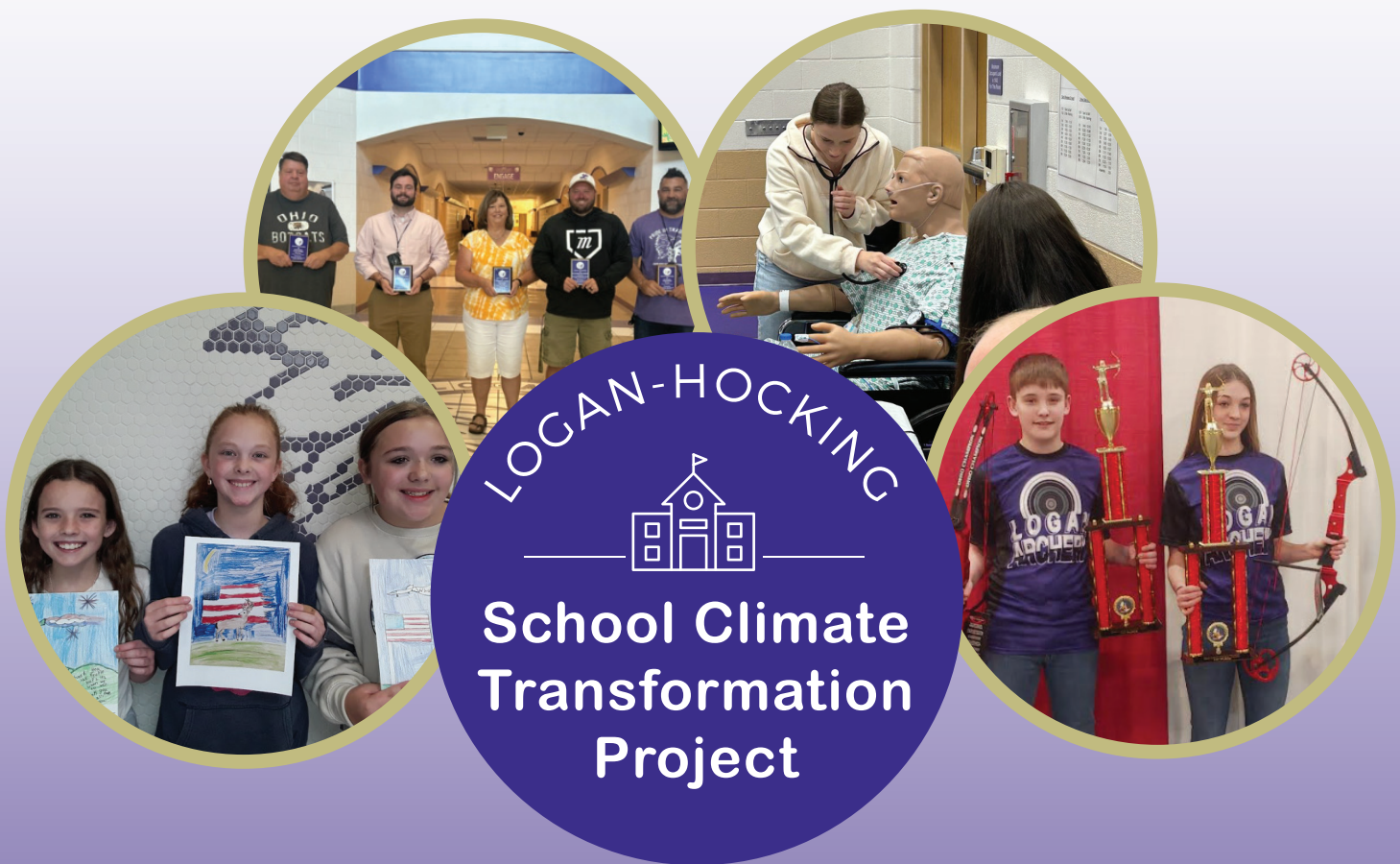




# LOGAN-HOCKING SCHOOL CLIMATE TRANSFORMATION GRANT

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



PREPARED BY

**OHIO**  
UNIVERSITY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....1

    The history and purpose of the school climate transformation work..... 1

    Key Achievements ..... 3

    The district made substantial changes in student services and practices ..... 3

School Climate Improvements .....5

    Survey data indicate a positive school climate ..... 6

    Staff describe relationships, student and family engagement, collaboration and support ... 10

Student Behavioral Changes..... 11

    Fewer students receive out-of-school discipline for drugs or alcohol.....11

    Grant activities made positive impacts on teaching, learning, and career readiness..... 12

    LHSD teachers utilize best practices in their instruction ..... 12

    The district was successful in closing academic achievement gaps ..... 12

    LHSD students are more prepared for success after high school ..... 15

Conclusions and Sustainability Considerations .....17

References .....18

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The history and purpose of the school climate transformation work

In 2019, the Logan-Hocking Local School District in Hocking County, Ohio, applied for and was awarded a five-year school climate transformation grant from the U.S. Department of Education to enable the district to build a comprehensive system of academic success, learner engagement, health and wellness, and college and career readiness for all students. As the federal grant title indicates, a project of this scope and duration is intended to be transformational—that is, not to focus on one or a handful of immediate issues or presenting problems, but to transform the entire organization and fundamentally change the way the district operates in three broad areas:



**Developing/enhancing supports for every student, kindergarten through 12th grade, including academic engagement and success, health and wellness, and college/career readiness**



**Engaging all student-facing staff, including teachers, bus drivers, aides, and other district personnel as part of the transformation**



**Doing more work outside the district by forming and growing community partnerships. This external partnership work includes the business community, health care organizations, and higher education.**

The Logan-Hocking Local School District did not launch the school climate transformation grant as a result of a crisis or external mandate that had to be addressed for the district to continue operating successfully. Rather, the impetus for the project was the awareness, informed by data, that students needed better supports for academic success, mental/behavioral health, and preparation for college and careers than they were currently receiving. District data indicated academic achievement gaps that increased significantly after students left elementary school. Logan High School was not effectively closing the achievement gap for all students, including economically disadvantaged students. Enrolled in a rural, Appalachian district with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, these students in poverty were not achieving academically at the same level as other students. Beyond academic measures, a high percentage of Logan-Hocking's students experienced food insecurity, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and fragmented supports for mental and physical health needs. Finally, school climate surveys indicated inconsistent supports to effectively promote health, wellness, and academic success. District leadership saw this federal grant as an opportunity to address these issues and gaps comprehensively rather than piecemeal.

The federal funding and technical assistance provided by this grant allowed for the planning and implementation supports necessary to launch and sustain system-wide change at this scale and duration. However, for the project to be successful, a dedicated core team to lead the work was critical. This transformation grant needed an energetic leadership team that believed in the work and had the respect/buy-in from others in the district. In addition to a consistent project leadership team with enough time allocated to the project, success depended on other district and building leadership, teachers, non-certified staff, and critical partners outside the district such as first responders, the business community, and higher education partners.

Now, at the end of the five-year period, the comprehensive external evaluation indicates overall success at transforming the district's capacity to provide academic and mental/behavioral health supports for all students and better prepare students for success when they leave the district. And, as this summary report will indicate, the residual impact of the project went beyond the original goals of the grant. Project leaders leveraged the momentum, new partnerships, and enhanced district capacity to build supports such as a new school-based health clinic addressing the physical needs of the students and community, as well as extended work with new private and nonprofit partners for internships and work-based learning.



## Key Achievements



### ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The district successfully closed achievement gaps, particularly in higher grade levels, and improved student performance in key subjects such as HS Algebra 1, HS English 2, and HS Geometry. The increased participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual enrollment classes further highlights the district's commitment to academic excellence.



### MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The establishment of the Chieftain Health Clinic and partnerships with organizations like Hopewell Health Centers have provided essential health and behavioral health services to students. Programs like Drug Free Clubs of America and Handle with Care have also contributed to a supportive and safe school environment.



### COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

The district's efforts in career exploration, job shadowing, internships, and the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal have significantly enhanced students' preparedness for post-secondary success. The district's performance in the Prepared for Success component of the state report card underscores these achievements.

## The district made substantial changes in student services and practices

The School Climate Transformation Grant funding allowed the district to establish a grant leadership team including a newly hired Project Director. This team developed the infrastructure for expanding existing student services as well as identifying and incorporating new support services for students. Largely through collaboration and partnerships with external parties, myriad services are now in place to meet students' needs. Not all services were directly funded by the grant but came about due to increased emphasis on overall student well-being. Though all the services and training interrelate, the table below depicts a sample of services in three broad categories of health, behavioral health, as well as academics and careers.



**Well, with the Vision to Learn Program, kids who may not have glasses now have glasses. That's a positive."**

**LOGAN-HOCKING  
STAFF MEMBER**

## Services Developed or Expanded During the School Climate Transformation Grant

<b>Health</b>	Vision Screenings and Eyeglasses
	School-Based Health Clinic
	Health Clinic Transportation
	Signs of Suicide Training
<b>Behavioral Health</b>	School-Based Behavioral Health Counseling and Student Assistance Program
	Handle with Care
	Drug Free Clubs of America
	Botvin Life Skills
<b>Academics and Careers</b>	College and Career Exploration Events, Speakers, and Career Coaching
	After-School Tutoring
	Student Leadership Opportunities
	High School Student Internships

A few services highlights include the development of the Chieftain Health Clinic, which is now in place at Logan-Hocking High School, in part because of relationships with health service providers focused on student health and via a Removing Barriers to Care Grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Health. The clinic is operated by Hocking Valley Community Hospital in collaboration with Hopewell Health Centers. Relatedly, to serve the entire district, elementary students have transportation available from their school to and from the clinic for well visits such as routine health screenings.

Additionally, a robust partnership with Hopewell Health Centers has been maintained for offering school-based behavioral health care for students in the form of counseling. Another highlight program is Drug Free Clubs of America (DFCA), which is an organization dedicated to preventing drug abuse among young people by promoting a drug-free lifestyle. DFCA's mission is to create a supportive community that empowers students to live drug-free lives and build a promising future. The Logan-Hocking School District's high school student participation in DFCA increased substantially from the first year of implementation (30 students) to the most recent year (230 students). The district incorporates



The Handle with Care Program, I think, is great because we're learning things like, if a kid's house is burning down or you know, if they're hospitalized, or if there was a death. All the first responders and outside agencies are reaching out, and therefore, you know, we can be there to support our kids (students) when they need it, whereas before we may not have known about those things.

LOGAN-HOCKING  
STAFF MEMBER



Handle with Care, which is a program that sensitizes all staff to what a student may be experiencing. It is designed specifically for that purpose. For example, if a traumatic event such as a significant house fire or the death of a family member occurs, the school staff are notified that the student should be “handled with care.”

As noted, the services for students were offered via robust partnerships across myriad sectors. These partnerships not only are beneficial to students but include support and training of teachers and staff. Many of these relationships are sustainable beyond Year 5.

To the right is a sample of the collaborations and partnerships developed or expanded over the course of the grant.

Many of the partnerships and training sessions, for example Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) training, resulted in extensive changes in practices among the staff regarding behavior management. This was evidenced in staff interviews as a theme. As noted, Handle with Care is a change in staff practices regarding students experiencing traumatic events.

## SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENTS

School climate plays a critical role in the overall well-being and academic success of students. We know from decades of research that a positive school climate, defined as supportive teacher-student relationships, safety, student/family/staff engagement, and a structured environment supports students’ social-emotional health and academic engagement. Students in supportive environments show higher levels of self-efficacy and grit, and lower levels of depression and stress. Positive school climate has a direct link to student engagement and academic achievement, as well as improved mental health outcomes (Aldridge et al., 2024; Wong et al., 2021).

For students, some important components of a positive school climate include: safety (both physical safety and emotional security), ensuring students feel protected from bullying and welcomed at school; a supportive academic environment with both high expectations and high support for all students; respectful, trusting relationships among students, teachers, and staff that build community within the school; and

### Examples of Partnerships and Collaborations



SchoolLinks



**HANDLE WITH CARE: OHIO**  
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE



student engagement opportunities that support all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, academic achievement, or post-secondary pathways.

School climate improvements also have positive impacts for teachers/ staff and families. For teachers and staff, a positive school climate includes supportive leadership, a collaborative culture, high expectations and trust between teachers and administrators, and adequate resources and support. For parents/caregivers, a positive school climate includes effective communication, inclusive engagement and a welcoming school environment, where parents are encouraged to participate in school activities and decision making, and resources and support to help parents elevate their children's academic achievement and physical/mental well-being.

There is no one, direct measure of a broad construct like school climate. The comprehensive evaluation of Logan-Hocking's school climate transformation efforts utilized multiple data sources, including annual surveys of teachers/ staff, students, and parents/caregivers; staff surveys focused on specific professional development objectives; site visits with the grant leadership team; and individual interviews at the end of the grant period. Looking at school climate at Logan-Hocking through these multiple lenses indicates a clear, positive change over the course of the grant period. The sustained focus of this collaborative work has made Logan-Hocking a more positive and supportive climate for students, families, and staff.

## Survey data indicate a positive school climate

A cornerstone of Logan-Hocking's school climate transformation work is the adoption and careful implementation of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), aligning Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and trauma-informed practices. MTSS is a comprehensive framework for addressing students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional well-being (Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, 2020). The district has focused on professional development and coaching that emphasizes PBIS and trauma-informed practice throughout the five-year implementation of the school climate transformation grant, partnering with the University of Missouri's Center for Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support. District employees

“

I love the subjects and their teaching ways. They always make them fun, and the teachers are the best.”

LOGAN-HOCKING STUDENT



“

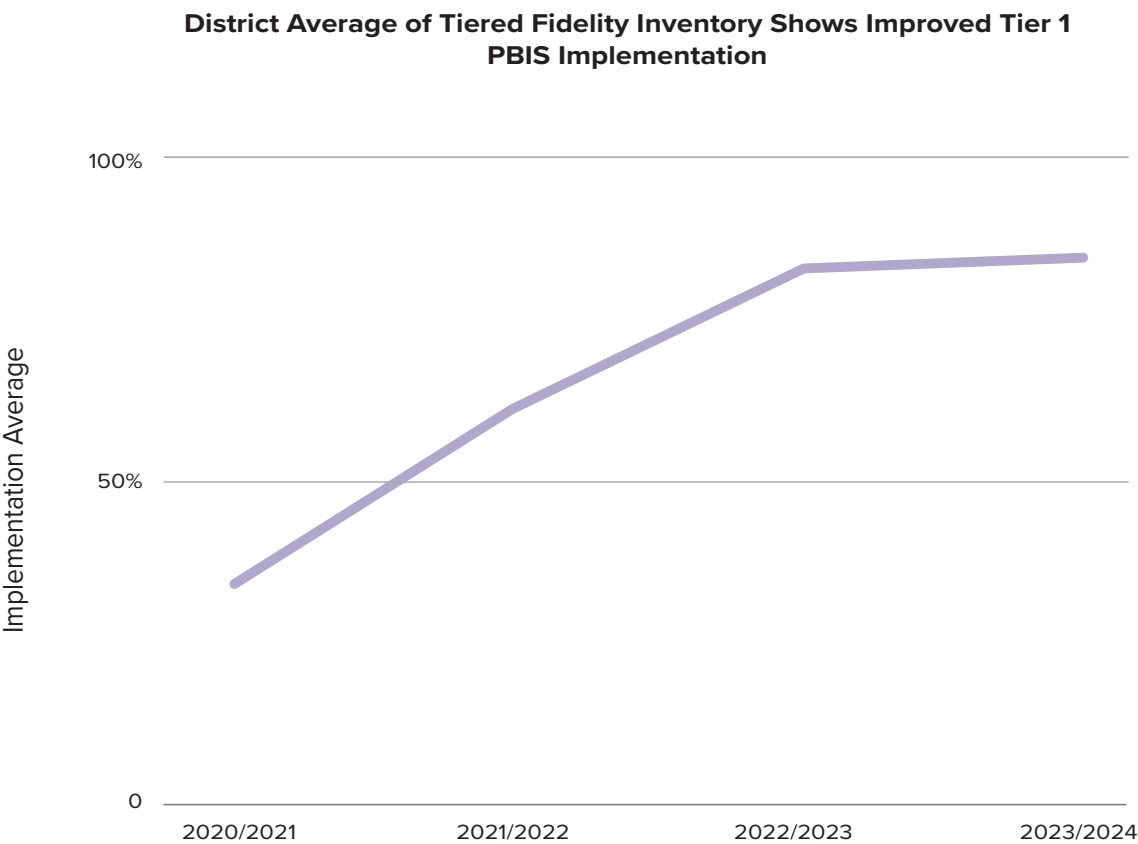
I feel like students and staff are even being better at recognizing their own emotions and regulating those with just the strategies that they've been given and just scenarios in general of other people. Yeah. I just feel like they're more aware of their behaviors and how to control those behaviors.”

LOGAN-HOCKING  
STAFF MEMBER



from all seven buildings have been involved in monthly district PBIS meetings with Center staff as well as individual building team meetings supported by district leadership.

Two validated instruments are used to gauge fidelity in implementation of PBIS—the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and the School Assessment Survey (SAS). All staff in the buildings complete the SAS annually. The building-level PBIS implementation teams complete the TFI annually, which measures fidelity of implementation of tiers 1, 2, and 3 of the PBIS framework. Tier 1 focuses on universal strategies that are designed to meet the needs of all students and develop common practices in all school settings, including classroom and non-classroom (e.g. cafeteria, hallways) settings (Center on PBIS, 2025). Logan-Hocking initially focused on implementing Tier 1 strategies with fidelity, as those strategies positively impact all students in the district.



Both TFI and SAS data show annual improvement in implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports across the district. In the final year of the grant, the SAS indicated continued improvement. All seven buildings met the required threshold for Tier 1 PBIS implementation at the building and classroom level, and six of the seven buildings are already meeting the Tier 2 implementation threshold. The TFI, administered to the implementation team members, shows every building made substantial improvement in Tier 1 PBIS implementation over the course of the grant. As additional confirmation of successful PBIS implementation, the Logan-Hocking School District received PBIS Bronze recognition from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for its district-wide PBIS work during the 2023–2024 academic year, and five of the seven buildings received individual PBIS Bronze recognition for their building-level implementation of PBIS.

Another survey administered annually to students, staff, and parents/caregivers is the Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experience Survey (CAYCI SES). The CAYCI SES measures several factors related to school effectiveness, including school climate. The student survey includes a *School Connectedness* subscale used throughout the project as one measure of school climate. The subscale comprises four items on the Elementary and lower Middle School (fifth and sixth grades) surveys and three items on the upper Middle School (seventh



#### Student quotes from Year 4 CAYCI SES:

“

The opportunities we have to take high-level classes like CCP and AP and all the Honors options.”

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

“

I like it because I feel safe and I like to come here and learn about stuff here.”

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT

“

Find a way to make everyone feel as if they are equal and belong because people deserve to feel as they belong.”

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT

“

The teachers are kind and help me when I need it.”

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT

and eighth grades) and High School surveys (Ohio State University, 2025). Building-level average scores on the *School Connectedness* subscale were consistently high across the four years of survey implementation, indicating overall positive school climate for students throughout the district.

The CAYCI Parent/Caregiver survey includes a five-item subscale that measures the degree to which parents perceive that the school provides them support and assistance when needed. Items comprising this subscale include questions to parents/caregivers about whether the school helps families access services, assists in getting to know other adults in the school community, and is generally a place where families can go to get help when needed. All five items in this parent/caregiver subscale showed improvement from baseline through Year 4.

The final year's open-ended responses on the CAYCI SES surveys were largely positive across all surveyed groups regarding school climate. Students from third grade through high school expressed that they feel supported by teachers/staff as well as academic and other programs. Some expressed the need for even more mental health and academic supports. Teachers/staff expressed feeling a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support, but want continued/ more focus on student behavior and safety.

#### Teacher/staff quotes from Year 4 CAYCI SES:

“

Our staff is amazing. Everyone works together to help and support as much as they can. In all things we keep students first, but we truly care for one another.”

STAFF MEMEBER



## Staff describe relationships, student and family engagement, collaboration and support

In individual interviews, building-level administrators described changes they have seen over the course of the grant period. All but one of the interviewed administrators had been in some role in the district prior to the start of the school climate transformation grant. All interview participants described specific and positive changes in relationships, student and family engagement, collaboration, and support. Staff noted the expanded opportunities for all students to engage in activities, get needed support services, and feel welcomed and that someone was glad they were there.

“

I also think it has increased relationships with our families.”

---

“

I think they [students] feel supported. . . kids know the expectations as opposed to telling them the negative piece of it. It has been positive.”

---

“

So it goes from bottom up and top down to make it, so I don't know whether it is enhanced by the grant or it's by the design, but we do have a good, collaborative staff that are willing to look into develop[ing], investigat[ing] all kinds of strategies on any one of those teams and then they'll collaborate. That collaboration is probably the most powerful tool that we have. I have awesome staff that will take the time to learn it for our kids.”

---

“

Definitely with just the school-wide building expectations with PBIS I can ask almost any student what our three things are and they are able to tell me. And so I just apply that everywhere. If I see a behavior that needs corrected, I say, 'Is that safe?' or 'Are you being respectful?' and it really impacts them.”

---

“

You know, staff feels more like they're buying into things more because they have a say.”

---

“

Parent participation absolutely was up and we did more things in our community than we had in the past 20 years I was here.”

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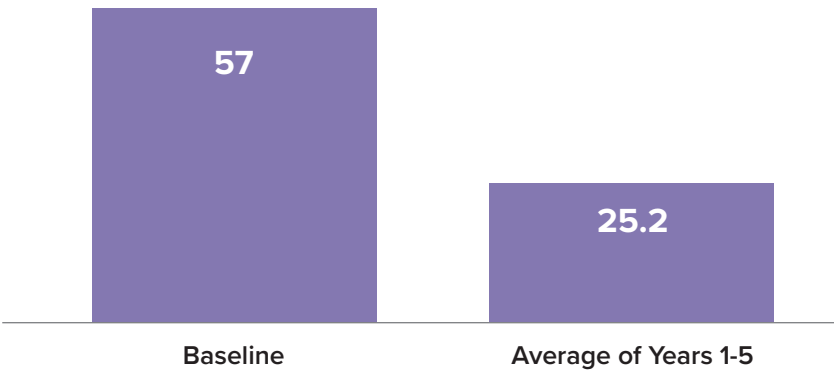
# STUDENT BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

## Fewer students receive out-of-school discipline for drugs or alcohol

As part of its efforts to transform the school climate, LHSD has reconsidered its formal and informal policies leading to out-of-school suspension or expulsion for youth infractions. Research has shown an inverse relationship between suspensions and student achievement, along with a significant positive relationship between suspensions and dropout. Not only is an undesired relationship seen, but the type of suspension significantly affected the relationship between suspensions and student outcomes (Noltemeyer et al., 2015). As out-of-school suspension or expulsion has been found to further negatively impact students, in-school suspension is being increasingly viewed as a better alternative. As Tim Lewis (2017), a renowned expert on PBIS, notes, “many schools are eliminating out-of-school suspension entirely.”

Throughout the school climate transformation grant, the district made considerable progress in reducing the number of students expelled or suspended for drugs or alcohol. Baseline discipline data from 2018–2019 were used as a comparison with discipline data from subsequent project years. All reported violations resulted in either out-of-school suspension or expulsion. At baseline, the district reported a total of 57 out-of-school disciplinary measures for either drugs or alcohol. On average, this total was reduced by more than half across each year of the grant period.

LHSD was successful in reducing out-of-school disciplinary measures



District-wide combined totals for out-of-school disciplinary measures for drugs or alcohol

## **Grant activities made positive impacts on teaching, learning, and career readiness**

An overarching goal of the school climate transformation grant was to enhance educational efforts and outcomes. The district's focus on PBIS provided teachers and staff with ongoing professional development with outcome goals of closing key academic achievement gaps for all students, including student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, as these are emphasized by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce as accountability measures. The district employed targeted interventions and additional resources to close academic achievement gaps for students. The district also developed and leveraged strategic partnerships to provide students with career exploration and readiness to enter the workforce. From the onset of grant activities, the district was committed to utilizing the SCTG to support the needs of all students, regardless of academic or career trajectory or socioeconomic status.

### **LHSD teachers utilize best practices in their instruction**

The district's ongoing professional development focus on PBIS has made teachers more aware of exemplary practice in using student-level behavioral data to guide interventions, with increased knowledge of PBIS fidelity. CAYCI-SES data gathered for teacher instructional practices indicate a very high level of respondents (roughly 90%) observe that teachers at Logan-Hocking provide helpful feedback to students on their academic performance and monitor whether students are learning on a regular basis, and nearly two-thirds observe that teachers and staff regularly use student-level behavioral data to guide interventions. Further, teachers reported increased confidence in using new teaching methods, with one teacher noting, "[t]he professional development sessions have been invaluable in helping me engage my students more effectively."

Importantly, and as already stated, the district also made significant progress in reducing suspensions and expulsions related to alcohol and drug use. Studies have shown an inverse relationship between suspensions and achievement, along with a significant positive relationship between suspensions and dropout. Because of this, the PBIS framework employs districts to review and consider whether formal or informal policies leading to out-of-school suspension or expulsion for youth infractions should be revised. This is an important consideration for measuring impact on teaching and learning. As one teacher noted regarding the professional development they received during the grant period, "[r]efocusing the positives and redirecting and reteaching is very beneficial. So, we're not just punishing. We are trying to build the kid up and keep reminding them of the wanted expectations."

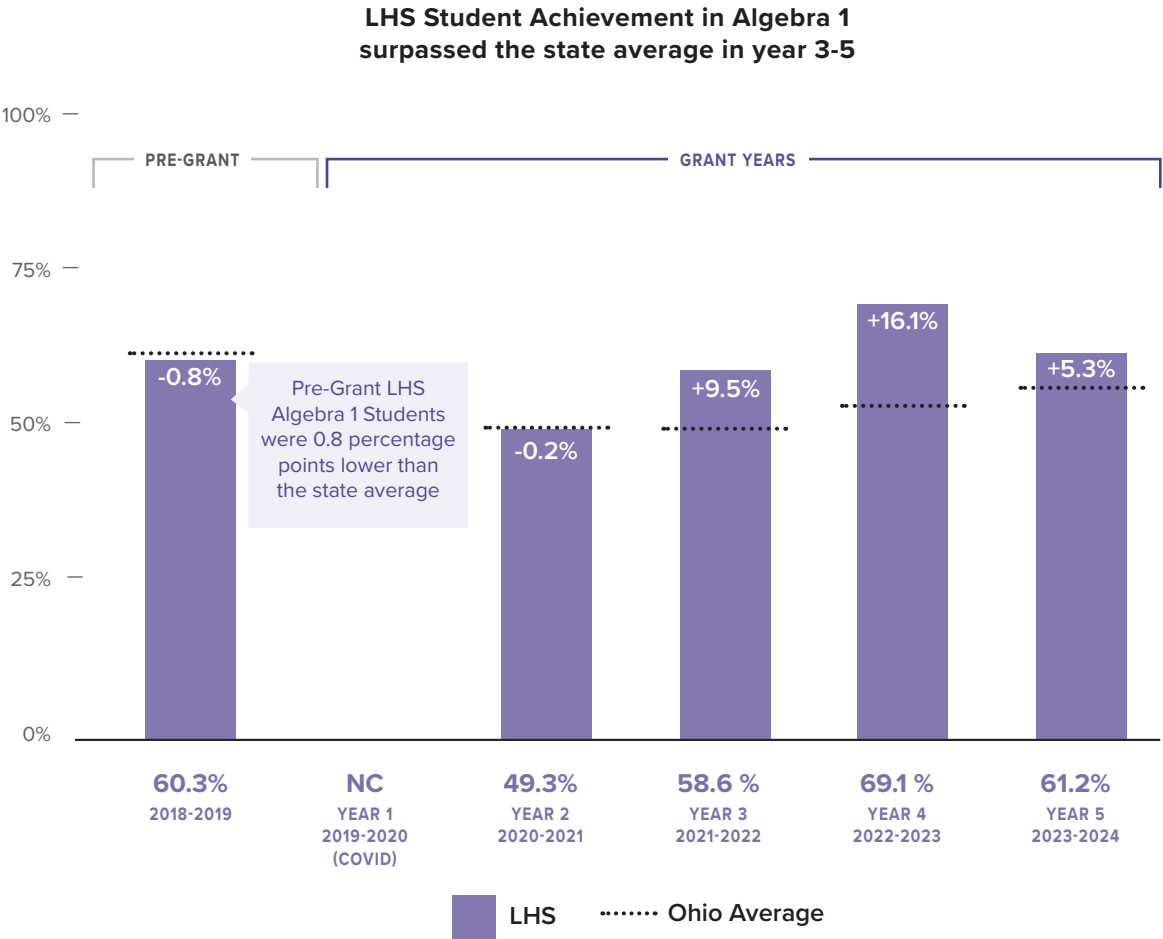
### **The district was successful in closing academic achievement gaps**

In years prior to grant efforts, district achievement data suggested that K–5 instruction and learning supports were generally meeting student needs, with achievement gaps broadening after fifth grade. At baseline, fifth graders exceeded state ELA and math standards, but no other grade met their state



achievement benchmarks. By middle school, similar districts were outperforming LHSD, and by high school, LHSD’s achievement indicators were below similar districts as well as state averages.

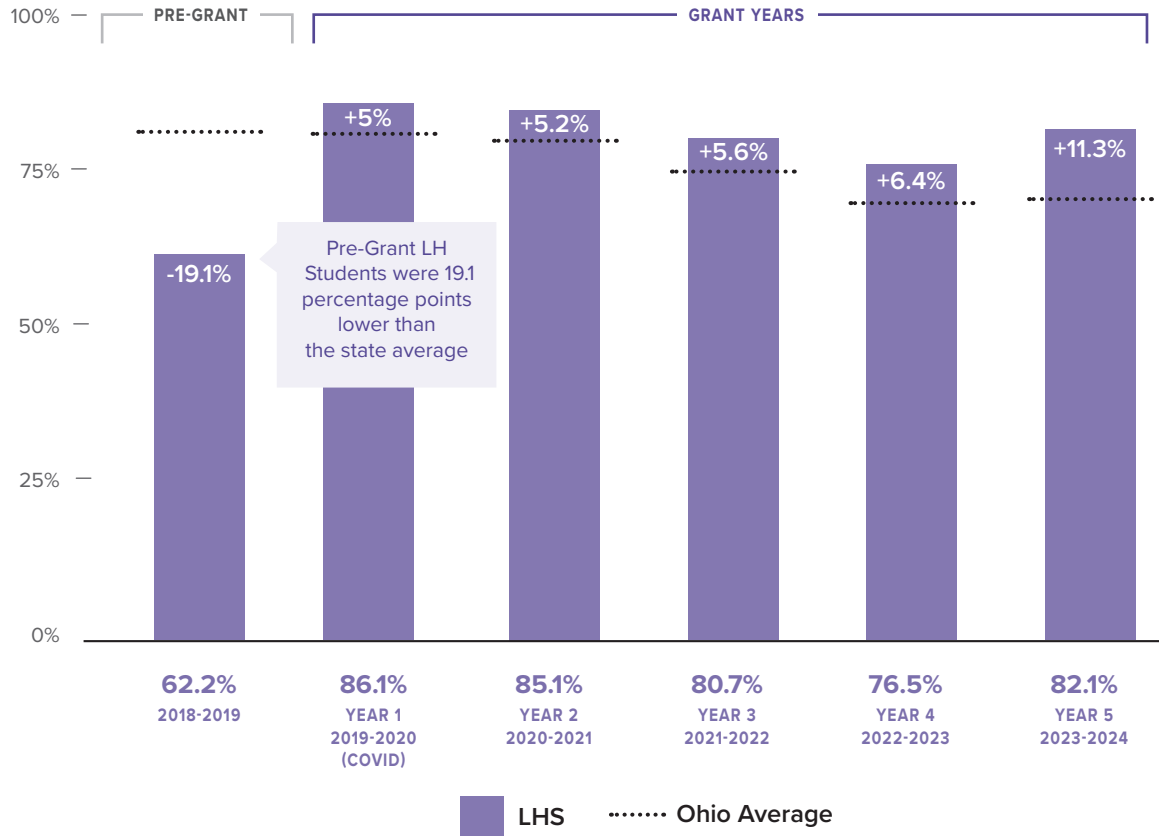
By the end of the SCTG period, the district had closed important achievement gaps, especially at higher grade levels. At the conclusion of the final project year, the district outperformed the state average in three out of seven measures—HS Algebra 1, HS English 2, and HS Geometry. This indicates a strong recovery and improvement in these subjects despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic. The figure below highlights the district’s success at improving student performance in HS Algebra 1. (Note: The state did not conduct these measures in the first project year due to the COVID-19 pandemic).



Percentage of Students At or Above Proficient in Algebra 1

The figure below shows there was a greater percentage of LHSD students taking the ACT test each project year compared with state averages. Compared with Ohio averages at baseline, the district had also closed the gap for the percentage of students ACT/SAT remediation-free by the final project year.

### The percentage of LH students taking the ACT test exceeded the state average in years 1-5



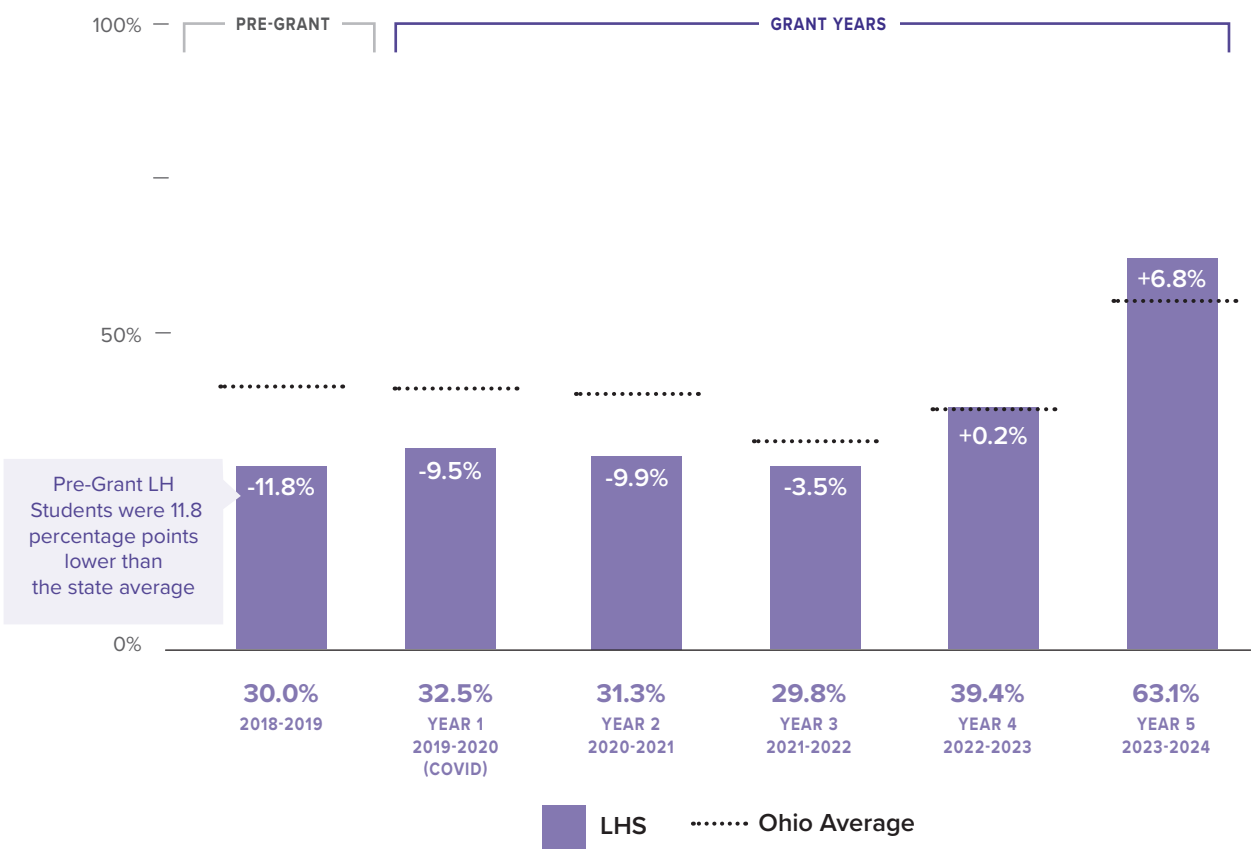
Percentage of Students Taking ACT Test

Additional measures also demonstrate district success in supporting student achievement. The district saw improvements in value-added data for student growth in mathematics and reading. By the end of Year 5, four out of seven schools had overall composite index measures similar to or greater than state averages. The data also suggest the grant had a notable impact on economically disadvantaged students, with improvements observed in various academic performance metrics across different grade levels. For example, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students achieving proficiency in fifth-grade ELA increased from 69.1 percent in Year 2 to 92.2 percent in Year 5. The district was also successful in expanding academic opportunities for students. LHS became a formally recognized campus site of Hocking College, allowing for the offering of additional college courses and degree program pathways. The percentage of LHS students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual enrollment classes had increased by the end of the grant period. As one student noted about the various programs available, “I like the opportunities that I can have.”

## LHSD students are more prepared for success after high school

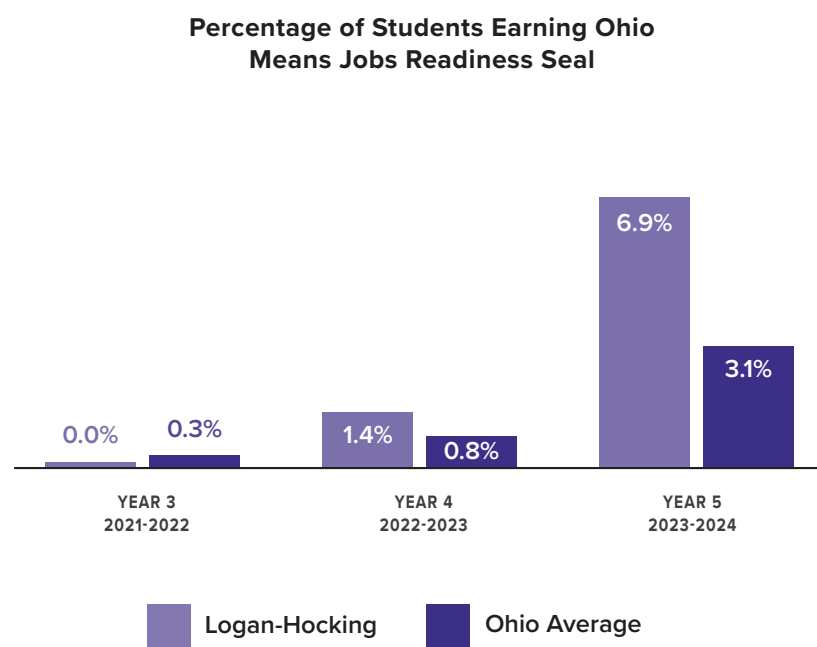
Over the five years of grant-funded efforts, LHSD implemented various programs to help students identify and pursue their career interests. These initiatives included career fairs, job shadowing, and newly created internships, all aimed at increasing students' career readiness. The *Prepared for Success* component of the state's report card for public school districts in Ohio uses multiple measures for college and career readiness to enable districts to showcase their unique approaches for preparing students for success after high school. For example, districts may focus on Advanced Placement courses, ACT or SAT remediation-free scores, College Credit Plus credits, or industry-recognized credentials in high-demand career fields, among other measures. LHSD engaged in various planning initiatives regarding *Prepared for Success* and other career readiness programming throughout each project year. The figure below shows that when compared with state averages, the district's performance level increased from 11.8 percent below the state average at baseline to 6.8 percent above the state average in the final project year.

The percentage of LH students *Prepared for Success* increased significantly during the grant period, exceeding the state average in years 4 and 5



Percentage of Students *Prepared for Success*

Under Ohio’s long-term graduation requirements, students must demonstrate readiness as a part of their pathway to earning a high school diploma. To demonstrate readiness, students must earn at least two seals, one of which must be a state-defined seal. The OhioMeansJobs (OMJ)-Readiness Seal is a state-defined seal. To earn the OMJ-Readiness Seal, students must demonstrate specific professional skills required for success in the workplace. Students must work with at least three experienced and trusted mentors who validate the demonstration of these skills in school, work, or the community. By the end of the grant period, the district had shown considerable success in increasing the percentage of its students who demonstrated readiness, more than doubling the state average by the end of the grant period. *(Note: The state did not conduct these measures in the first project year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)*



Collectively, these data suggest efforts supported through the school climate transformation grant had important impacts on the district’s educational efforts and outcomes. Through career exploration, expanded dual enrollment, leadership development, professional development for teachers, and strengthened community partnerships, LHSD has made significant strides in preparing students for success and has demonstrated its steadfast commitment to fostering a positive and productive educational environment for all students.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Logan-Hocking Local School District's School Climate Transformation Grant initiative has yielded significant positive impacts across multiple domains, including academic success, mental and behavioral health, and college and career readiness. The comprehensive approach, involving robust partnerships and a dedicated leadership team, has transformed the district's capacity to support all students effectively.

**Sustainability Considerations:** To ensure the long-term sustainability of these positive outcomes, the following considerations are essential:

- 1. Continued Funding and Resource Allocation:** Securing ongoing funding from diverse sources, including local, state, and federal grants, as well as private and nonprofit partnerships, will be crucial. Allocating resources strategically to maintain and expand successful programs is necessary for sustained impact.
- 2. Leadership and Staff Development:** Ongoing professional development for teachers, staff, and administrators is vital to maintain momentum of the transformation. Investing in leadership development ensures that the district continues to have a dedicated and capable team to drive future initiatives. Further, district leadership continuing to prioritize and address school climate is vital for sustaining the progress to date.
- 3. Community and Partnership Engagement:** Strengthening and expanding partnerships with health care providers, higher education institutions, businesses, and community organizations will provide additional support and resources. Engaging the community in the district's vision fosters a collaborative environment that benefits all stakeholders.
- 4. Data-Driven Decision Making:** Continuously monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and interventions through data collection and analysis will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that resources are used efficiently. Data-driven decision making supports the district's ability to adapt to changing needs and priorities.
- 5. Student and Family Involvement:** Encouraging active participation from students and families in school activities and decision-making processes promotes a sense of ownership and investment in the district's success. Providing opportunities for feedback and collaboration helps create a supportive and inclusive school climate.

In conclusion, the Logan-Hocking Local School District's School Climate Transformation Grant initiative has laid a strong foundation for ongoing improvement and success. By focusing on sustainability and continuous improvement, the district can ensure that the positive impacts of this initiative endure, providing lasting benefits for students, families, school staff, and the broader community.

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