



# **Executive Summary**

**Liberty Elementary School**

**School City of Hobart**

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## **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?**

### School Context

Liberty Elementary School serves a 1-5 population of approximately 450 students. The district is comprised of four elementary schools (1 Early Learning Center for full day kindergarten, Early Childhood Development for toddlers with special needs, and Parents as Teachers (PAT) readiness program for parents birth to kindergarten, and 3 elementary schools serving 1st -5th grade), one middle school, and one high school.

### Family Context

The following information on the community of Hobart was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010.

The Hobart community has a higher high school graduation rate (89.3%) than the national average (85.0%), yet the community has a percentage of 16.2 for those holding a bachelor's or higher degree. This percentage is well below the national average of 27.9 percent. There are 447 families recorded as below the poverty level within Hobart. This is equivalent to 4.0 percent, which is below the national percentage of 11.3%.

The community's statistics are consistent with the national levels for males and females married, but separated. Seventy percent of Hobart's population has families with 26.7 percent having children under age 18 years of age. The average Hobart household has 3.09 individuals in the family.

### Community Contexts

Hobart covers 28 square miles in Lake County, which is 497 square miles in size. It is part of the Gary Metropolitan Statistical Area. All the communities of northern Indiana are well-served by a modern network of roads, rail and air transportation. Over half of the population of the United States and Canada is within a day's drive. Here's how close (in miles) Hobart is to these major regional cities. Hobart is located 40 miles from Chicago, 250 miles from Detroit, and 155 miles from Indianapolis. Hobart is 0 miles from interstate highway access to I-65, 94, and 90. In addition, easy access is available to US and Indiana Highways 6 and 30 in town.

There is a wide range of civic organizations available in Hobart. Residents participate in the following organizations: Art League, Boys & Girls Scouts, Chamber of Commerce, Elks Club, Historical Society, Hobart Humane Society, Jaycees, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, YMCA, Partners in Contracting Corp., and the Hobart Industrial Economic Development Corp. In addition, parents are active within the schools by participating in each school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Booster clubs. Parent involvement has also been enhanced through the use of Harmony Parent Portal, an online portal that allows parents to view his/her child's grades, attendance, and discipline.

### General Characteristics

The total population of Hobart is 28,389 with 42.4 percent of the population ranging in age from 25 to 54 years of age. The median age is 39.3 years of age. The School City of Hobart can expect enrollment to continue to remain at current levels according to the statistics from the 2010 Census Bureau. Specifically, each range of ages or block of children from birth to 18 is a consistent percentage of 6% to 7% of the total population. Further, it could be assumed that the student population will stay consistent and/or rise as families move into Hobart.

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### Ethnicity/Race

In combination with one or more other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File, Hobart has a larger white population in comparison to other races. For example, the U.S has recorded 74.0% of its population as White, as Hobart has reported 84.4%. The U.S has a higher Black or African American population (12.50%) than Hobart (7.6%). Further, the Hispanic or Latino population in the U.S. is 15.7% of the population, and Hobart is lower at 12%. The Hispanic population ranks as the largest minority in the community.

### Housing

There is a wide range of housing choices in Hobart. The median value of a home in Hobart is \$132,400 compared to the national average of \$188,400. Within the Hobart community, there are 8,473 single-family owner-occupied homes.

75.7 percent of residents live in owner-occupied housing units, while 24.3 percent rent a home. The average family size in Hobart is 3.09.

### Economic Characteristics

The labor force in Hobart is slightly higher than the U.S. The median household and family income are higher in Hobart than the average in the U.S. Families and individuals that are below poverty are significantly lower than the country's average.

### Overall Strengths

- The Hobart community has a higher high school graduation rate (89.3%) than the national average (85.0%).
- The community has a more stable population than the state as a whole.
- The median household of \$54,301 and the family income of \$65,156 recorded in 2010, exceeds the national average of \$51,914 and \$62,982.
- The poverty level for families and individuals is less than the national average.

### Overall Challenges

- The Hobart community percentage for those holding a bachelor's or higher degree (16.2%) is well below the national average (27.9%).

## **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.**

Our School District's Beliefs:

- Learning is the shared responsibility of the school, student, parent and community.
  
- Learning occurs best in a safe, secure environment.
  
- Our schools value and respect diversity, creating an equal opportunity for all children to learn.
  
- Successful learners, whether students or adults, set goals and monitor progress in achieving them.
  
- Motivation to learn is influenced by a student's emotional state, beliefs, interests, and goals.
  
- Students learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful, challenging work.
  
- Students learn best when the staff maintains high expectations for learning.
  
- Successful students create and use a variety of thinking and reasoning strategies and can communicate ideas.
  
- Interactions with adults, who serve as role models and mentors, contribute to student learning and achievement.
  
- Effective educators engage in learning communities that use research and best practices that support the ongoing improvement of teaching and student performance.

Vision for Student Learning:

The School City of Hobart Community will foster intellectual curiosity, natural abilities, critical thinking, and literacy in students while developing respectful and responsible citizens who are excited about the challenges of tomorrow, confident in their ability to chart the future, and dedicated to the pursuit of lifelong learning.

School City of Hobart and the Board of School Trustees Mission:

The primary mission of the School City of Hobart and the Board of School Trustees is to continually provide effective community schools.

A. Our Schools Equip Children for Adulthood

Effective Community Schools adequately equip young people for adulthood in the 21st century. Our students must be prepared both for employment and for day-to-day living in a complicated and rapidly changing world. This necessitates that our schools provide students with the intellectual tools necessary for life-long learning. Among these tools must be: skills to facilitate participation in a democracy, communication skills, critical thinking, and other flexible learning skills as well as the ability to work both individually and in a team situation. It is expected that these skills be developed through all curricular areas.

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### B. Our Schools Address the Needs of Individual Students

Effective Community Schools address the needs of individual students and focus on individual development. Students bring to the schools a great diversity of interest, aptitudes, motivations and learning styles. Our schools must be able to address this diversity by identifying individual needs, responding with appropriate teaching strategies, flexibly meeting these needs and recognizing each individual student's ability to contribute to the school community.

### C. Our Schools Are Community Schools

Effective Community Schools are necessary to a healthy community. Our schools must always recognize their affirmative duty to the entire community, including families, government, business and industry, other institutions, civic groups and individual citizens. Our schools must draw from the strengths of this community to identify and accomplish their goals.

### D. Our Schools Are Committed to Success

Effective Community Schools fully utilize the resources of the entire school community (administration, teachers, support personnel, families and students) in all aspects of school life. Our schools cannot succeed without the committed involvement of all.

#### Liberty Mission Statement:

At Liberty Elementary,

-We expect high academic performance.

-We promote productive social responsibility.

-We achieve high standards.

-We are committed to the development of the whole child.

Student Success is our Goal!

#### Learning Areas and High-Priority Expectations for Student Learning:

##### Learning Area - Language Arts

###### Expectations for Student Learning

All students will read and comprehend a variety of genres and informational text, as well as communicate ideas through writing.

##### Learning Area - Problem Solving

###### Expectations for Student Learning

All students will use problem solving skills to think critically and apply knowledge and reason to solve problems.

##### Learning Area - Careers

###### Expectations for Student Learning

All students will demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual role of productive and successful community member and wage earner by gaining employment in a career or by continuing education at the post-secondary level.

##### Learning Area - Citizenship

###### Expectations for Student Learning

All students will develop an understanding and commitment to the democratic ideals of human dignity, justice and equality by focusing on productive citizenship in a democratic society.

#### Rationale for Learning Areas:

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Our district's vision for student learning envisions our students as respectful and responsible citizens who are excited about the challenges of tomorrow, confident in their ability to chart the future, and dedicated to the pursuit of lifelong learning.

Language Arts, Problem Solving, Careers, and Citizenship are the focus of accountability requirements for our district.

Liberty Elementary School mission:

Liberty Elementary School Equips Children for Adulthood

Liberty Elementary School Addresses the Needs of Individual Students

Liberty Elementary School is a Community School

Liberty Elementary School is Committed to Success



## **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 School City of Hobart and Liberty Elementary believe the last accreditation visit yielded the most notable achievements about our district and Liberty Elementary:

A Caring School/Community Culture

☐ "If it is best for kids, they (school/community) find a way to make it happen."

☐ Systematic process for effective communication is in place and utilized

☐ Because the caring culture listens and is responsive to student and staff needs, new programming and initiatives are implemented to impact student achievement

The Liberty Staff states the best things about Liberty Elementary are:

☐ We work collaboratively to take care of student needs.

☐ We are a team and strive to involve families.

☐ We are a small learning community and are family oriented.

The most notable achievements as documented from stakeholders of Liberty Elementary include the following strengths:

☐ Effective teachers (Strong student-staff relationships; Many teachers recognized as Outstanding Teachers from the Hobart Chamber of Commerce, and Teachers of Excellence in local newspapers)

☐ Achievement (Increased achievement scores over last 5 years; "A" School; Exemplary School)

☐ Strong Language Arts Programming (Reading Workshop - Students reading at their own ability levels; Writing Workshop; Technology integration with student writing)

☐ Meeting Needs of Individual Students (Liberty Elementary cares for needs of students in all areas; Rtl; Great interventions - READ 180, System 44, High Ability Program, PBIS; Utilization of the technology resources to meet students' individual needs (Compass, etc.)

☐ School Safety (All safety drills completed; Partnerships with Hobart Police and Fire departments; Tabletop exercises; PBIS)

☐ Support System (Apply and receive many grants from Hobart Education Foundation; Received Teaching Garden Grant from The American Heart Association and St. Mary's Hospital; Hard working Liberty staff; Lowered building costs (NIPSCO Energy Star Award), Communication using technology has greatly improved, Hire competent employees; Foster team work)

☐ Professional Learning Communities (Encourages culture of professional development through mentoring programs; Increased use of formative assessment to guide instruction; Collecting and analyzing data; student intervention; progress monitoring and tracking; Late- In Wednesday for professional development)

☐ Technology (Wireless access; New technology - iPads & doc cameras; Harmony, Implementation in all curricular areas; Google Applications)

The challenges we face for improvement include the following areas as designated by our district stakeholders:

☐ Math (Continue to work at improvement at all grade levels; More interventions needed)

☐ Technology (More training; Staying ahead of technology; Maintaining current hardware and technology effectiveness)

☐ Budget Limitations (Additional staff and professional development)

☐ Data analysis (Additional time to analyze; More in-depth training desired)

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## **Additional Information**

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

The School City of Hobart and Liberty Elementary has a rich tradition of Brickie Pride! Every teacher! Every student! The entire community supports the Brickies! Famous sayings include, "All my life I want to be a Brickie! Work, Work, Work!" and "Once a Brickie, Always a Brickie!"

The partnerships for students are quite overwhelming including the following:

- ☺ Early Learning (Parents As Teachers, Ready Set Go - Pre-Schools, the YMCA, Main Source Bank)
- ☺ Civic Groups (Hobart Educational Foundation, Kiwanis, The Hobart Food Pantry, Tri Kappa. Legacy Foundation, United Way, The Dean and Barbara White Family Foundation, Maria Reiner Fund, American Heart Association)
- ☺ The City and Chamber (DARE, Criminal Justice Class, Fire Safety, Table Top exercises, Teacher of the Year)
- ☺ Academic Partners (St. Mary's Medical Center, Northwest Indiana Times Newspaper, Mighty Acorns, Challenger Learning Center)
- ☺ Parents (PTOs)
- ☺ Youth Organizations (Athletics for youth like Pop Warner, Cub Scouts, Hobart Youth Basketball, Hobart Wrestling, Hobart Little League, Girls Softball, Hobart Soccer, Brownies and Girl Scouts, Young Rembrandts)
- ☺ Local Businesses (Johnson's Farm Market, Sappers, Hobart Lumber, Dairy Queen, Art Theater, Subway, McDonald's)

The community embraces the youth of the schools because they care and are true to the Hobart Brickies! Brickie Pride! It is the best!