practices and look for research-based practices through the continuous improvement process. Technology integration and digital learning are ways to reach all students and truly individualize their learning. Technology is a fast moving trend, and we are working hard to keep up. Our goal is to eventually ensure that all students have full access to technology at all times. Currently we have rolled out a 1:1 Chromebook initiative in 6th grade, and we hope to expand this program each year starting with 6th graders and continuing through the high school. The elementary schools are continually upgrading their technology and adding mobile Chromebook carts so that classrooms can check them out for use throughout the day. We have started Google training this year for faculty and staff and hope to increase our immersion into the Google environment, including Gmail, Google Apps for Education, and Google Classrooms to truly individualize each student's educational environment.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.