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OCTOBER 2019

## CASE STUDY #1

Mr. Rogers, a second-year principal at Landon High School (LHS), was disappointed to hear the counselor from King Community College (KCC), Mr. Jones, say that LHS graduates were not prepared for college. Mr. Jones went on to say that very few of the LHS seniors enrolled at KCC, and when they did, they struggled and rarely finished the two-year program.

The high school is in a rural community within seventy-five miles of a large urban city in the South. KCC is the closest college to LHS, approximately 50 miles. In addition to KCC, there are three four-year universities within a hundred-mile radius of LHS. The population of the high school is 66 percent white, 20 percent African American, and 14 percent Hispanic. Few of the children who attend LHS have parents who graduated from college. In fact, a few years ago, a survey reported that nearly 50 percent of LHS parents did not have a high school diploma. As a result, the school has a high ratio of low socioeconomic student population.

However, the demographics of this small town are beginning to change. Within the past few years, young professionals have been buying land and building homes to raise their families away from the city in the quiet of this rural community.

As Mr. Rogers reflected on the comments from Mr. Jones, he found himself thinking about the curriculum at LHS. Last year, as a new principal, Mr. Rogers suggested that the school partner with the nearby community college to begin an Early College High School (ECHS). However, several department team leaders, all of whom had been at the high school for at least 15 years, talked him out of this idea, saying that it “wouldn’t fly” here.

The equipment in the computer, chemistry, and biology lab was minimal. Teachers still relied heavily on lectures and implemented very few hands-on activities. Funding was always a problem, and there never seemed to be enough money to provide the labs with all that was needed for the science classes. Now he wondered whether teachers would use these resources if they had them – perhaps that was the problem. Regardless, he was beginning to understand why the students were not interested in taking some of these classes.

In addition to his concerns about the curriculum and the lack of equipment at the school, Mr. Rogers had other concerns, not the least of which was that KCC would go public with this complaint. That would really be bad, especially now that the community was beginning to get excited about new economic prospects. New families would certainly be interested in good schools.

## *EDLD 5311 Fundamentals Leadership*

A week later, Mr. Roger held a faculty meeting. He told teachers about the comments from Mr. Jones and pointed out that the college leadership was concerned that faculty at LHS were not doing an adequate job of preparing students for college and certainly not for KCC. The teachers' reactions were varied. Many teachers pointed out that "these students are not interested in going to college anyway." This prompted an argument when other teachers stated that the students did want to go to college but could not afford it, not even KCC, which was so close. Others noted that the students had very little support from their families since few of them had gone to college themselves.

Some teachers thought the report was exaggerated and felt sure that there were LHS graduates who went to KCC. If they did not do well, it was "probably because they got too involved in partying." Another commented that students were so busy working that college just did not seem necessary; after all, nearly all the students in the high school already held part-time jobs somewhere to help the family.

Finally, after listening to different to teacher comments, the principal handed out the State Accountability Assessment System Comparison Group Campus information. This reported the college-bound data for schools that are similar to LHS in size and demographics.