

**Walker Intermediate School
Executive Summary
Spring 2013**

Section 1: Introduction

Walker Intermediate School is located on the Ft. Knox Military Installation. Enrolling 287 students in grades four, five, and six, Walker serves dependents of military personnel who are stationed at Ft. Knox. Located about 35 miles south of Louisville, KY, Ft. Knox has a population of nearly 40,000 Soldiers, civilian employees, and families. Ft. Knox is home to the Human Resources Center (HRC) and the 3/1 Brigade Combat Team, which will be deployed to Afghanistan in the summer of 2013.

The following student breakdown of ethnicity is self-reported at the time of enrollment to Walker School: 16% Hispanic/Latino, 51% Caucasian, 18% African-American, 1.5% Asian, 1.5% American Indian/Native Alaskan, 1% Pacific Islander, 8% Multi-Racial, and 3% did not report. On staff, there are 12 classroom teachers, 1 Art teacher, 1 Music teacher, 1 Physical Education teacher, 1 Information Specialist, 1 Education Technology Specialist, 1 Gifted Education teacher, 2 Special Education Teachers, 0.5 Read 180 teacher (shared with Mudge Elementary), 1 Guidance Counselor, 0.5 School Nurse (shared with Mudge), 2 Special Education program Aides, and 5 Student Instructional Support (SIS) Aides. The pupil/classroom teacher ratio at Walker is 24:1.

Section 2: Student Performance

Walker Intermediate School has the vision, ‘We Choose to Succeed!’ It is our belief that students achieve more, grow more, and accomplish more when they make the *choice* and commitment to pushing themselves forward in any facet of their life. The staff at Walker accepts the responsibility and challenge of providing students with the opportunities and the tools to be successful in a complex and globally connected world.

Walker School has two main improvement goals: for students to improve their writing skills across the curriculum, and for students to improve their problem-solving goals across the curriculum. These goals were developed several years ago with analysis of assessment data and from information gathered through the environmental scan. The staff and students have encountered difficulties in trying to accomplish these goals, and expect to accomplish these goals in 2013 through additional interventions enacted in the past 18 months.

Walker grade level teams meet weekly. Each Thursday is designated as common planning time, where each team meets to discuss student progress and develop interventions to assist students as needed based upon thoughtful analysis of the available data. This is also a time for teachers to meet with the principal to discuss curricular concerns and progress in meeting our school improvement goals.

Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

Walker School faces the same challenges that most schools that serve our military encounter: transient students, the stresses of the deployment cycle, and attendance problems due to the nature of the military life (leave schedule, medical problems, etc). The Walker Staff works as a team to overcome these issues and provide students with a stable and nurturing environment that gives students the opportunity to be successful.

However, Walker School has worked for over five years to reach its two school improvement goals: improved writing and problem-solving. Over the past 18 months, Walker School has focused professional development activities and new programs to improve student achievement in both areas with the aim of retiring both goals before the 2013/14 school year. The implementation of the *Exemplars* program with the support of district level staff has shown some benefits to students based on preliminary local assessment data. Walker staff has also been working to incorporate STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) lessons into the curriculum to enhance students analytical, problem-solving, and writing skills.

In reviewing our *TerraNova* data for 2011/12, we found that an achievement gap exists between males and females. Closing this gap by increasing male achievement offers us an additional opportunity to meet our two school improvement goals. Professional development focused on boys' literacy, careful review of purchased materials that will be appealing to both genders, and a summer reading program are ways that we are addressing this achievement gap.

Section 4: Conclusion

Walker Intermediate School has worked diligently to create a positive school climate that is responsive to student needs. This work is confirmed by the customer satisfaction survey completed in 2010 and by a staff survey completed in 2012. Due to the transient nature of our families, we must continue to work hard to involve students and parents in our school in an effective and meaningful way.

As a staff, we recognize the need to constantly improve how we teach our students. We participate in professional development activities designed to help us help our students achieve more and implement our vision, "We choose to succeed!"