



## 2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary for SOHS

2020-21 Phase Three: Executive Summary for Schools

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. Describe the school'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 serves?

South Oldham High School is located in Crestwood, Kentucky, a suburb 10 miles north of Louisville, Kentucky, in Oldham County. SOHS is a comprehensive high school which serves a population of approximately 1,338 students. In addition to being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence that is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in, SOHS was also named a School of Distinction for performing in the 98th percentile of public schools in Kentucky. Our motto is "South....Where Greatness Continues!" South Oldham High School offers a diverse curriculum with twenty-four Advanced Placement Courses, college-prep classes, dual-credit classes, research-based instruction, and high academic standards enabling all students to attain their highest level of academic performance. SOHS has shown improvement on both state and national test rankings (Silver Award List of U.S. News & World Report 2009 and 2010; Gold Award List of U.S. News & World Report 2011, & 2012; Top 1500 Public High Schools in Newsweek Magazine and America's Best High Schools 2010, 2011 & 2012; The Washington Post's Top Performing Schools of 2010, 2011 & 2012, and most recently US News and World Report named SOHS as the #7 public school in Kentucky). Even with these academic successes, we strive to improve and constantly search for Best Practices. Not only does our school benefit from a number of tools in place which support academic growth, but also we are fortunate to have a supportive community of stakeholders who assist us in our quest. From our students and their families to staff members and citizens in the community, we are constantly seeking ways to involve as many stakeholders as possible because we believe this helps create an atmosphere conducive for learning. A large number of our students are highly motivated to perform well academically due to support from home. In 2020-2021, SOHS had three National Merit Semi-Finalists. We have over 1000 students taking at least one AP Course. Over the past three years, not only have we seen growth in our students' desire for more rigorous classes (AP, College-Prep, Dual Certification), but our staff has intentionally focused on mastering the concept of being a classroom-content facilitator. Through inquiry-based learning that engages students in academic discourse and project-based learning discovery, SOHS teachers have started to move away from the traditional methods of 'stand-and-deliver' instruction. Through meaningful professional development opportunities, including topics in academic conversations, thinking strategies,

community building, and inquiry cycles, the SOHS Staff has become more deliberate about facilitating purposeful core instruction for our students.

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

Our mission at South Oldham High School is for all stakeholders to collaboratively work to achieve a shared educational purpose. We have invested a great amount of time, energy, and effort in establishing Professional Learning Communities whose guiding focus is a belief that all students can learn and should learn at high levels. It is the job of these established Professional Learning Communities to create an atmosphere for this achievement to occur. Over the years, we have made it a point to emphasize the following areas to assist us in our mission for PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) to create an environment for rigorous learning such as: Increasing the number of students demonstrating proficiency in writing by having students write consistently and in a variety of genres. The idea that 'teaching writing is an English teacher's job' is not a belief in our building. Through a number of professional development opportunities, curriculum training, and PLC discussions, our teachers understand the importance of students explaining a learned concept through writing that enhances their comprehension. Increasing the number of students demonstrating proficiency in reading comprehension of non-fiction works is another emphasis at South Oldham High School. Beyond state and national assessments, we want our students to be able to comprehend and analyze information throughout life. In order for students to understand that every piece of text should be analyzed in order to fully comprehend, our teachers demonstrate and implement techniques such as 'making texts considerate' via anecdotal notes. Teachers are facilitating more in-class discussions of content-area passages to increase student comprehension. These are just two Best Practices used to increase our reading proficiency. Supporting our Advanced Placement Teachers (27) and National Board Teachers (12) through annual certification and professional development opportunities supports our continued growth. We also offer AP Training to teachers who want to increase their content knowledge, but who may not teach an AP course. This is beneficial not only to the trained professional teacher, but to his/her students who gain content with higher expectations. Continuing our ACT Prep Classes and AP Practice Test Dates throughout the year is another area we must maintain. When students understand the format of the tests, it relieves some anxiety. Also, through our ACT Prep Classes, students gain important test-taking skills as well. Over the past fourteen years, we have seen a constant growth with the number of Advanced Placement courses offered at our school, and due to our open-door policy we have seen an increase in the number of

students enrolled in these courses. One would think that with an increase in student enrollment, the Advanced Placement overall pass percentage rate would fluctuate; however, we have been fortunate to increase our rate each year with a few courses and maintain our pass percentage rate in others. We have also been able to experience slight increases in our ACT Scores. These academic achievements are great to share with all stakeholders, but our challenge comes with implementing ways to continue this growth. One avenue we've taken to ensure students are College and Career Ready is through our Seminar Classes where teachers were selected to offer seminar students the academic, behavioral, and organizational support they need for success during and after high school. As we continue our academic growth, we have a number of support programs in place to assist: counseling, mental health services, Literacy Coach, Special Education Programming, Math Coaches, Lead Teacher Support, Common Planning Periods, ECS Coordinator, ESS Coordinator, RTI Coordinator, and Career Pathways. We developed an Intervention Team in the 2019-2020 academic year. This team has 3 full-time certified teachers and a part-time certified teacher who provide interventions in every period for students. The team works with PLCs, taking notes on initiatives and next steps for instruction; assessment data, analysis of learning, and the identification of trend data; and the development of learning extensions for those students who have mastered essential learning. In addition, a member of the team has created Google spreadsheets to track data across our school. This includes data on college and career-ready students; ACT progression scores; writing essential learning targets and assessments; and a data dashboard that, in addition to the data already named, collects attendance data, behavioral interventions, office referrals, and in-school and out-of-school suspensions. This team allows us to more specifically target interventions to those students most in need of academic support, increase communication with the classroom teacher, and begin developing a school-wide assessment model.

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

One notable achievement at SOHS is our work with the Oldham County Learning Institute (OCLI). This institute emphasizes four instructional strands: building community, gradually releasing the responsibility for learning to students, promoting critical thinking and problem-solving, and intentionally structuring opportunities for student discourse. During the 2019 Institute, our literacy coach co-facilitated the district-wide deep dives into learning, and out school hosted two OCLI Lab Classrooms (math and science) for other teachers in the district and outside the district to come and observe. We have increased the number of

teachers participating in internal lab observations, and engage the entire faculty in twice-yearly Learning Walks. After the initial institute, South continues to provide leadership in the learning that occurs for students and teachers in our district and meeting with new teachers. Our new teacher induction/mentoring program at the school level continues to use the foundational strands and work individually with them to ensure fidelity of implementation. A challenge our school continues to face is keeping up with our district's vision of equipping our students for the 21st Century by improving media/technology skills, critical thinking/problem solving skills, communication skills, creativity/innovation skills, and leadership skills. As a school we have tried to find innovative technological ways to supplement the content taught in classes. Over the past three years, through professional development the district's Digital Leader Network and our Library Media Specialists, teachers have become more aware and have a variety of technological tools they can implement in their classrooms daily. We have two full computer labs in our library media center where teachers can schedule instruction and four embedded iPad carts in content specific classrooms. In addition, we have three "floater" iPad carts that teachers can check out from our media center; and ECS teachers who use Google forms to collect data that is then used to create IEPs. In December 2017, the district provided all of our students that have IEPs that require a reader or scribe, a Chromebook for home and school use. Along with the district's dedication to technology, we have invested in twenty-four Google Chromebook classroom sets. Many of our teachers are moving to an all Google Classroom. All teachers were given a Google Chromebook or a laptop to continue our movement of going digital as a school. As the economy has changed, we have also seen an increase in the number of multi-family homes along with an increase in the number of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch. With these changes, and new state curriculum in English and new standards in science, challenges are constant; however, the ability of our staff to keep focused on the accomplishments of our students makes facing these challenges possible.

**. CSI/TSI Schools (including ATSI) Only:** Describe the procedures used to create the school's improvement plan and briefly state the specific efforts to address the causes of low student performance and resource inequities.

The school leadership team, alongside our district team, formed a TSI stakeholder group that analyzed the discrepancy in our data with all children and African American children. There were many steps taken in the 2017-2018 school year that positively impacted our work with this special population of students. We used our Teacher Work Days to review school-wide data and specifically gap data with all staff. The school-wide response was an ACT workshop for all gap populations, which show tremendous growth in all our gap students. We worked with our school-wide

professional development plan to incorporate PD that supported our special populations. Our last day of professional development included a Poverty Simulation in which teachers experienced the struggles of a family that lives in poverty. As a school, we followed that professional development up with having Dr. Anthony Muhammad working with our staff on Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap. This work has led us into the 2019-2020 school year and continuous work we are doing surrounding all our gap population, not just African American. We do want to celebrate that if the TSI designation were to still exist in the state accountability system, we would not have been labeled TSI in the 2019-2020 school year for African American population. This work has continued into the 2020-2021 school year and continuing building on our core programming and monitoring of student progress. At the classroom level, our PLC's continue to work weekly through that process to identify (proactively) students that struggle with our essential learning. We have an intervention team that supplements the work of our ESS and PLC teams with identified struggling students.

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

South Oldham High School is very proud of our students, staff, and community members. We are fortunate that all stakeholders want to know what occurs at our school and are willing to pitch in and help if needed. We work hard to provide a safe, inviting atmosphere so our students feel comfortable enough to challenge themselves academically and athletically. We like to pride ourselves in keeping parents informed because we feel strongly that parents want to know what is going on with their student. We are most proud of the vision shared by parents, students, staff, and community, along with the dedication of our staff and their commitment to continued student improvement. We invested in a custom school app which allows the school to highlight all the happenings and accomplishments by a quick click for any student, staff, parents and/or community members.

# Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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