Executive Summary

Live Oak Elementary
Newton County School System

Ms. Ericka L. Anderson, Principal
500 Kirkland Rd
Covington, GA 30016-3315
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 1

Description of the School .......................................................................................................................... 2

School's Purpose ......................................................................................................................................... 3

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement ................................................................................... 5

Additional Information ............................................................................................................................... 6
Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school 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, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

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

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?

Live Oak Elementary School is in its fifth year of existence and is located in Covington, Georgia. Live Oak is a Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth Grade school located in the western portion of Covington, a suburban area east of Atlanta. There are several incorporated towns in the Newton County school district: Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Oxford, and Porterdale. Covington is the largest and is the center of community activity. A majority of the families that Live Oak serves have low socio-economic income levels. Students live in rental homes, apartments, and single-family homes. According to the 2012 Census for Newton County, the population of Covington is approximately 100,000. The racial composition of Newton County is approximately 54% White individuals, 42% African American individuals, and 5% Hispanic individuals.

Live Oak's enrollment numbers have ranged from 980 students to 1130 students consistently since its opening five year ago. The demographic profile and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch at Live Oak has also been consistent. The current enrollment at Live Oak is 1,024 students with an almost even distribution of boys and girls. Live Oak offers a variety of services to meet the needs of a diverse population. Approximately 11% of the students are served in the EIP reduced class setting, approximately 21% are served in Special Education, and approximately 3% of served and monitored through the EL program. Eleven percent of the student population is served in the gifted/talented (Quest) program through the resource model. Although Live Oak serves a variety of students with different needs, the attendance rate remains high and consistent at 98%.

A dedicated staff serves the students at Live Oak. The staff consists of three administrators, fifty-seven teachers, twenty-six paraprofessionals, a media specialist, art teacher, music teacher, physical education teacher, one full time and one half time counselor. Additional personnel include: three office staff members, a school nurse, five custodians, an instructional technology paraprofessional, and ten cafeteria workers. There are three Prekindergarten, eight Kindergarten, seven First Grade, eight Second Grade, six Third Grade, six Fourth Grade, and six Fifth Grade classrooms with an average student teacher ratio of 23:1. The teaching experience of the staff ranges from one year up to thirty-two years. All professional staff members are "highly qualified"; with thirty two staff members having advanced degrees.

One of the biggest challenges of the Live Oak community is having a highly transient population--with approximately 30% of Live Oak's students either entering or withdrawing the school within one school year. It is a challenge for students and parents because they must learn new rules, building layout, staff, and school expectations. Live Oak works hard to bridge that gap by cultivating a warm school environment for students. Another challenge is having a high population of students who receive free and reduced lunch (84%). Working with families and underscoring the importance of having a strong foundation of high quality education continues to be a focus for Live Oak's committed and determined staff members.
**School's Purpose**

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.

Live Oak's Mission Statement: To grow and educate productive people to be rooted in a global society; one acorn at a time.

Live Oak's Vision Statement: Exceeding Expectations Everyday

The school's mission of growing and educating productive people to be rooted in a global society drives the decision making process of the Leadership Team and administrative staff. Live Oak strives to meet the needs of the whole child, fostering academic, social, physical, and emotional growth in a safe and nurturing environment.

A high quality instruction is paramount to the program offerings and expectations for students. All instructional staff work from a school based instructional framework that includes the use of differentiated instruction strategies, research based instructional strategies, data disaggregation, and appropriate Response to Intervention tools. Based on data review, students are provided with ancillary programs such as Academic Mentoring (for students who are in need of academic support) and Mighty Minds (for students who consistently exceeds expectations of standards). Academic mentoring utilizes support staff to provide small group instruction four days a week for 30 minute sessions while Mighty Minds utilizes support staff to provide small group enrichment to students two days a week for an hour session each.

Staff members hold students to high academic and behavioral expectations. This is supported by survey results from parents, students, and staff. Teachers use observation and STAR data to form differentiated small groups in Reading and Math. These small groups help meet students at their instructional level and support students in a smaller teacher student ratio setting. Students' progress is primarily monitored through STAR testing, ThinkGate benchmarks, and teacher observation. Parents receive periodic reports that detail students' progress monitoring data.

Teachers meet as professional learning communities weekly in PAL (Planning and Assessing for Learning) meetings. Under the guidance of administrative staff and the school's academic coach, teachers collegially unpack performance standards, plan instructional activities, and share resources. These meetings are also the main conduit for professional learning, data disaggregation, review of the school system's strategic plan, and review and maintenance of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Effective technology integration is a main area of focus in the instructional program at Live Oak. Each classroom is equipped with a Promethean ActivBoard and most classes have an audio enhancement microphone system for teacher and student use. The school has two computer labs that are equipped with full day support staff. Technology is utilized to assist teachers in building students' background knowledge and as a research tool to build students' media and literacy skills.

To foster students' social, physical, and emotional growth, Live Oak hosts many extra curricular activities developed to support students' learning styles and interests such as Reading Club, Science Club, Dance Team, Fitness Club, Photography Club, and Horticulture Club. A token economy system is in place to validate students' effort in showing safe and productive school behavior. Cub Cash is provided to students by staff members for displaying character education traits and making substantial effort with their school work. Cub Cash is redeemed at a school store for school supplies and small incentives.
Parents are an integral part of students academic and social growth. Therefore, parents are encouraged to visit the school and volunteer to support the instructional program. Parent workshops are held monthly that provide information that parents may use to increase student achievement at home. The PTO meets regularly and works hard to create additional opportunities for parents to be involved at Live Oak. Live Oak’s School Council serves as an advisory board to assist in the instructional and organizational aspects of the school.

There are two main challenges that the Live Oak community works through on a daily basis. First, Live Oak staff members serves a population with a large free and reduced lunch percentage. The next challenge is the transient nature of the enrollment pattern within the school. While both of these issues impact student achievement, the staff is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment in which research based instructional strategies are implemented to support students in being a successful and productive member of our global society.
Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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.

The goal of Live Oak's School Improvement Plan focuses on improving student achievement as evidenced by data from local, state, and national assessments. All students are engaged in rigorous and relevant tasks that are differentiated to allow all learners to meet and exceed the standards. Live Oak concentrates on increasing the percentage of students in the "Meets" category (on the CRCT). Evidence supports that the trend of increasing the percentage of students scoring in the "Meets" category is occurring in most academic areas. In Reading, scores went from to 86% meeting and exceeding standards to 92% meeting and exceeding standards. In English/Language Arts, scores increased from 83% meeting and exceeding standards to 91% meeting and exceeding standards. In Math, scores went from 77% meeting and exceeding standards to 82% meeting and exceeding standards. In Science, scores increased from 60% meeting and exceeding standards to 81% meeting and exceeding standards. In Social Studies, scores went from 60% meeting and exceeding standards to 81% meeting and exceeding standards.

Upon data review and reflection, the Leadership Team and administrators determined that to further strengthen the instructional program an increased focus will be to raise the percentage of students who are in the Exceeds category of the CRCT (grades 3-5). Other upcoming goals for Live Oak's students are to increase the Lexile band for all students (grades K-5) as well as to increase students' individual Student Growth Percentage (SGP) (grades K-5) as a value added component to their instruction at the school.

In order to ensure that research based instructional strategies are continued, the school's academic coach and administrative team will continue to monitor the implementation of the school based instructional framework and RTI tools to maximize the student learning experience at Live Oak Elementary.
Additional Information

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

Live Oak Elementary has implemented the use of research based instructional strategies as framed by Dr. Robert Marzano for the past four years. To support this process, professional learning through the use of Dr. Marzano's books, Classroom Instruction that Works and Building Background Knowledge was conducted by the administrative team and the school's academic coach. The Newton County School system continues the maintenance of these skills by providing further professional learning through Summer Institutes and continuing education by an outside education consultant, who visits all NCSS schools to provide feedback to staff concerning the implementation of research based instructional strategies. This comprehensive professional learning process is further advanced by the system's use of content leaders, teachers on each grade level from each school that work together to develop a shared language and common instructional expectations amongst schools. These opportunities assist in bringing a cohesiveness within all elementary schools regarding what students should be able to know, understand, and do to be successful at their current grade level and to advance towards future steps in being ready for their next level of learning.