



# KENTUCKY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

## Building a **GROUNDWELL**

in partnership with the Prichard Committee

Creating meaningful connections where students and families are invested, schools are inviting, and communities are involved

*Carter County Schools*

### **Olive Hill Elementary School Action Plan Snapshot**

#### **1. Population, Desired Results, and Indicators**

Olive Hill Elementary School aims to ensure that all students are healthy, prepared for their future paths, and supported by stable environments. The school emphasizes strong partnerships between school, family, and community, and prioritizes academic success, including readiness for kindergarten. Progress toward these goals will be monitored through indicators such as attendance, behavior, and academic performance

#### **2. What is the story behind the curve?**

At Olive Hill Elementary, several notable successes have been observed. In 3rd grade reading, 62% of students achieved proficiency or distinction on state assessments, well above the state average of 46%. This achievement is attributed to the effective use of i-Ready data, targeted student interventions, and strong professional development for teachers. Kindergarten readiness has remained steady at 47%, matching pre-2018-19 levels, thanks to robust pre-K programs, the Mini School, and Families in Training initiatives that support academic and developmental preparedness. Additionally, behavior incidents have decreased to half of the 2018-19 levels, with only 2.9% of 385 students involved. This improvement is largely due to the implementation of a Trauma-Informed Approach, social-emotional learning instruction, and proactive relationship-building strategies.

Despite these successes, several concerns have emerged. In grade 3 math, only 40% of students were proficient or distinguished on state assessments, falling below the state average of 43% and the 53.6% recorded in 2018-19. Contributing factors include gaps in home math knowledge, the introduction of new and complex math concepts, confusing state standards, and reduced math instruction during Covid. Attendance is another significant issue, with 35% of students who are economically disadvantaged being chronically absent, and 10% of chronically absent students not facing economic challenges. This figure has nearly doubled from 90 students in 2018-19, driven by post-Covid mental health issues, communication gaps, and transportation concerns. Communication remains a challenge, as many families are unaware of whom to contact or available resources, partly due to difficulties in identifying preferred communication methods and technological issues, which have increased teachers' workload.

#### **3. Locally Set Indicators (based on Areas of Concern)**

- Attendance  
#/% of chronically absent students decreases.
- Behavior  
#/% of classroom teachers who report that students' mental health needs are met allowing them to be more effective inside the classroom

## Strategies for Active Family and Community Engagement

- **Family Friendly School Certification:** In an effort to build strong relationships between our school and our families we will work toward becoming a Family Friendly School through the Prichard Committee.
- **Parent Engagement Events:** We will offer new events aimed to boost family involvement by addressing a variety of topics tailored to the community's interests and needs. Proposed topics include Using Chromebooks & Technology, Accessing the Parent Portal, Game Nights, Financial Literacy, School Assessment Information, Health & Mental Health Information, Homework Help, and Cooking on a Budget.
- **Family Engagement Meetings (PEMs):** These established meetings are conducted to determine root causes of attendance issues. This program is a collaboration with the community resources. Parents of children who have chronic absenteeism meet to discuss the importance of attendance and determine why their child is not attending school. When the root cause is identified, referrals are made to appropriate community resources and/or the issue is addressed.
- **Communication Plan redesign:** In partnership with our families we will develop a plan that will provide a new roadmap for consistent and effective communication strategies including, streamlining communication; determining family's preferred method(s) of communication; developing a school directory and strengthening communication between families and teachers.

## Strategies for Integrated Student Supports

- **Mentoring Program:** We would like to develop and implement a partnership with East Carter High School and Kentucky Christian University students to provide mentoring activities to address self-confidence, self-esteem, social and mental health.
- **Vision/Hearing Services:** Partnerships/collaborations will be sought to provide vision & hearing services to students. Students are currently provided with a basic (eye chart) exam but there is no follow through to ensure that the child sees an optometrist if referred.
- **Sensory Spaces:** Creating a new sensory space in and outside the school is an inclusive approach to supporting student well-being and reducing behavior instances and classroom disruptions. We will partner with other schools across KY that have sensory spaces already established to design the best space for our students. Sensory spaces will benefit all students, especially those who have been exposed to trauma, chronic stress and those with specified sensory needs. The space will provide a safe environment where a student can be supported to calm and regulate, therefore optimizing learning and participation in the school environment.
- **Communicating the availability of community resources:** Family and community members felt that attendance was affected due to families' lack of awareness regarding available school and community resources. A need to increase communications to inform families of the availability of in-school and out-of-school community resources for Integrated Student Supports was discussed. This intentional communication will ensure that families have equitable access to information about available resources.

## Strategies for Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities

- **Community After-School Tutoring/Care:** Through partnership with a local church and other community members we will offer after school tutoring/care. During this program students will receive academic support, math tutoring, and resources in a safe and supportive environment.
- **Summer Reading Program:** We want to partner with the Carter County Public Library to expand and enhance their summer reading program to be able to offer services to more Olive Hill Elem. students.
- **After-School Clubs/Activities for Students:** We will be introducing two new after-school student interest programs, coordinated by the 4-H Extension Agent, will increase student engagement and interest in after-school activities. These programs will provide students with opportunities to explore their interests, develop new skills and build connections with their peers.

## Strategies for Collaborative Leadership and Practices to Support High-Quality Teaching

- **Create a Video Library for Families Focusing on Math Concepts:** Creating a Video Library of instruction concepts for families to access when helping their child with homework will be initiated during the 2024-2025 school year. The Video Library will support student learning at home and strengthen the home-school partnership in promoting student success.
- **Community and Family Engagement:**
  - Families will be invited to join the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership (CIPL) to strengthen partnerships between the school and families.
  - School administrators, community partners, and the Family Resource Center Coordinator will be encouraged to attend key KCSI trainings and conferences, including:
    - CIPL Facilitator Training (Sept 11-13, Lexington, KY)
    - Kentucky Community Schools Initiative Networking (Nov 12-13, Lexington, KY)
    - National Community Schools Conference (Date TBD)
    - 2025 Groundswell Conference (Date TBD)

**Be a part of the change by attending an upcoming Community School Team meeting.  
Get connected below.**

- Olive Hill Elementary School Community School District Director: Pam Kouns [pam.kouns@carter.kyschools.us](mailto:pam.kouns@carter.kyschools.us)
- Olive Hill Elementary School Community School State Coach: Andrea McKeenan;  
[andream@prichardcommittee.org](mailto:andream@prichardcommittee.org)
- School Webpage: <https://cartercountyschools.wixsite.com/olivehill>
- School or District Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/CarterCoSchools>
- Full School Action Plan: [2024-2025 Carter-OHES Action Plan](#)