



A Guide to Kentucky's Equity Playbook

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Overview of Kentucky's Equity Playbook

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Team has partnered with engage2learn (e2L), an education consultant firm, and Kentucky's regional educational cooperatives, to lead Kentucky's equity playbook. The equity playbook is an initiative for district and school leaders, administrators and teachers to address equity through personalized coaching on evidence/research-based practices, content and resources to address opportunity gaps in one or more of the following areas:



Student achievement



Utilization of funding and resources



Disproportionality relative to student discipline



Culture and climate



Highly effective staff and high-quality instructional resources

In order to address the opportunity and access gaps in the areas above, the equity playbook will be taking both an inside-out and an outside-in approach as described below (Lindsey, Robins and Terrell, 2009, p. 58). Using both approaches, district and/or school participants will choose a problem of practice related to one or more of the equity pillars to address over the course of participation in the equity playbook.

Inside-Out

- 1) A commitment to examining your own values, assumptions, behaviors and competencies in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
- 2) A commitment to working with your colleagues to examine your school/or district policies and practices

Outside-In

- 1) A commitment to a student and family-centered approach to improving the student experience
- 2) A commitment to examining data from multiple sources such as the [School Report Card](#), [Equity Dashboard](#), [IMPACT KY Working Conditions survey](#), and your [Comprehensive School/District Improvement Plan \(CSIP/CDIP\) Needs Assessment](#) to identify priorities and concerns
- 3) A commitment to learning from the community you serve, specifically focusing on starting with voices that are traditionally at the margins

Equity Playbook Alignment to Kentucky Department of Education Processes

In July 2020, the [Kentucky Board of Education passed a resolution affirming its commitment to racial equity in Kentucky public schools](#). The Kentucky Board of Education and the Kentucky Department of Education believe all students should have the necessary supports to reach their full potential. For participants in the equity playbook initiative, components may support the Kentucky Board of Education resolution, while also aligning to several other key areas at the Kentucky Department of Education. For example:

- **Trauma-Informed Plans and Practices:** In 2019, the Kentucky General Assembly passed the [School Safety and Resiliency Act](#). This Act affected multiple statutes regarding school safety and student resiliency and many agencies that work with districts and schools. Pursuant to [KRS 158.4416](#), each local board of education must have developed a plan for implementing a trauma-informed approach in its schools by July 1, 2021. At a minimum, the plan shall include strategies for:
 - Enhancing **trauma awareness** throughout the school community;
 - Assessing the school climate, including but not limited to **inclusiveness and respect for diversity**;
 - Providing services and programs designed to reduce the negative impact of trauma, support critical learning, and foster a **positive and safe school environment for every student**.
 - ❖ **Alignment to equity pillar: culture and climate**

- **Professional Standards for Educators and Leaders (PSEL):** ***PSEL Standard 3, Equity and Cultural Responsiveness:*** “Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.”
 - ❖ **Alignment to Equity Coaching Competencies**

- **Comprehensive School/District Improvement Plan (CSIP/CDIP):** When developed through a collaborative process involving multiple stakeholders and implemented with fidelity, the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP) cultivate an environment that promotes student growth and achievement. Through this intentional process, schools and districts identify priority needs, strategically allocate resources, and monitor results **to meet the needs of all students and close achievement gaps among identified subgroups**.
 - ❖ **Each CSIP and CDIP has required goals (including one around the achievement gap) which are aligned to the goals of the equity playbook pillars:**

CSIP/CDIP Required Goal	Aligned to Equity Pillar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State assessment results in reading and mathematics ● State assessment results in science, social studies and writing ● Achievement Gap ● English Learner (Emergent Bilingual/Multilingual) Progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student achievement ● Utilization of funding and resources ● Highly effective staff and high-quality instructional resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality of School Climate and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disproportionality relative to student discipline; ● Culture and climate

Selecting an Equity Pillar Problem of Practice: Workshop

The goal of the equity playbook is to implement strategies to ensure equitable access and outcomes for the diverse student populations that we serve in Kentucky. To that end, each participant or team of participants will select a problem of practice related to one of the equity pillars. Each of the equity pillars are described in the next section. An overview of a process of how to select a problem of practice is described below:

Step 1: Review the equity pillars and decide which domain or domain(s) you or your team will focus on for the equity playbook.

Step 2: Use the Data Analysis Protocol Framework to review data around the domain to identify and narrow down a problem.

The [Data Analysis Protocol](#) helps guide district or school level teams through the four-step problem solving process (see [KyMTSS Implementation Guide](#) pp 14-19) around a problem of practice. The process should look the same at each tier of prevention across all domains with district data, school data, grade level data, small groups or individual students. The following process may be helpful as you identify and prepare your problem of practice around one of the Equity Pillars. Each step is accompanied in the protocol by guiding questions and next steps.

- **Problem Identification:** The first step in the decision-making process is to determine whether a problem exists and define it as precisely and explicitly as possible.
- **Problem Analysis:** After a problem or goal has been defined, it is necessary for teams to analyze the data with enough depth to develop hypotheses and identify potential barriers to successfully achieving the goal. This is where teams identify possible root causes that the school or district can act on and the influence to change.
- **Planning and Implementation:** Once a reasonable set of root causes have been identified, the next step in the problem-solving process for teams is to investigate the research on evidence-based interventions and best practices, identify a solution and develop an action plan to address the identified area(s) of concern.
- **Evaluation:** The success of the plan is evaluated using data to determine whether the problem still exists. If so, the problem-solving steps will begin again applying new information gained from the process. During this step, teams look at the outcome data (graphed) and fidelity data to answer the questions below.

Step 3. Reflect and critique your problem of practice.

- How is this question important to my practice? How is this problem of practice important to student outcomes?
- How does this problem of practice connect to my school/district mission and vision?

- Are there stakeholders you are aware of that may need to provide additional input or may be critical to understanding the identified problem? What conversations can you have with them to better collaborate?

Step 4. Discuss your problem of practice with your coach.

- What competencies will be important in developing within this problem of practice?
- Who else needs to be included to make progress in your problem of practice?
- What will success look like for me/my students/my district?

Equity Playbook Pillars Overview

The foundation of the equity playbook relies on studying the policies, practices and procedures that have resulted in current disparities across our student groups. In order to improve student outcomes, five major domains of school and district improvement are outlined as key areas to examine for improvement efforts. These areas and the seminal research describing the importance of equity within each strand is outlined below.

	Pillar	Research
	Student achievement	National longitudinal data has well-documented the inequities in educational outcomes for different student groups. In addition, there is an interaction between disparities by racial/ethnic groups and disparities by income level. While both poverty and race/ethnicity are associated with student achievement, students who are Black or Latine attending a school with a high concentration of poverty are more likely to experience large inequities in academic outcomes. Source: Achievement Gap
	Utilization of funding and resources	Funding and resource inequities are well-documented to be associated with disparities in education outcomes. Often schools serving high-poverty concentrations have fewer resources than other schools so that the students that need the most resources often have the least. Source: Equitable School Finance
	Disproportionality relative to student discipline	The Office of Civil Rights requires public school reporting of discipline every two years. Consistently, the data has illustrated the wide disparities in discipline with students of color and students with disabilities significantly more likely to receive exclusionary discipline than other students. Students who are suspended at least once are more at-risk of dropping out than students who are not suspended. Source: Exclusionary Discipline Practices
	Culture and climate	The climate and culture of the school sets the tone for the student experience. Caring adults and peers are critical to provide each student and adult with a sense of belonging. Connectedness to school is a protective factor and associated with higher academic achievement, better attendance, and reduced risk behaviors. Often different student groups vary in their sense of belonging in school. Source: School Connectedness
	Highly effective staff and high-quality instructional resources	Instructional resources where students can see both themselves and others in the materials (“windows and mirrors”) cultivates a sense of inclusion and belonging as well as enriches critical thinking and perspective-taking skills. When students are exposed to culturally rich materials, students show better outcomes. Source: Center for Education Policy Analysis

Selecting a Problem of Practice Guidance

An overview of each of the equity pillars is described in the following section. Considerations of how to utilize this guidance document are below.

Data-Sources

For each overview, sample data at the state-level is provided as an example of how data can help inform the current state of an issue. Suggested data sources are provided, and in addition, each district or school can consider their locally collected data to inform their selection of a problem of practice.

Analysis and Reflection on Data

When selecting a problem of practice, consider what data points has your school or district grappled with in the past few years? What priorities and concerns have been described in your school's or district's Needs Assessment as part of the CSIP or CDIP process? As an equity playbook participant, consider what stakeholders need to be included in analyzing and reflecting on the data and the root causes. Sample reflective questions are included in the overviews on each pillar.

Action Planning

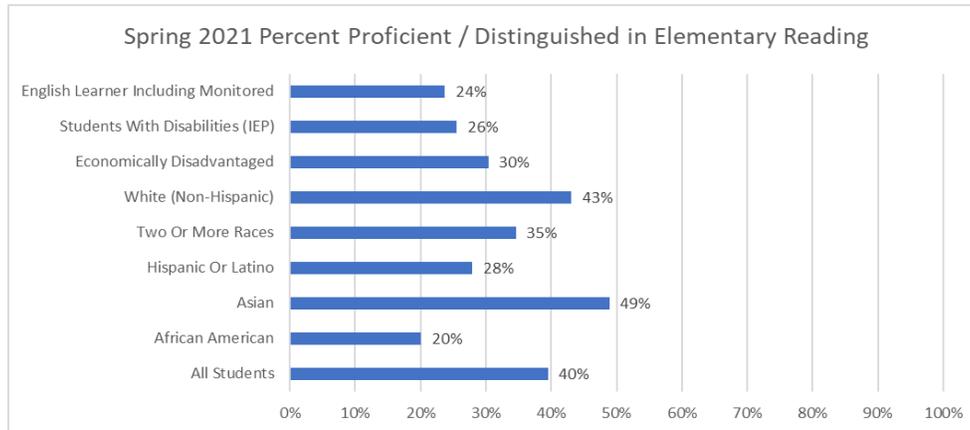
Finally, each equity pillar overview includes sample action strategies to help get started on potential next steps related to each problem of practice. One of the important design principles in action planning is to include **stakeholder voice** in helping improve equity. In particular, gathering perceptions, ideas and experiences from stakeholders whose data show they are at the margins in that domain is critical. Before determining actions, consider what stakeholders' voices need to be heard and included before proceeding. Lastly, as referenced in the Data Analysis Protocol, reviewing what strategies have been most impactful in similar populations with similar challenges is critical to success. Evidence-based practices help to increase the likelihood of success as the practice/strategy has shown impact in other similar contexts.

Problem of Practice Identification Template

As equity playbook participants are identifying and working on their problem of practice, along with their priority competencies for coaching, a problem of practice identification template is provided. This template allows the team(s) to document their problem of practice, outline their action steps and reflect on progress toward their goals.

Equity Pillar: Student Achievement

Sample Highlighted Kentucky Data: School Report Card 2020-2021



Key Takeaway: Significant differences in achievement in elementary reading at the state-level between student groups.

Sample Data Sources in order to narrow down a problem of practice in this domain:

- School Report Card: Assessment Domain, Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)
- Equity Dashboard: Disproportionality in Achievement
- Local Formative Assessment Data

Sample Reflective Questions for Schools/Districts:

- 1) Are there differences in student achievement by student group, including but not limited to differences by race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, English learners (emergent multi-lingual), and students with disabilities?
- 2) What grade levels show the largest disparities and in which subject areas?
- 3) What curriculum/programs are being utilized in the subject/grades of concern? What types of training and support are in place for staff implementing these programs?

Sample Key Actions:

- Re-examine implementation of multi-tiered systems of support plan
- Assure programs and curriculum are research and evidence-based for impact on the population of interest. Review [Kentucky's Model Curriculum Framework](#).
- Talk to educators who are implementing curriculum/programs to identify potential supports needed
- Observe or talk to students who are struggling in their learning to identify potential root causes
- Triangulate student learning data with student attendance, behavior, and engagement data to address whole-child needs

Equity Pillar: Culture and Climate

Sample Kentucky Key Highlighted Data: Impact Kentucky Working Conditions Survey – was taken by more than 38,000 teachers in the Winter of 2021.

- 75% of respondents said they were concerned with the emotional well-being of their colleagues as a result of their work.
- 40% of educators didn't feel effective at their job right now
- 64% said they were concerned about their own emotional well-being as a result of their work

- 64% said they were concerned about their own emotional well-being as a result of their work

Key Takeaway: Educator emotional well-being is a priority concern to address in the post-pandemic period.

Sample Data Sources to narrow down a problem of practice in this domain:

- School Report Card: Quality of School Climate and Safety Domain
- IMPACT survey: Educator Working Conditions Survey, Emotional Well-Being Domain
- Equity Dashboard: Disproportionality Data in Chronic Absenteeism
- Local surveys of staff, families and students regarding culture and climate
- Local data on teacher and student attendance, staff turnover

Sample Reflective Questions for Schools/Districts:

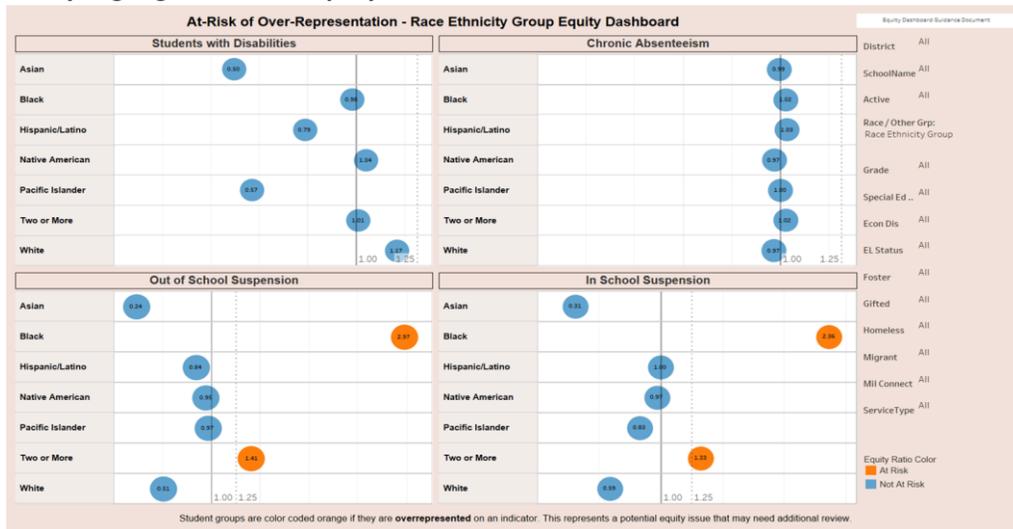
- 1) What systems are in place to care for self and others?
- 2) What structures are in place to celebrate successes, diversity and inclusion?
- 3) How are educators, families and students encouraged to participate in the school/district learning and social activities, decision-making processes, and take on leadership roles?

Sample Key Actions:

- Conduct empathy interviews with educators regarding culture and climate
- Survey families, students and educators on sense of belonging
- Develop employee or student affinity groups
- Develop advisory boards/councils with representation from different stakeholder groups to be actively involved in school culture and climate change

Equity Pillar: Discipline

Sample Kentucky Highlighted Data: Equity Dashboard End of Year 2021-2022 Data



Key Takeaway: Significant differences in in- and out-of school suspensions for Black/African-American students and students of Two or More Races compared to other student groups.

Sample Data Sources to narrow down a problem of practice in this domain:

- School Report Card: Quality of School Climate and Safety Domain, School Safety Domain
- IMPACT survey: Educator Working Conditions Survey, Managing Student Behavior Domain
- Equity Dashboard: Disproportionality Data in In- and Out- of School Suspensions
- Equity Dashboard: Disproportionality Data in In- and Out- of School Suspensions

Sample Reflective Questions for Schools/Districts:

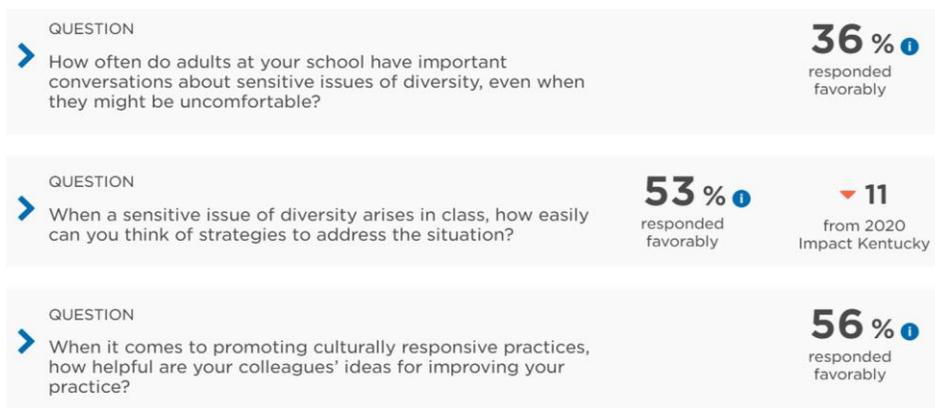
- 1) Are there differences in student discipline by student groups, including but not limited to differences by race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, English learners (emergent multi-lingual), and students with disabilities?
- 2) What grade levels or classrooms show the largest disparities and reflect what is different about those areas?
- 3) What social-emotional and behavior support programs are being implemented? What types of trainings and supports are in place for staff implementing these strategies?

Sample Key Actions:

- Hold focus groups with students or families to reflect on code of conduct practices
- Observe classroom observations to assess behavior management strategies
- Reassess trainings and professional learning offerings for administrators and teachers

Equity Pillar: Highly Effective Staff and Instructional Resources

Sample Kentucky Highlighted Data: IMPACT Working Conditions Survey Data 2021-2022 Data



Key Takeaway: Significant drop in the percent of educators who have strategies to address issues of diversity.

Sample Data Sources to narrow down a problem of practice in this domain:

- IMPACT survey: Educator Working Conditions Survey, Educating All Student Domain
- Local Instructional Resources and Supports
- Local Professional Development Plan

Sample Reflective Questions for Schools/Districts:

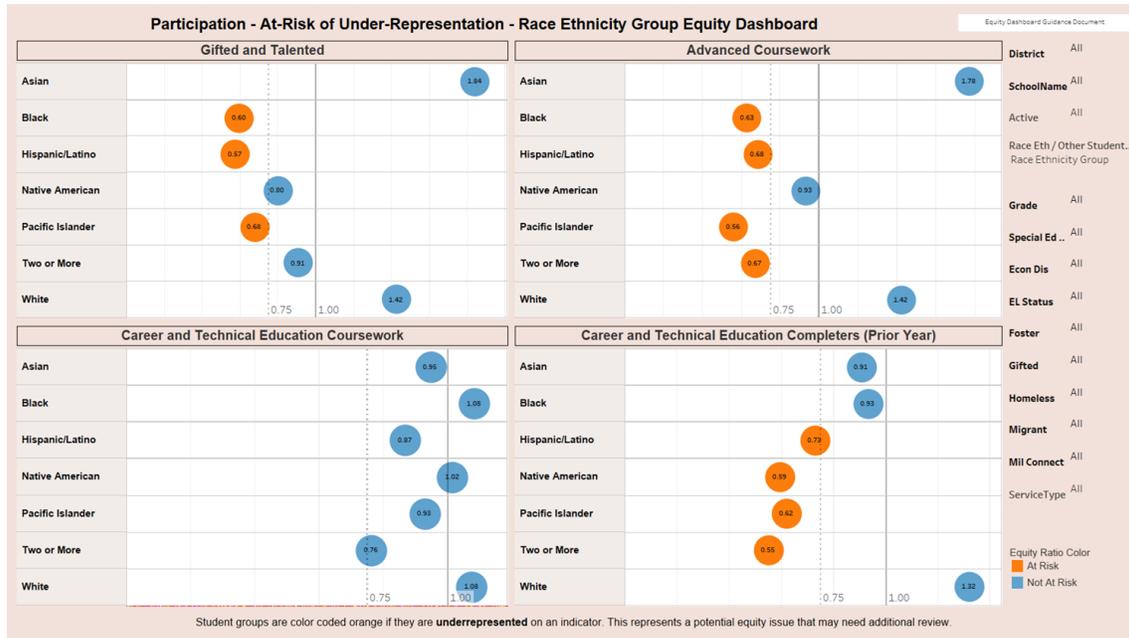
- 1) How comfortable are staff with issues related to diversity and culturally responsive practices?
- 2) What types of trainings and supports are in place for staff to help support the needs of the diverse learners?

Sample Key Actions:

- Hold focus groups with students or families to assess their learning needs and challenges
- Conduct empathy interviews with educators in your school/district to assess their needs and challenges in the domains of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
- Re-assess trainings and professional learning offerings around culturally responsive pedagogy for administrators and teachers.

Equity Pillar: Utilization of Funding and Resources

Sample Kentucky Key Data: Equity Dashboard Access and Opportunities



Key Takeaway: Significant differences between student groups in Gifted and Talented, Advanced Coursework, Career and Technical Education Completers

Sample Data Sources to narrow down a problem of practice in this domain:

- School Report Card: Financial Transparency Domain
- Equity Dashboard: Equitable Access to Advanced Coursework, Career and Technical Education
- Local data on financial add-ons, funding formulas based on school and student needs
- Local data on staffing and adjustments for high-poverty/high-need schools

Sample Reflective Questions for Schools/Districts:

- 1) Are there disparities between student groups in access and opportunities to advanced coursework or special programs? Are resources contributing to disparities?
- 2) What types of resources are allocated to help support strategies that address inequitable access points?

Sample Key Actions:

- Hold focus groups with students or families to assess barriers
- Re-assess referral or assignment process to advanced coursework to determine what areas may need more supports/resources along the pipeline
- Convene experts in financial allocations within your district to evaluate equity in resources

Coaching Competencies and Equity Pillars

Equity Playbook Pillars	District Leaders Aligned Competencies	School Administration Aligned Competencies	Teachers Aligned Competencies
Student Achievement	Process Purpose Personalized Professional Learning Product Place People Awareness	Awareness Coaching Process Coaching Role Community Building Cultural Competence Culture Professional Learning Expertise Systems Thinking	Assessment, Formative Feedback Differentiation and Scaffolding Small Group Instruction Standards Alignment
School Culture and Climate	Purpose Place People Personalized Professional Learning Awareness Cultural Competence Community Building	Awareness Coaching Process Coaching Role Collaborative Partnerships Community Building Cultural Competence Culture Systems Thinking	Awareness Community Building Cultural Competence Culture, Environment Professional Ethics
Disciplinary Practices and Procedures	Purpose Product Cultural Competence	Coaching Role Collaborative Partnerships Digital Fluency Professional Learning Expertise Systems Thinking	Awareness Community Building Cultural Competence
Highly effective staff and high-quality instructional resources	Product People Process Place Personalized Professional Learning Awareness Community Building	Awareness Systems Thinking	N/A
Distribution of Funding and Resources	Product People Personalized Professional Learning Awareness Community Building	Awareness Community Building	N/A

Problem of Practice Identification Template

District or School Name:

District or School Equity Playbook Team:

Problem of Practice Identified (state in two to three sentences what problem of practice your school/district identified as a focus area for the equity playbook):

Describe what data/information was used to identify this problem of practice:

What will success look like? (Describe what you/your team hope to accomplish by the end of the school year):

Complete at End of School Year:

Describe the actions that supported improving the problem of practice and you/your team's perception of progress:

Glossary of Terms: Competencies

Term	Definition
Assessment, Formative Feedback	Designs and facilitates standards-aligned formative assessments to monitor progress of all learners in academic standards and life-ready skills.
Awareness	Sharpens cultural lens to develop an awareness of identity, personal bias and socio-political positioning to build culturally sustaining relationships and systems for intellectual capacity.
Coaching Culture	Creates and maintains a culture that supports coaching success.
Coaching Process	Coaches apply student data and the evidence-based coaching conversation protocol effectively to systematically facilitate and reflect on growth.
Coaching Role	Coaches utilize the coaching role to enhance educator growth through an educator-centered approach, and coaching the design and facilitation best practices culminating in the Buerk Rubric.
Collaborative Partnerships	Coaches cultivate authentic relationships through a proven onboarding process, proactive systems for scheduling, effective communication systems, and feedback protocols.
Community Building	Values the social, cultural and individual capital of individuals and the community and analyzes norms, values, morals and instructions to disrupt deficit and biased perspectives
Competency Rubric	<p>Conventional definition: based on or in accordance with what is generally done or believed.</p> <p>Collaborative definition: produced or accomplished by two or more parties working together.</p> <p>Synergistic definition: relating to the interdependence of all people and systems to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.</p> <p>Innovative definition: featuring new methods; advanced ideas; original and inventive in thinking.</p>
Cultural Competence	Uses cultural practices and orientations to create a socially and intellectually safe environment for learning that values individualism.
Culture	Coaches contribute to a culture of growth by clearly articulating and encouraging educators to articulate a commitment and passion for the profession, embracing growth mindset, and implementing recognition and support systems that ensure and celebrate growth.

Term	Definition
Culture, Environment, Professional Ethics	Designs and facilitates learning environments and systems for equitable, engaged, collaborative, autonomous learning.
Differentiation, Scaffolding	Designs and facilitates opportunities for individualized learning.
Digital Fluency	Coaches utilize the eSuite coaching platform in order to interact, communicate, model and share exact-right digital tools with fluency in the digital and virtual space.
People	Creates coaching opportunities and systems for consistent and timely critique to increase fidelity.
Personalized Professional Learning	Provides the tools for autonomous and collaborative professional learning.
Place	Nurture the culture of a learning organization by encouraging growth mindset, modeling the ideal learning experience and seeking feedback.
Process	Develop and implement an integrated system for recognition to support fidelity and sustainability of the ideal learner experience.
Product	Create systems to support standards-aligned, engaging design products and implementation of the ideal learner experience to increase fidelity.
Professional Learning Expertise	Coaches establish and enhance a knowledge of subjects and standards, special populations, culturally-relevant pedagogy, adult learning characteristic, and motivation theories to apply in coaching and training.
Project Launch	Engages in planning logistics to effectively develop all aspects of the project components.
Purpose	Demonstrate a personal purpose for and commitment to achieve equity in the learner experience.
Small Group Instruction	Designs and facilitates effective, differentiated small group instruction workshops personalized to individual learner needs.
Standards Alignment	Designs and facilitates units, resources, activities and assessments that are aligned to conceptually, clustered standards and are relevant to learners.
Systems Thinking	Coaches gain understanding of systems thinking to coach in context, design solutions with empathy from the educators' viewpoint, problem-solve collaboratively, and ideate personalized resources.

Coaching Rubric Descriptors

Conventional Culture

- Definition: Based on or in accordance with what is generally done or believed
- Application: Learning environment and systems are in alignment with conventions that have been successful in the past

Collaborative Culture

- Definition: Produced or accomplished by two or more parties working together
- Application: Learning environment is enhanced by and includes two or more parties working together within systems that support a collaborative learning environment

Synergistic Culture

- Definition: Relation to the interdependence of all people and systems to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects
- Application: Learning environment and systems create a truly differentiated learning experience that fosters both collaboration and autonomy and include consistent opportunities to master standards and growth in Life Ready Skills

Innovative Culture

- Definition: Featuring new methods; advanced ideas; original and inventive in thinking
- Application: Learning environment and systems feature learners as the center of the learning experience with students co-designing new experiences, methods, or ideas resulting in inventive thinking, standards mastery and sustainable Life Ready Skills

eGrove Coaching Overview

e-Grove	Descriptor
e-evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every eGrove Coaching Conversation starts and ends with evidence! • This evidence shows that the coachee is growing and completing their next steps.
G-Goal Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal for each coaching conversation will be on a competency from the Kentucky School Leadership Rubric • During this part of the coaching conversation, the coachee chooses his or her competency of growth from a sequenced timeline of professional learning competency
r- Reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coachee reflects on the rubric to determine the current reality
o- Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach/coachee collaborative effort in brainstorming and sharing strategies, ideas, resources etc.
w- Will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coachee considers brainstormed options and commit to those they want to try between now and the next conversation
e-evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach/coachee collaboratively determine evidence the coachee will bring to show progress and impact

Equity Playbook Logic Model

Inputs	Outputs/ Activities	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E2I coaches ● Regional Coordinators ● KDE staff ● eGrove Platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E2I Trainings ● 1-1 Coaching Sessions (e2I coach: school leader) ● 1-1 Coaching Session (school leader: teacher) ● Resources and Trainings from KDE and Regional Cooperative (RC) staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance to coaching sessions ● Positive relationship between coach/coachee ● Utilization of eGrove ● Utilization of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved cultural competencies with participants ● Improved culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogy ● Improved stakeholder perceptions such as student/family sense of belonging (begin with students/families traditionally at the margins) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improvements across the equity pillars for participating districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● achievement, ● disproportionality in behavior, ● culture/climate, ● instruction, and ● utilization of resources.

Theory of Change

IF	THEN
If the e2I coaches train the regional DEIB coordinators and KDE DEIB staff on the e2I eGrove platform...	then staff will understand how to log attendance in the coaching sessions accurately and with fidelity.
If the e2I coaches, in conjunction with KDE and the regional DEIB coordinators, train district and school leaders on the equity playbook...	then participants will understand how to utilize the resources and training materials, including the eGrove platform to support their problem of practice.
If coaching session schedules are followed and attendance is consistent...	then participants will increase their cultural competencies and have the potential to reach their goals of their problem of practice.
If participants allocate time to develop their problem of practice and use stakeholder input to develop their strategies...	then stakeholders will report higher levels of satisfaction and sense of belonging.
If cultural competencies increase and stakeholders report positive perceptions towards the school/district...	then the problem of practice identified will show improvements.