

Glossary of Key Terms for the Kentucky United We Learn Council

Term	Definition
Academic Competencies	A set of skills and abilities that are often the focus of assessment and accountability efforts, in particular math, English Language Arts (ELA) and science.
Accountability System	The collection of all indicators, processes, and reports that are used to manage school quality at a district or state level.
Assessment	A standardized instrument and/or a process for collecting information about learners, teachers, or other human beings in a systematic way.
Assessment System	The collection of all instruments, processes, and reports that are used to evaluate how students are making progress towards key goals.
Competitive Grant for State Assessment (CGSA)	The federal funding competition to which Kentucky applied and was granted funding in 2022. The grant partially supports the current work of the Kentucky United We Learn Council and other initiatives related to achieving the United We Learn vision for the Commonwealth.
Classroom Assessment	An umbrella term for a variety of practices to gather real-time information about learners. These assessments occur through observation, probing, and other types of feedback cycles.
Co-creation	A process to engage a community and actively seek input from others to make collective decisions that benefit the community and, working in deep partnership, to realize a shared vision.
Competency	The capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform critical functions or tasks in a defined setting.
Competency-based Education (CBE)	An approach to teaching and learning whereby educators use a variety of in-school and out-of-school opportunities to develop students' skills and abilities, rather than relying on the more traditional completion of courses or grades.
Curriculum	The collection of all materials, activities, and possibly assessments that teachers and students use in a grade and subject. Curriculum may be created by a district or purchased from a vendor.
Dashboard	A digital display where users can look at various graphics, text, and data and, in many cases, interact with the data, to identify patterns and trends emerging from the data.
Deeper Learning (DL)	An umbrella term for a variety of pedagogical (teaching) approaches designed to develop competencies in students' skills and abilities through innovative, authentic, and interdisciplinary learning and assessment activities.
Empathy	The ability to understand and share the feelings of another. To channel empathy in our work, we listen to each other's concerns and include all voices in planning processes to create deeper, more connected solutions and decision making.
Inclusion	The process by which we engage diverse perspectives from across

	our communities, especially from those whose perspectives are often devalued or left out of decisions that affect their communities.
Indicator	A statistical measure of a certain behavior or outcome that is used within an accountability system for monitoring how well students, teachers, or districts are doing.
Interim Assessment	A series of measures that are taken at multiple times throughout the school year, typically to learn about the achievement status of learners and progress towards end-of-year goals.
Item	As it relates to educational assessments, this is a technical term for a question on an assessment, which can be a multiple-choice question, a different kind of selection question, a short answer, an essay, or a related type of question.
Kentucky Board of Education (KBE)	The governing body that develops and adopts the regulations and policies that govern Kentucky's 171 public school districts and the actions of the Kentucky Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education reports to the board.
Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)	The agency of the Commonwealth of Kentucky that provides resources and guidance to Kentucky's public schools and districts as they implement the state's preschool through 12th grade education requirements.
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	A measure that is tracked for individual teachers, schools, or districts to evaluate whether they are making adequate progress towards annual goals.
Kentucky United We Learn Council (KUWL Council)	The advisory group formed to engage a community of interested stakeholders in the design, development, and coordination of activities to bring the United We Learn vision to life.
Local Laboratories of Learning (L3)	Community-based partnerships led by the local school district administrator and a community leader formed from a diverse group of students, educators, business participants and local leaders that reflect the unique perspectives of their communities. L3s are working to develop and oversee innovative solutions to address local educational challenges that reflect the United We Learn vision.
Local Education Agency (LEA)	A different term for a school district.
Project Based Learning (PBL)	An umbrella term for a variety of initiatives in which projects are at the center of the learning and assessment efforts in the curriculum. Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects.
Portrait of a Graduate (PoG)	The conceptualization of the core competencies that learners should have developed at the point of graduation; this is sometimes used synonymously with Portrait of a Learner (PoL).
Portrait of a Learner (PoL)	The conceptualization of the core competencies (skills and abilities) that learners should develop throughout their PK-12 education. The identified skills and abilities are then used to guide the development and improvement of school curriculum and teaching

	practices. Portrait of a Learner is sometimes used synonymously with Portrait of a Graduate (PoG).
Reciprocity	The practice of exchanging things or ideas with others for mutual benefit. To channel reciprocity in our work, we listen to, engage, and consider all stakeholders' needs and feedback in decision making.
Reliability	A concept related to the consistency or general trustworthiness of scores from a statistical perspective. Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure (whether the results can be reproduced under the same conditions). The reliability of an assessment tool is the extent to which it consistently and accurately measures learning.
Score Report	A document that learners receive which provides an overview of how they performed on an assessment, often with information about individual questions as well as how they performed overall relative to peers, other learners in the state, or even nationally.
State Education Agency (SEA)	A different term for a state-level education agency. The Kentucky State Department of Education (KDE) is a state education agency.
Socio-emotional Competencies	A set of skills and abilities that allow learners to deal with challenging situations, engage productively with one another, and regulate their learning processes effectively; sometimes also referred to as "non-academic competencies" or "essential skills."
Summative Assessment	An assessment used at the end of a curricular sequence – often a semester, trimester, course, or school year – that provides an aggregate measure of what students have learned and can do at that point in time.
System of Systems	The collection of multiple, independent systems that interact or work together as part of a larger, more complex system. A system is a group of interacting, interrelated and interdependent components that form a complex and unified whole.
Theory of Action	A hypothesis about what will happen when a set of strategies is implemented. Theory of Action is an approach used in program planning to connect what we plan to do with what we hope to achieve. When developing a Theory of Action, organizations identify actions to be taken, the expected short- and long-term outcomes, the resources and assumptions that are used, and the beliefs about why the various actions will have the desired effects.
United We Learn (UWL)	Our collective vision for the future of public education in Kentucky. This vision builds around three Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating a more vibrant experience for every student; 2. Encouraging innovation in our schools – especially when it comes to assessment and accountability; and 3. Creating a bold new future for Kentucky's schools through collaboration with our communities.

Validity	A concept related to the defensibility or general meaningfulness of scores from an interpretational perspective. The validity of an assessment tool is the extent by which it measures what it was designed to measure.
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