Solution Tree

PLC
AT WORK™

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Fairdale High School
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

The percentage of college- and career-ready students, as measured by ACT, rose from 9 to 34.7 in just three years.

Fairdale High School students

DEMOGRAPHICS

Fairdale High School is a suburban school in the Jefferson County Public School System. The local community of Fairdale is primarily white (96%), with small percentages of Hispanic (1.5%) and African American (1%) residents. The median income of $39,663 is significantly lower than the state median income. Nearly all the minority population at Fairdale comes from three areas a substantial distance away. The median income of families from these satellite areas is well below the median income of Fairdale residents.

- 70 Teachers (11 National Board Certified)
- 1,078 Students
- 73% Free and reduced lunch
- 3% Homeless
- 8% Limited English proficient
- 12% Special education
- 22% African American
- 12% Hispanic
- 2.4% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1.2% Other

CHALLENGE

For 2010–11, Fairdale High School was identified as a "Priority School," meaning the school was "Persistently Low Achieving" by NCLB guidelines and in the bottom 5th percentile for math/reading achievement in the state of Kentucky.

Community and local media did not perceive Fairdale to be a location for high academic achievement and college readiness.

For 2011–12, Kentucky adopted the Common Core State Standards. A new accountability and assessment system considers not just proficiency in math and reading, but also measures student achievement using a growth model related to college and career readiness. Administrators, counselors, and teachers analyzed the available assessment data to ensure each student had the maximum opportunities and resources to meet state requirements. Then, the school challenged all stakeholders to assist in the goal of improving student learning and school culture simultaneously—with a clear vision, mission, and set of collective commitments focused on preparing each student for postsecondary education.

IMPLEMENTATION

The first step in turning Fairdale around was to create an atmosphere of shared leadership and expertise. Fairdale implemented the Professional Learning Communities at Work™ process, working closely with Solution Tree Associate Garrick Peterson who offered training, guidance, and support on-site. The PLC at Work™ process enabled teachers to collaborate and focus on using data to seek best instructional practices, assess student achievement, improve current instructional methods, and get achievement results. Fairdale faculty are working together to sustain a culture based on the belief that all students can learn given the proper time and motivation.

Teachers are committed to working with each student on a standards-based curriculum, using common formative and summative assessments, and using all time available until *all* students have learned. The use of standards-based common formative assessments by each team in every course provides daily and weekly data that shows how students are progressing on standards and skills for college and career readiness. A flexible intervention system allows teachers to quickly identify learning gaps so that students can achieve standards-based learning and master skill sets immediately. The system also offers multiple opportunities for students to meet learning goals.

"
Solution Tree has been pivotal to our rapid improvements in student achievement. Their conferences and workshops continue to be among the best professional development opportunities for our teachers and leaders at every stage of the PLC process."
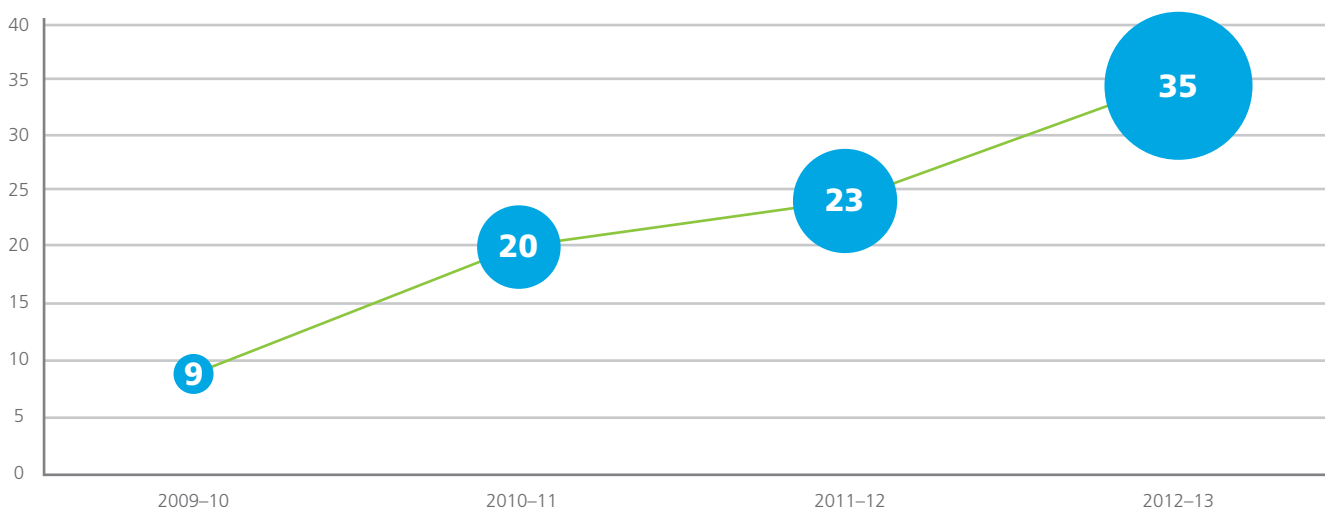
—Principal Bradley Weston

RESULTS

To measure success in meeting the collaborative goal of college and career readiness, Fairdale uses the ACT assessment that is given to every 11th-grade student as the capstone of student achievement. To be college ready, a student must hit the ACT benchmarks in English, reading, and math. Those benchmarks are 18 for English, 20 for reading, and 19 for math. By becoming a PLC, Fairdale cultivated a culture where learning for all is truly supported.

The percentage of college- and career-ready students, as measured by ACT, rose from 9 to 34.7 in just three years, and Fairdale rose from a "Persistently Low Achieving" school to an award-winning school.

For the 2013–14 school year, Fairdale set a goal that 46% of 12th-grade students will be college and career ready, as measured by ACT, by June 2014.

Percentage of Fairdale High School College- and Career-Ready Students (as measured by ACT)

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
	9	20	23	35

Reach new heights of student learning

You're dedicated to helping your students succeed. At Solution Tree, our experts are committed to equipping you with solutions that directly impact student achievement. We invite you to explore the best of content-rich, research-based professional development and discover just how rewarding the journey can be.

Here are just a few ways we can work together:

Customized Workshops

Bring an expert to your school! Plan a dynamic one-day session or a series of trainings. Just tell us your goals, and we'll customize an experience for you and your team.

Standard Workshops

Ever attended one of our workshops and wished you could bring it back to the rest of your team? Now you can! Let our experts come to you.

Keynotes

Bring a keynote speaker into your school, and inspire your team to take the next steps on your professional learning journey! Keynotes typically include a slide presentation and a general question-and-answer segment.

Interactive Web and Video Conferencing

Get top-notch PD from the comfort of your office or classroom! Discover personalized, research-based support from our experts on more than 100 topics, including Common Core, RTI, and 21st century skills.

Long-Term Sustainable Plans

Let us put you on the path to long-term success. We'll partner with you to develop a comprehensive and sustainable professional development plan based on your most critical challenges.

Hybrid Events

Experience a PLC at Work™ Institute from the comfort of your own school! Live streaming video will deliver dynamic and engaging keynotes, breakouts, and panel discussions to your entire team.

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