

# SOUTHERN OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Utica, KY

Southern Oaks Elementary School

Grades Preschool-5

348 Students

21.8 Certified Staff

Rural Setting

Socioeconomic:

47.4% free lunch

7.3% reduced lunch

Ethnicity:

1.4% African American

2.6% Asian

9.2% Hispanic

85.6% White

\$10,332 per student spending



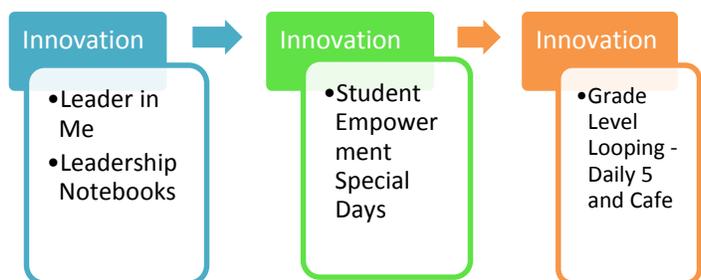
*Preparing Every Student to be  
College or Career Ready*

## Innovation Snapshot

### Student Empowerment

Southern Oaks Elementary will develop individual leadership qualities in their students towards a growth mindset with the intent of leading them to college and career readiness.

## Key Elements



## kid-FRIENDLY Supports

- Data Retreat
- Leader In Me
- FRSYC Funds
- Personalized Learning Symposium



## Southern Oaks Innovation Snapshot

2015

Our mission statement for Southern Oaks Elementary is to "Celebrate the Success of Students as they Learn, Lead, and Grow". Our focus is to develop students who take responsibility for their own learning, develop individual leadership qualities and a growth mindset. We hope by celebrating success in each of these areas we can grow college/career ready individuals for the future.

To accomplish our goal for the future we have chosen to implement student empowerment strategies throughout our school. We strongly believe at SOES that building relationships and knowing our students strengths and weaknesses help us to empower students both academically and socially. This belief has led us to structuring our school by grade level loops. This structure allows our students to have the same reading and math teacher for two years. We have seen relationships grow and have also seen less loss of instruction time as teachers have a strong awareness of students needs at the beginning of the second year.

The implementation of the Leader in Me program has provided us with an avenue to empower students to be responsible for their learning, to see themselves as leaders and to set goals to monitor their growth. Using the 7 Habits language throughout the school has helped to create a climate of leadership and growth. It has also given us a language to teach to parents to use at home to build college and career readiness. Through the Leader in Me initiative we have also been able to empower students to take leadership roles in our school wide events such as Veterans' Day, Art Day, and Harvest Days. These days were once organized and led by adults in the building, now students take the lead, causing some strong talents to emerge.

As part of our implementation of Leader in Me we have begun using data notebooks in all classrooms kindergarten through fifth grade to help students be

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more responsible for their learning. In these notebooks, they track their daily behavior, their attendance, their fall, winter and spring MAP scores, as well as any other data classroom teacher wan them to be responsible for. Student also set goals for MAP after taking the fall test. These goals are revisited to remind students they are responsible for learning material needed to meet their individual goal. Students understand that their goal represent how much they think they can grow in a given period of time.

In addition to goal setting, all classes in our school have classroom jobs to promote leadership skills. The jobs are changed periodically and can be lost if not performed effectively or if behavior isn't appropriate for the job holder. We also have school jobs for student 3-5. To obtain these jobs, students must go through an application process and to retain the job, they must have excellent behavior and must perform the duties of the job effectively. These jobs have helped students to find a voice where they otherwise may not have.

Providing student choice is also a means of student empowerment. Our school also has begun to implement Daily 5 and Café as part of our literacy framework. In doing so, we are able to provide more student choice in the classroom while also providing differentiation in instruction.

We have worked to create an environment of leadership in our building to support our belief that we are all leaders. We have quotes, student pictures and student work associated with the 7 Habits displayed throughout our building. In addition, our teachers work to use the 7 Habits language in their lessons to help students see the habits in action. Each Friday morning during our school wide Friday morning meeting, one habit is focused on, leaders of the week are recognized and our school mission is recited to remind students of their purpose in learning.

Prior to implementing Leader in Me at Southern Oaks Elementary, we read the Leader in Me book written by Covey, visited other Leader in Me schools and

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attended the Leader in Me symposium in Bowling Green, Ky. The results we observed first hand as well as the findings depicted in Covey's book led us to the decision to implement Leader in Me in our school.

We currently need more opportunities to train new staff members and to provide more in depth training for parents. We feel working with parent to implement the 7 Habits at home is crucial to students using them in their everyday life to help them become college and career ready. Our goal as a school is to continue to work towards Lighthouse status and become a model Leader in Me school so that our students have every opportunity to learn, lead and grow in all aspects of their lives.