

Strategies to Prepare for the ACT Summary of Promising Practices

Fairview High School (Mid Cumberland) - Juli Oyer, Principal	
<i>Academic Strategy</i>	<i>School Culture Strategy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Prep course available to all juniors and is taught by some of the school's most effective teachers. • On the statewide ACT test date for juniors, the sophomore class takes a practice ACT as if it were the real test. • The results from the sophomore practice test are used in a few ways: A pareto analysis is conducted so student and teachers are aware of specific needs and strengths of each student; results are used to place students in their junior year ACT prep courses; the data is referred to frequently to drive conversations with students and families to stress their potential and their areas for growth. • Many eleventh grade teachers use ACT-style questions on their summative assessments or as bell ringers in their daily instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the statewide ACT test date, the Fairview staff cooks a pancake breakfast at the school. • Each class sets a goal for the ACT and has a choice of incentives for reaching their goal (one example was a BBQ and dance party in the school parking lot). • The local chamber of commerce, in collaboration with the superintendent, offers a laptop incentive to students who improve their ACT scores or tutor other students. • Oyer has many one-on-one conversations with students regarding their ACT scores and their postsecondary plans. • Over time, Fairview has opened advanced coursework (AP) to a broader range of students. • The practice ACT for sophomores is framed as a "first date" with the ACT. The message is "you might be nervous and you might make a few mistakes, but you better give it serious effort."
Loudon High School (East) - Cheri Parrish, Principal	
<i>Academic Strategy</i>	<i>School Culture Strategy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ACT prep course is available to all juniors and is taught by some of the school's most effective teachers. • On the statewide ACT test date for juniors, the sophomore class takes a practice ACT as if it were the real test; they are planning to expand to include freshmen. • Practice test data is used for individual and school goal-setting. • ACT "Question of the Day" used as bell-ringer in all classes. • ACT-related vocabulary is required in all courses each week. • Silent sustained reading for all students is built into the daily schedule. • Summer reading is required for all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAN test results are used to place students in advanced course offerings. • All student are encouraged to take challenging courses. • Literacy has been a major focus school-wide. Teachers have received special training and utilized close reading strategies. • Plans are in place to publically recognize student ACT performance. • Students who retake the ACT on a Saturday test date are exempted from the final exam in their ACT prep course.

Strategies to Prepare for the ACT Summary of Promising Practices

Marshall County High School (South Central) - John Bush, Principal	
<i>Academic Strategy</i>	<i>School Culture Strategy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT prep course is available to all juniors and is taught by some of the school's most effective teachers. • On the statewide ACT test date for juniors, all freshmen and sophomores take a practice ACT as if it were the real test. • The sophomore tests are used to help identify specific learning goals and areas for targeted remediation. The pareto analysis is used to assign students to ACT prep based upon their areas of need. Hence, students receive specific instruction for their deficiencies rather than a broad shotgun plan of study. All students with scores below 21 are required to attend ACT prep courses. • Math, English, and science teachers have cross-walked the ACT Standards and the Tennessee State Standards so that all teachers can better ensure mastery of both for their students. This process has greatly improved teacher understanding and ownership of the ACT Standards. • Teachers utilize number2.com and act.org for daily bell-ringer activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marshall County High School is a Renaissance Program school and encourages and recognizes academic achievement with reward cards. • Students scoring in the 65th percentile or higher on their state tests are required to enroll in honors level courses in English, math, science, and history. • All students have access to Advanced Placement courses. There is no gatekeeping strategy that prevents students from enrolling. • Through PLCs, teachers have defined essential standards and provide timely remediation for students who do not master those standards. Planned and structured meeting protocols have been established to promote collaboration, the use of common formative assessments, and the creation of remediation and enrichment strategies for all students.