

Leadership Hardin County EDUCATION DAY

IN THE SEASON FOR BEING THANKFUL, THE TEAM OF LEADERSHIP HARDIN COUNTY WAS PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR FROM SOME OF THE MOST VALUABLE PEOPLE THAT KEEP OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM THRIVING. PROVIDING THE YOUTH OF HARDIN COUNTY WITH A WONDERFUL SCHOLASTIC EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITIES, IS AN ASPECT OF LIFE FOR WHICH WE ALL ARE GRATEFUL.

Elizabethtown Community and Technical College

The team started off at ECTC, hearing from the powerful Dr. Corina Langford, Vice President of Student Affairs. In her leadership role, she oversees admissions, advising, assessment, active duty, and veterans- a noticeably big plate! Her goal is to build relationships for the long term. She showed us how her position helps the college thrive by discussing the Happenings of ECTC. Enrollment is growing, with the 2025 fall semester hitting a new record of 3356 new students. Diplomas for the 2024-2025 class included 412 applications, with 360 degrees earned. Even the college funding system has grown, with the Federal Pell Grant for Work Ready KY awarding \$673,164 to 375 students. Alongside the current growth, Dr. Langford continues to drive the college with the new Student Success Plan/Community College 3.0 which contains A clear path & purpose for all students, including a comprehensive advising plan, career exploration software, and a one-year schedule exploration. Multiple factors have changed how continued



education is available to students, including less people reproducing at an early age. So, the college is changing recruitment strategy due to these factors by looking for students who are already in the workforce.

Next up in our session was Chrissie Angell, the Director of Philanthropy & Executive Director of ECTC Foundation, stating her job is to raise money and connect the community with the college. She is highly active in community events to bring recognition

to the college for patronage and also celebrating its achievements. Mrs. Angell also discussed where financial needs lie within the student body, and how the college assists in finding help with the rising cost of college. At ECTC last year, 77% of students received financial aid, and 67% received a Pell Grant. One of the best up-and-coming developments for ECTC advancement is the Family Scholar House, anticipated completion in Fall of 2026. Family Scholar House works to ease financial and situational burdens that could prevent a student from continuing their education at ECTC.

Mrs. Angell also discussed the Student Success Circle Unstoppable Fund. It is an annual financial fund in which community partners donate to, then the faculty and staff present ideas for those funds. Finally, community members vote on which idea they find the most useful and then implement the idea. Another fantastic community event at which funds are raised for the Student Success Circle Unstoppable Fund is the annual UnGala, with the date for 2026 now set for August 28th.

Wrapping up the ECTC circuit was the memorable Dr. Telly Sellars, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost. He quoted his role to be similar to a Principal of a high school and let us know that ECTC is in very good hands, with tremendous praise to the staff. He relayed many great statistics, such as ECTC is #1 in 16 schools of the KCTCS system – the biggest community college in the state! ECTC supports ten counties with four locations, in which 66% of students are employed, alongside completing their studies. With the robust growth and changes for technological careers, ECTC is building technical programs for advancement within careers while investing in growing IT, Robotics, and manufacturing. Over 40% of the college is under construction for remodel and expansion, including projects like Family Scholar House. While speaking of Family Scholar House and its benefits, Dr. Sellars stated that Kids don't fail course because the class is too hard, it's because of relationship responsibilities. A new focus has commenced on creating a universal center path to earn 4-year degrees with college partners (ex. WKU/UofL/KY State/etc.) by having ability for advising on ECTC campus for these colleges instead of the students having to go off-campus.

Elizabethtown High School

The second session of the day took place at Elizabethtown High school. We all met up in the library and kicked things off with a lunch provided by Honey Baked Ham.

After lunch, a short presentation given by Laura Berger, the workforce readiness coordinator. Laura's presentation covered the history of Elizabethtown Highschool and include a variety of interesting facts and stories about the school's past. She then discussed some of the activities and strategies the high school uses to ensure that graduates are ready for

the workforce as soon as they graduate. The high school provides a wide array of courses designed to prepare students for college as well as other traditional careers.

Following the presentation there was a tour of various classes offered by Hardin County Highschool. Several students volunteered to give tours of the various classes and programs that they wanted to highlight. These classes included an engineering class, geography, AP biology, ROTC, and more. Each class offered a unique display of what takes place during their day and what type of material was being covered. The engineering class presented on a project they were working on for an engineering competition. The high school had won this very competition several times in the past and was excited to try and continue the winning streak.

The geography class included a quiz of the 50 states. It was fun to see how many of the states we all could identify within the short time span. The AP biology class was more of a traditional classroom situation, the students were taking a practice test and everyone was encouraged to look it over and see what we could understand. Everyone

was very impressed with the difficulty of the material.

The tour continued on to several other classrooms and then finally wrapped back up where we started in the library. Everyone was really impressed with everything that was going on and the breadth of programs and classes available to the students to pursue their areas of interest.

Early College and Career Center

We ended our afternoon of learning at one of the most impressive schools likely to exist in the county, The Early College and Career Center, affectionately known to student and staff as EC3.

EC3 serves students from all Hardin County Schools high schools, Central Hardin, North Hardin and John Hardin.

Opening in 2014, the center now aids in the education of over 600 students from Freshman to Senior. Students have the capability to take a deeper dive into the field they are most interested in, earning certifications as well as dual credit college/high school classes, helping them graduate with not only their high school diploma, but an associates degree as well! This saves families in our community funds on college courses for their children, and propels them into life with their best foot forward. It also gives them an opportunity to know what they may actually like to do, before entering the workforce. Pathways include culinary arts, automotive, health sciences, media arts, computer science, aviation, construction, welding, criminal justice, and newly added Dental Hygienics, which was added to the health sciences floor. This state of the art facility gives students hands on learning, with many students working in their field of choice, even before graduation.

At the end of the tour, the group had the privilege to meet with HCS



Director of Public Relations, John Wright. He gave us an overview of upcoming projects within the district, to include new buildings being erected over the coming couple of years. We learned the history of the district, discussed things like how snow days are decided, and were given the opportunity to pick his brain with any questions we had. HCS employs 3000 people, services 14,500 students across 13 elementary schools, 5 middle schools and 3 area high schools, with alternative learning schools added to that count as well. John is very passionate about the children in our district, and that was touching to see, as he poured his heart out about the kiddos he serves. This was a perfect ending to a wonderful day of Learning!

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**Lincoln Trail**

Area Development District
~ established 1968 ~

