



2025-2026 Phase Two: The Needs Assessment for
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Black Mountain Elementary School

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Understanding Continuous Improvement: The Needs Assessment for Schools

The Needs Assessment Diagnostic will facilitate the use of multiple sources of data to determine the current reality and establish a foundation for decision-making around school goals and strategies. Once completed, the diagnostic will lead to priorities to be addressed in the comprehensive school improvement plan to build staff capacity and increase student achievement. The needs assessment is to be conducted annually as an essential part of the continuous improvement process and precedes the development of strategic goals (i.e. desired state).

While the focus of continuous improvement is student performance, the work must be guided by the aspects of teaching and learning that affect performance. An effective improvement process should address the contributing factors creating the learning environment (inputs) and the performance data (outcomes).

The needs assessment provides the framework for all schools to clearly and honestly identify their most critical areas for improvement that they will address later in the planning process through the development of goals, objectives, strategies and activities. 703 KAR 2:225 requires, as part of continuous improvement planning for schools, each school to complete the needs assessment between October 1 and November 1 of each year and include: (1) a description of the data reviewed and the process used to develop the needs assessment; (2) a review of the previous plan and its implementation to inform development of the new plan; and, (3) perception data gathered from the administration of a valid and reliable measure of teaching and learning conditions.

Protocol

1. Clearly detail the process used to determine the priorities of this year's needs assessment. Include the following information in your response:

- names of school council members, leadership teams and stakeholder groups (i.e., Family Resource Youth Service Centers, community partners such as civic and business organizations, etc.) involved in the process
- a timeline of the process
- the specific data reviewed and analyzed
- how and where the meetings were documented.

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, teachers in grades 3-8 will meet as a group and individually in PLC groups to review and analyze all 2024-2025 KSA state testing data. Meetings are documented by minutes and sign-in sheets for all staff. School needs assessment members will meet at least once every nine weeks to review new data and trending data, review our school improvement plan to ensure that we are continuously working toward implementing school and department goals. All General Ed classroom teachers, Special Education teachers and members of school administration meet quarterly to review and assess data trends, as well as take a collaborative approach on how to best implement teaching strategies that thoroughly cover all required standards at each grade level. Support staff for this

process includes Halee Long and Candice Lewis, members of our "Save the Children" team, and Gear Up tutor (Misty Fox) who regularly collaborate with classroom teachers to help meet the needs of all of our students. Students in grades 2-8 will continue working on STAR reading and math tests to monitor progress and trends. Specific data/documentation that will be reviewed during meetings include KSA test scores, STAR reading and math scores, and IXL data.

Review of Previous Plan

2. Summarize the implementation of the goals, objectives, strategies and activities from the previous year's comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP). What was successful? How will your results inform this year's plan?

The two prioritized goals from the previous year's school improvement plan are as follows:

Goal 1: BME will increase elementary reading proficient/distinguished scores to 45%, middle school reading proficient/distinguished scores to 44%, elementary math proficient/distinguished scores to 38%, and middle school math proficiency/distinguished scores to 37% to meet state performance levels by the 2025-2026 school year. We have made strides towards reaching this goal by following our plan of implementing teaching strategies to increase student reading levels and collaborating with Save the Children. Our computer lab classes from the previous year, along with the availability of Chromebooks for each student this year, are helping us to move towards this goal.

Goal 2: BME will increase elementary science proficient/distinguished scores to 29%, middle school science proficient/distinguished scores to 32%, elementary social studies proficient/distinguished scores to 37%, middle school social studies proficient/distinguished scores to 56%, elementary writing proficient/distinguished scores to 47%, and middle school writing to 46% by 2025-2026 to meet state performance standards. We have made strides towards this goal by utilizing technology and teacher collaboration to improve instructional strategies.

Trends

3. After analyzing data trends from the previous two academic years, which academic, cultural and behavioral measures remain significant areas for improvement?

Example of Trends

- Behavior remains an area for improvement, as referrals have increased in the last two years from 204 in 2023-2024 to 288 in 2024-2025.
- Reading for students in our gap groups remains an area for improvement because the district saw an 11% increase in novice scores in reading among students with achievement gaps from 2024-2025.
 - 100% of students in both intermediate and middle school participated in the KSA test for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

- The number of students participating the out Gifted and Talented Program decreased from 10.3% in 2023-2024 to 6.3% in 2024-2025.
- The number of behavior incidents increased from 4.2% in 2023-204 to 6.5% in 2024-2025.
- Black Mountain Elementary will continue to monitor student behavior and the disciplinary process to decrease to the number of behavior referrals in current school year.

Current State of Academics and Climate and Culture

4. Describe in narrative form the current academic state of the school using precise numbers and percentages as revealed by multiple sources of your most recent outcome data. Cite the source of data used. Consider the following data sources:

- Kentucky Summative Assessments
- Benchmark assessments
- Formative assessments
- Graduation rate
- Progress in achieving English language proficiency
- Student access to high quality instructional resources, advanced placement courses, dual credit courses, career and technical education courses, before/after school and summer programs, preschool, full day kindergarten

Example of Current Academic Narratives:

- Thirty-four percent (34%) of students in the achievement gap scored proficient on Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) in reading. Local benchmark data indicates that 32% of all students receive Tier II intervention in reading.
- Fifty-four percent (54%) of our students scored proficient in math on the KSA compared to the state average of 57%. Local formative assessments show 53% of students are on grade level in math.

In both our intermediate (3-5) and middle school (6-8) 100% of our students completed the KSA for the 2024-2025 school year. Our overall Elementary rating is Orange, and our overall Middle School rating is Red. Below are specific KSA results for both Elementary and Middle School.

- Proficient/Distinguished for 3rd grade Reading- 42%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 4th grade Reading- 59%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 5th grade Reading- 42%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 3rd grade Math- 46%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 4th grade Math- 37%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 5th grade Math- 42%

- Proficient/Distinguished for 6th grade Reading- 40%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 7th grade Reading- 32%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 8th grade Reading- 40%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 6th grade Math- 28%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 7th grade Math- 26%
- Proficient/Distinguished for 8th grade Math- 27%

5. Describe in narrative form the current climate and culture conditions of the school using precise numbers and percentages as revealed by multiple sources of your most recent data. Cite the source of data used. Consider the following data sources:

- Educator and school staff retention rates
- High-quality professional learning opportunities
- Chronic absenteeism
- School climate
- Behavior
- Staff and student access to mental healthcare
- Family and community involvement

Example of Current Climate and Culture Narratives:

- Teacher attendance rate was 84% for the 2024-2025 academic year. 2023-2024 Impact survey data shows that 71% of staff feel like they belong at our school.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of families participated in a family engagement activity during the 2024-2025 school year.

Non-Academic Current State:

Our Quality of School Climate Survey results were at a Yellow rating for our 3-5 students, and a Green rating for our 6-8 students.

According to the most recent data provided by the Kentucky Impact Survey:

- In the category of "Educating all Students" 76% of the BME staff responded favorably.
- In the category of "Managing Student Behavior" 67% of the BME staff responded favorably.
- In the category of "Staff-Leadership Relationships" 67% of the BME staff responded favorably.
- In the category of "School Leadership" 66% of the BME staff responded favorably.
- In the category of "School Climate" 61% of the BME staff responded favorably.

- In the category of "Feedback and Coaching" 60% of the BME staff responded favorably.

Strengths

6. Plainly state, using precise numbers and percentages revealed by current data, the strengths of the school.

Example:

- We have active partnerships with twelve community organizations and businesses.
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of certified staff have participated in high-quality professional learning through the Kentucky Reading Academies.

All team members at Black Mountain Elementary, including members of our faculty, staff, General Education and Special Education teachers, aids, support staff and members of administration are working diligently to target identified gaps and implement educational strategies to address said gaps. We have taken numerous steps as a school to improve instruction, provide specific help to individual students in areas where they are struggling, offer additional support outside of the classroom, and establish unique plans that fit every student we serve.

Strengths of 2024-2025 KSA Data:

- Proficient/Distinguished KSA results in 6th Reading increased from 30% to 40%.
- Proficient/Distinguished KSA results in 8th Reading increased from 33% to 40%.
- Proficient/Distinguished KSA results in Middle School Editing and Mechanics increased from 59% to 67%.
- Proficient/Distinguished KSA results in 5th Math increased from 36% to 42%.
- Proficient/Distinguished KSA results in Elementary Social Studies increased from 46% to 50%.

Leverages/Assets

7. Explain how the district will utilize its strengths and leverages, including community resources and assets (i.e., colleges, community partnerships, businesses, industry, etc.) to improve areas for improvement listed above.

Examples:

- We will coordinate efforts with our community partners to meet the behavior needs of more students.
- We will utilize the knowledge gained from the Kentucky Reading Academies to develop a reading action plan to target students in our achievement gap groups.

Black Mountain was awarded the McKinney-Vento grant, which pays for a homeless tutor to come into our school and work with all students who need additional support. Sharon Chitwood, our tutor, is specifically working with students who are on the verge of achieving the next domain on the KSA state test. We have one part-time Gear-Up tutor in the building 2-3 days a week. Our Gear-Up tutor collaborates with classroom and special education teachers to target identified areas of weakness and provide additional support. Our "Save the Children" program provides two additional support staff members in our school, five days a week. Halee Long (coordinator) and her assistant, Candice Lewis, work with primary students on a daily basis to set and strengthen literacy goals. Black Mountain is part of a Deeper Learning Team, where the objective is to help students think analytically. First and second year teachers at Black Mountain Elementary are working closely with representatives from Southeast South Central. These mentors are focused primarily in the areas of reading, writing and math. Our Southeast South Central mentors are working with teachers inside and outside of the classroom to help them develop lesson plans and opportunities for differentiated instruction, implement classroom management/behavioral strategies, and teaching strategies. Part of our school improvement plan last year included the adoption and implementation of the IXL program. We continue to use this program in classrooms. The IXL program is designed to provide additional support to students in all content areas, not only math and reading. The program is designed to meet the students where they are academically. The program assesses students on their current abilities, and provides extra practice in areas of weakness, and prompts them to master additional skills once they have accomplished specific standards. Other programs we are continuing to implement throughout our school include Reading Eggs (K-1), Moby Max (K-8), STAR Early Literacy (K-1), STAR Reading and Math (2-8), and Accelerated Reader program (2-8). We also have a Gifted and Talented liaison within our school, Kristin Lester. Mrs. Lester is continuously working with teachers to identify and place students who are considered gifted, while also working with current students who have been identified as gifted to offer more challenging and advanced educational opportunities outside of the class. Our school was the recipient of a 21st century grant and we have used that money to open our very own Black Mountain Elementary Boys & Girls Club. The club is free and open to all students, grades kindergarten through eighth and is offered Monday through Thursday after school until 5:30. Through the club, students can complete homework assignments, work on projects, receive tutoring services and get additional support outside of the classroom. Black Mountain Elementary is also working with multiple agencies in the community to offer school counselors on a full-time basis to help address social and emotional needs that students may have.

We are continuing to use these programs to target learning gaps and help reach our goals. Educational programs, additional support, and after school programs will all contribute to the goal of improving benchmark scores in math, reading, and on-demand writing.

Evaluate the Teaching and Learning Environment

Consider the processes, practices and conditions evident in the teaching and learning environment as identified in the six Key Core Work Processes outlined below:

[KCWP 1: Design and Deploy Standards](#)

[KCWP 2: Design and Deliver Instruction](#)

[KCWP 3: Design and Deliver Assessment Literacy](#)

[KCWP 4: Review, Analyze and Apply Data Results](#)

[KCWP 5: Design, Align and Deliver Support Processes](#)

[KCWP 6: Establish Learning Environment and Culture](#)

8a. KCWP 1: Design and Deploy Standards

Schools continually assess, review, and revise school curricula to support the assurance that all students have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for future success.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

NA

8b. KCWP 2: Design and Deliver Instruction

Instructional programs include consistent implementation of evidence-based instructional practices essential for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional competencies that are aligned to Kentucky Academic Standards and current research.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

NA

8c. KCWP 3: Design and Deliver Assessment Literacy

Schools have a comprehensive, balanced assessment system that provides a variety of evidence to support educational decision making and includes four primary assessment purposes: formative, diagnostic, interim/benchmark, and summative.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

NA

8d. KCWP 4: Review, Analyze and Apply Data Results

Schools communicate and implement a sustainable system for reviewing, analyzing, and applying data results to ensure a uniform way to elicit, interpret, and act on meaningful evidence of student learning.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

Black Mountain Elementary will work collectively to analyze significant data, including but not limited to STAR Renaissance data, IXL results, and the Kentucky Summative Assessment data from the previous year. Staff will work in PLC groups to analyze data and determine positive and negative trends. After identifying achievement and performance gaps, classroom teachers will collaborate with administration and support staff to develop a plan to target these gaps and provide intervention to help improve test scores.

8e. KCWP 5: Design, Align and Deliver Support Processes

Schools establish a framework that organizes systems, data, and practices to promote positive, equitable and inclusive learning experiences for all students.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

NA

8f. KCWP 6: Establish Learning Environment and Culture

Schools intentionally design the learning environment to be inclusive and accessible for all students within a culture where learning and continued growth is the primary focus and foundation for all actions.

Will this be a focus? **If yes, describe in the Comments. If no, write N/A.**

No

Yes

COMMENTS

NA

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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