



# Kentucky United We Learn Regional Town Halls

The Future of Assessment and Accountability  
in Kentucky

January 2025





*Kentucky*  
UNITED WE LEARN  
**C O U N C I L**

# Welcome

Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

 Kentucky Department of  
**E D U C A T I O N**



**“To build a prosperous Kentucky, we will launch an accountability system that is meaningful and useful to all learners.”**

# Three “BIG” Ideas

- Vibrant Learning
- Accelerating Innovation (in Accountability)
- Collaboration with LOCAL Communities (and with other school districts)

# The Flight Path

## Where have we been?

- **2021**
  - Listening Tour
  - Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education (KCAE)
  - Local Laboratories of Learning (L3)
- **2022 -2023**
  - Kentucky United We Learn Council
  - Accountability Focus
- **2024**
  - 4 Prototypes
  - 2 Model Frameworks with an Ongoing Study Phase for Input

## Where are we going?

- **2025**
  - Town Halls
  - Finalized Model Framework
- **2026**
  - Recommendation to the General Assembly

# Accountability : Two Parts of the Whole

## Federal/State

- Streamlining to fill the required “buckets”
- Identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools
- Providing timely instructional data

## Local

- Allowing flexibility to assess learning
- Customizing to meet community needs
- Collaborating with multiple groups

# Regional Town Hall Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- What is Vibrant Learning?
- What is Local Accountability?
  - One School District's Story
- Model Framework 2.0
- Question and Answer Session

# What is Vibrant Learning?

Kristal Doolin,  
Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)  
Representative

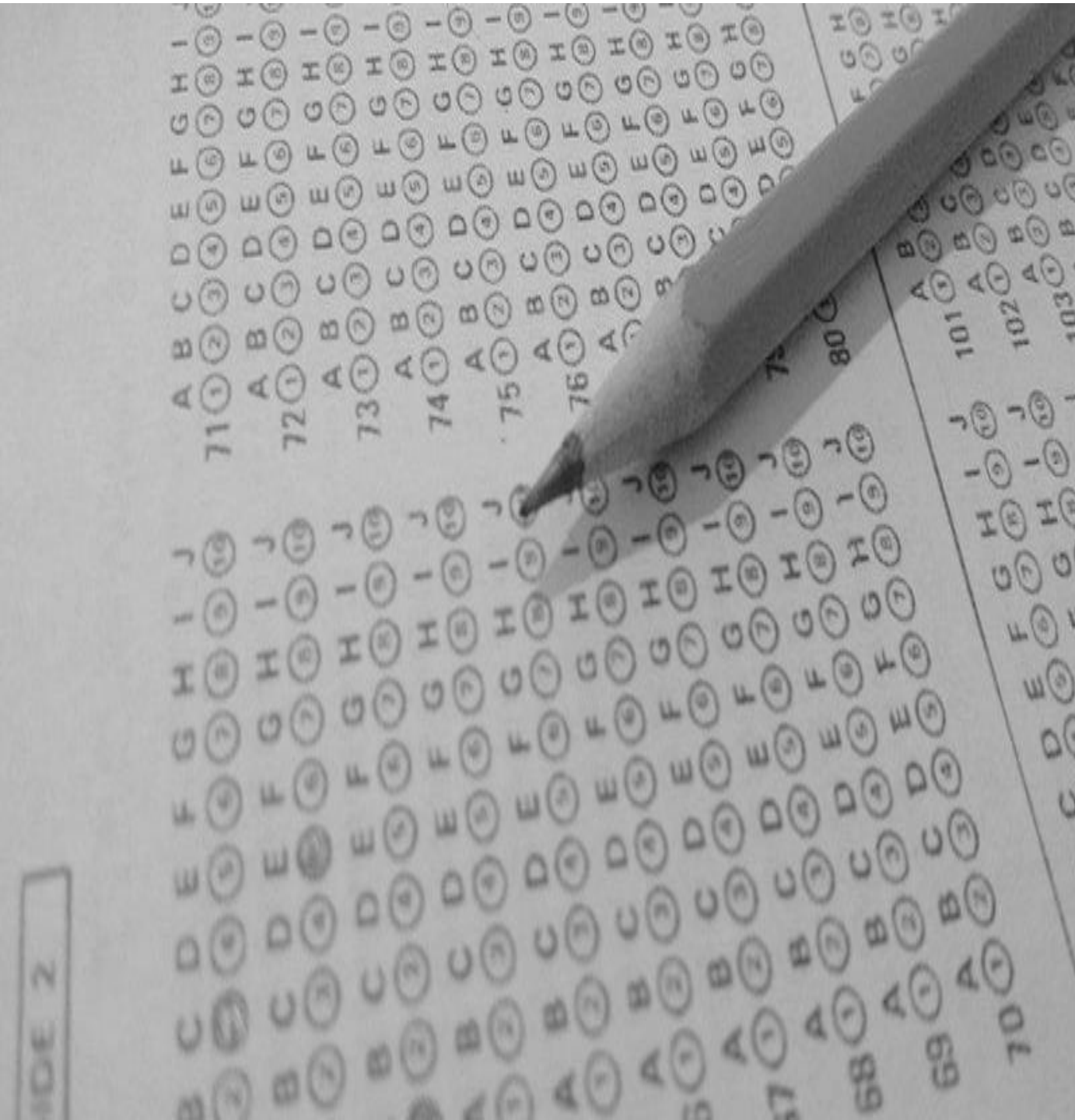


# Think about a student in your life.....

Pull up a photo on your phone of a child/youth you love. As you think about this child, ask yourself:

- What kind of learner are they?
- What kind of learning experiences do you want for them?

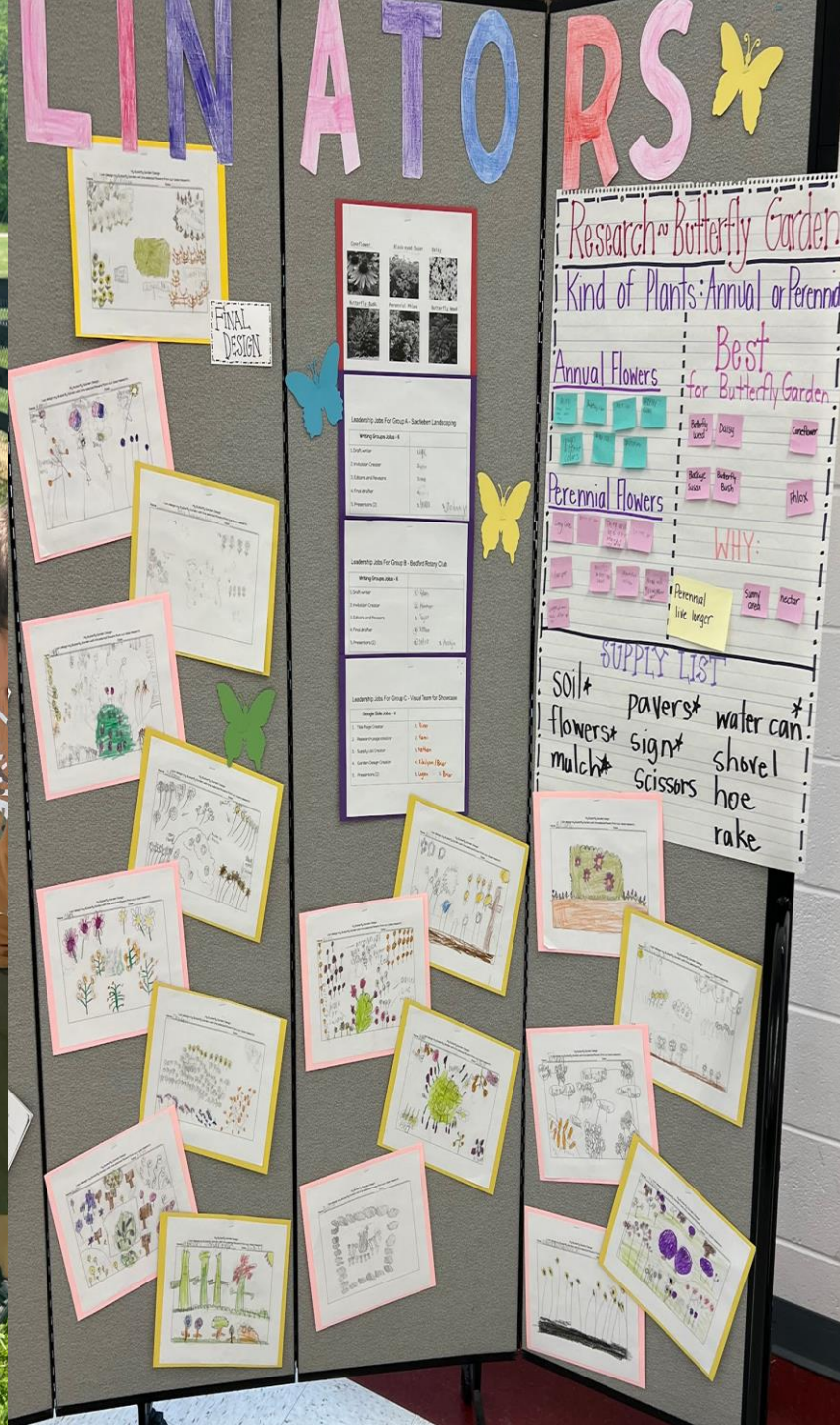




# Pollinator - Traditional

In a traditional classroom students read a textbook chapter about pollinators and complete a worksheet identifying the dangers pollinators face and their importance to plants and animals.

Students draw a diagram of a pollinator and label its parts. For assessment, learners take a quiz that includes multiple-choice questions about pollinators.



# Pollinator - Vibrant

However, in this example from the commonwealth, learners are driven by the question, “How can we inspire others to protect and support pollinators?” They research pollinators and apply their knowledge to design a pollinator garden, collaborating with local businesses for materials and expertise. They share their learning with the community through visual aids, such as scientific drawings or slides, and by creating items like seed packets or bracelets to inspire action

# Human Body Systems

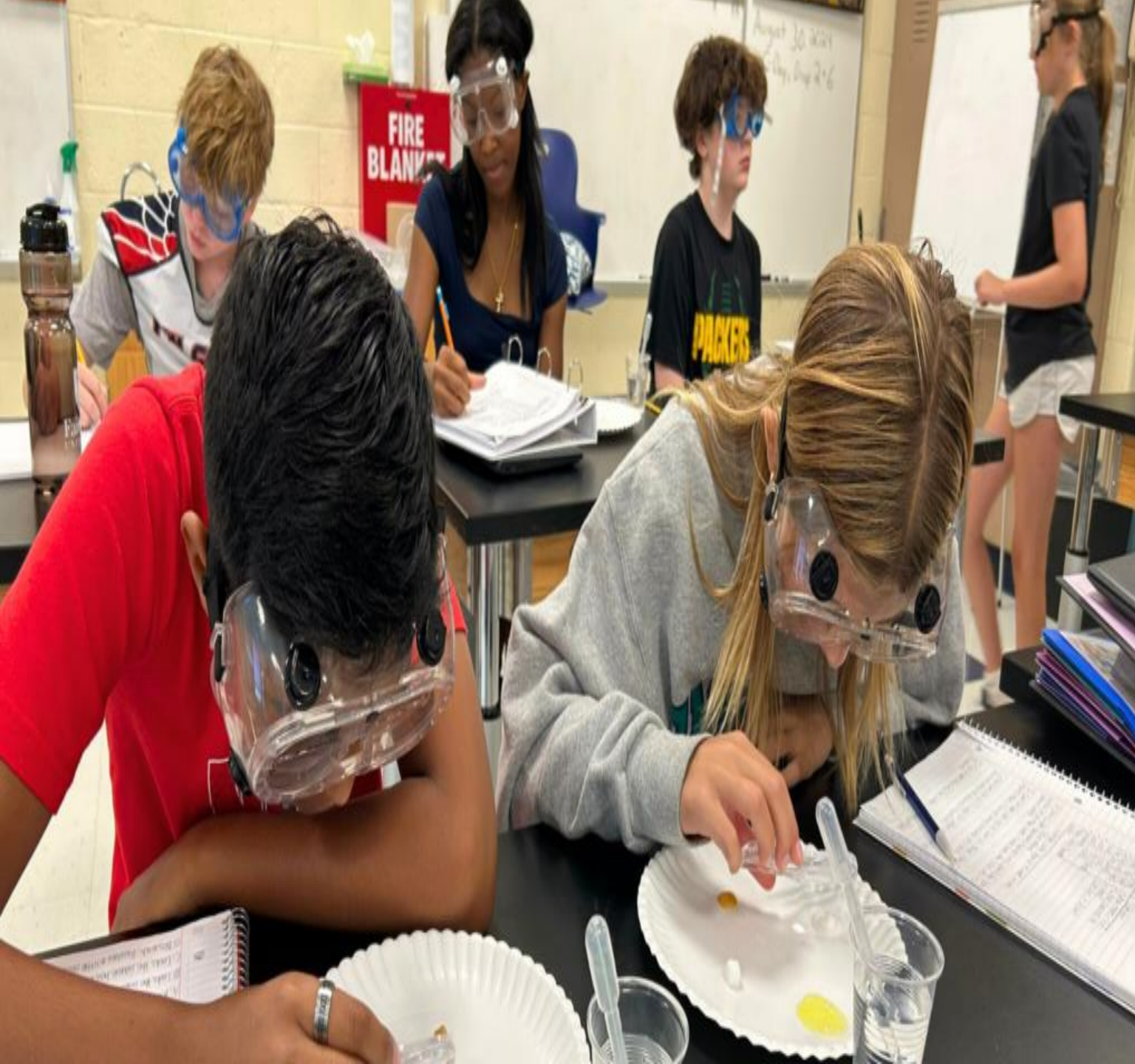
NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

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## Human Body Systems Traditional

Traditionally, students learn about body systems by reading assigned textbook chapters on the major body systems (e.g., circulatory, digestive, respiratory) and taking notes on the key organs, structures, and functions. They will complete a worksheet with labeled diagrams, key term definitions, and questions about how each system works and interacts with others. After reviewing the material, students summarize their understanding through a short-written report or presentation.



# Human Body Systems Vibrant

In this example from the Commonwealth, Learners take on the role of a medical investigator to solve a real case of a sick middle school girl to answer the question, “What is going on in M’Kenna’s body that is making her feel the way she does?” Through a series of investigations learners curate evidence that will inform their final presentation of learning. In their medical teams, learners choose how they will present their findings and diagnosis to a panel of community members from the medical field.



# To Kill a Mockingbird Traditional

I bet we have all read the novel To Kill a Mockingbird and write an essay defending their position on whether or not the character Atticus is a hero using evidence from the text.



Kentucky Department of  
**EDUCATION**



## To Kill a Mockingbird Vibrant

In this example from the Commonwealth, Learners consider “What makes someone a hero?” They explore this question through the lens of the Jim Crow South using a curation of teacher and learner chosen fiction and informational texts about the time period. Collaboratively, students create a video for the schools’ Activism Week sharing their shared definition of a hero supported by fictional and real examples from the Jim Crow South. Their video also provides actions their fellow students can take to stand up to injustice in their own world today based on what they learned from the past.

## **Vibrant Learning Experiences** - *As defined by the Kentucky United We Learn Council*

### ***“Learning that matters to students”***

In partnership with families and communities, students are agents of their own learning, engaged in **relevant, authentic and joyful learning** opportunities. Vibrant learning **honors students' cultural wealth, gifts and interests**. Vibrant learning culminates in the application of knowledge and skills demonstrated through **personalized products**.



# Student Reflection on Vibrant Learning

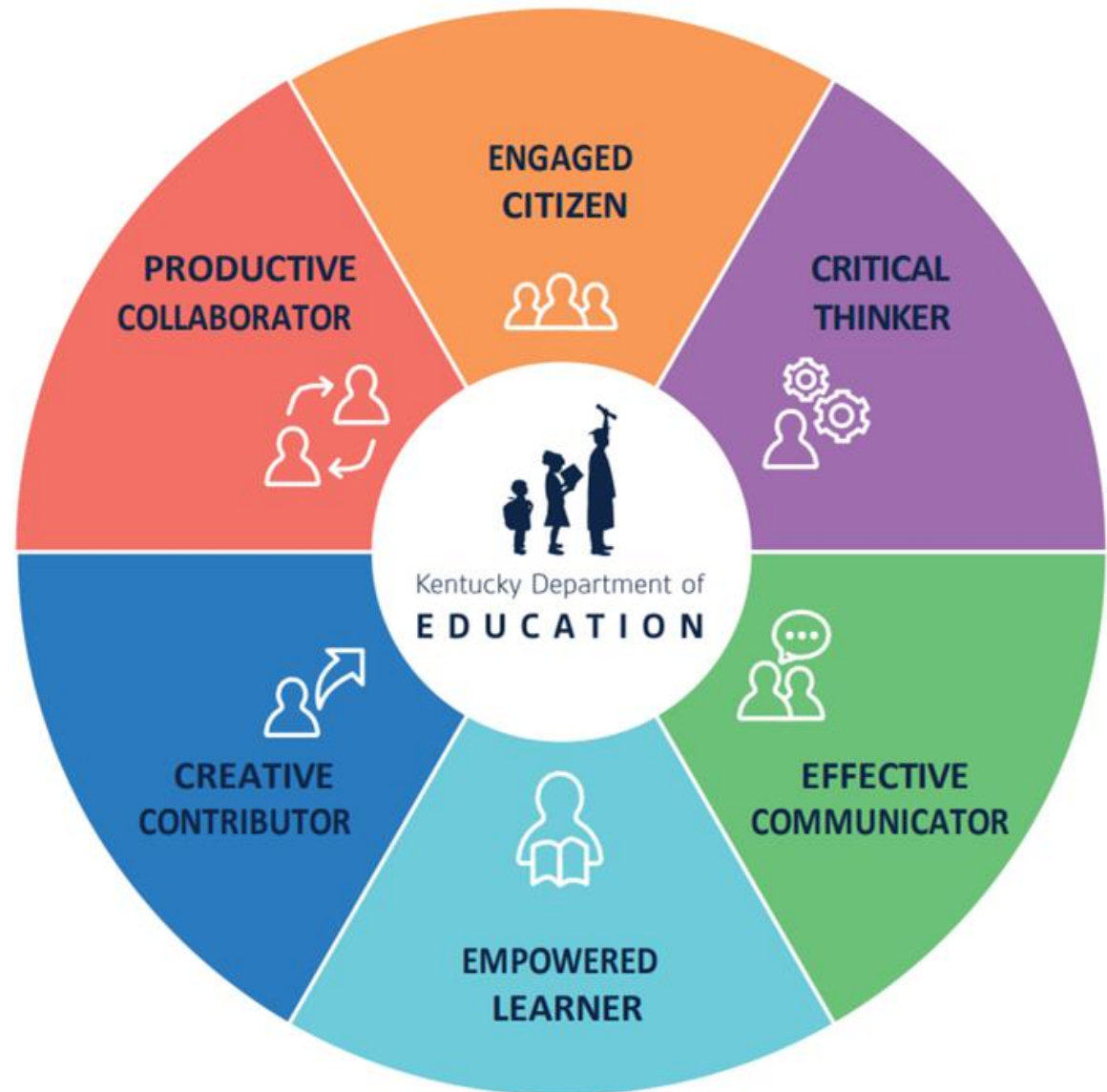
“I like to build things. I like to experiment with things and see how it works in real life. When I first heard about our [dream house project], I was like “yes!” I’ve always loved math, but I didn’t understand how [building a house] would become math. I’m an art person. I like to make it creative, not just write something down on a piece of paper and be done with it. This [project] helped me because I could learn math by converting everything and still get to do it my own way.”

- *Spencer County Middle School Student*



# Kentucky Portrait of a Learner

- The knowledge, skills, and competencies students should know and exhibit upon graduation
- Combines academic knowledge with personal traits and skills
- Honors a wider set of student passions and experiences



# 140+



# Speaker Notes on Previous Slide


Currently, over 140 out of the 171 Kentucky districts are developing or have developed a Portrait of a Learner.

Many districts are creating Performance Assessment systems to measure the agreed-upon competencies through authentic experiences and exhibitions of learning.



**“To build a prosperous Kentucky, we will launch an accountability system that is meaningful and useful to all learners.”**

# What is Local Accountability?



“Local accountability is a system designed **by the people** it serves, **for the people** it serves.

When implemented effectively, it is not only impactful but **transformative, reshaping the learning process.**

Furthermore, it **restores and strengthens the bonds and partnerships between school districts and their communities**, prioritizing student-centered, authentic, **joyful, and personalized learning.”**

- Brian Creasman, Superintendent  
*Fleming County Schools*



# Local Accountability in Action:

Denise Isaac and Amy Newsome  
*Floyd County Schools*



# District Introduction/Background

## Needs

- Strengthen Partnerships with local businesses to create more opportunities for students
  - Internships - current focus

## What brought your district to local accountability?

- Became L3 Members
- Need for More Personalized Learning and Assessment
- Desire for Greater Transparency
- Focus on Preparing Students for Local Careers

## Core Need Being Addressed

- Our district is addressing the need to create a more personalized, transparent, and community-aligned education system that prepares all students for success.

\*The attachments on this slide were not created by KDE



## Our Commitment

We believe that what gets measured gets improved. This dashboard is not just a reflection of where we are today—it's a tool to drive conversations, inform decisions, and spark innovation. It represents

**\*This website is a work in progress and has not been released to the public. It is currently under development and subject to review by our L3 Committee. Content and features may change before the final release. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we work to finalize this resource. \***

# Community Engagement

## L3 Committee (Local Laboratories of Learning)

- Formed a diverse committee of educators, families and community members to collaborate on innovative approaches to accountability and assessment.
- Regularly meet to discuss progress, share feedback and refine goals based on community priorities.

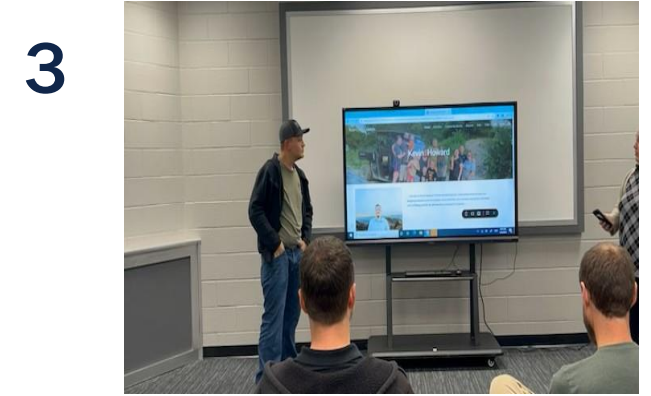
## Partnerships with Local Businesses and Industries

- Worked with local employers to identify workforce needs and incorporate them into our Portrait of a Graduate and curriculum planning.
- Invited industry leaders to participate in mentorship programs, career fairs and school events, and monthly L3 meetings to connect students with real-world opportunities.
- Recently awarded partnership with Rural Up for paid internships/apprenticeships



# District Prototype/Efforts Examples

## Portrait of a Graduate Guidance Document



\*The attachments on this slide were not created by KDE

# District Prototype/Efforts Examples Continued

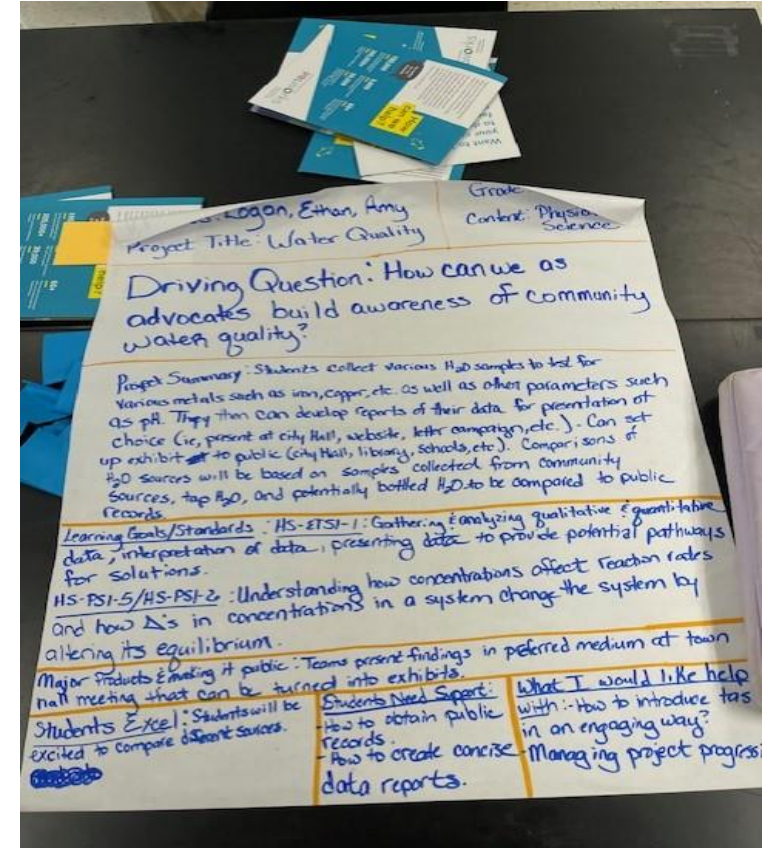
7



8



9



10



11



12



# Speaker Notes on **District Prototype/Efforts Examples Slides**

- Introduce the prototype as a tangible representation of the district's vision for personalized and community-aligned education.
- Point out that the photos showcase students actively engaged in vibrant and meaningful learning experiences.

## **Supporting Resources**

- Highlight the resources linked on the slide, including the Portrait of a Graduate (POG) guidance document, the primary workbook, and trading cards.
- Explain how these tools support teachers and students in aligning their learning with the district's priorities.

Photo Descriptions: 1) How our Portrait of a Graduate connects with the State's Portrait of a Graduate 2) Pre-school Career Fair 3) Student giving his defense of learning 4&5) Pre-school Career Fair 6) Students designing and coding robotic hand 7) Students performing a dissection 8) Student learning how to weave as part of Drawing on Kinship Project 9) Teachers participated in PBL works workshop and this is an example of one of the PBLs they created 10) Student defending his learning 11) The ambulance that sits in the classroom of the EMT class 12) Floyd County Steam Bus

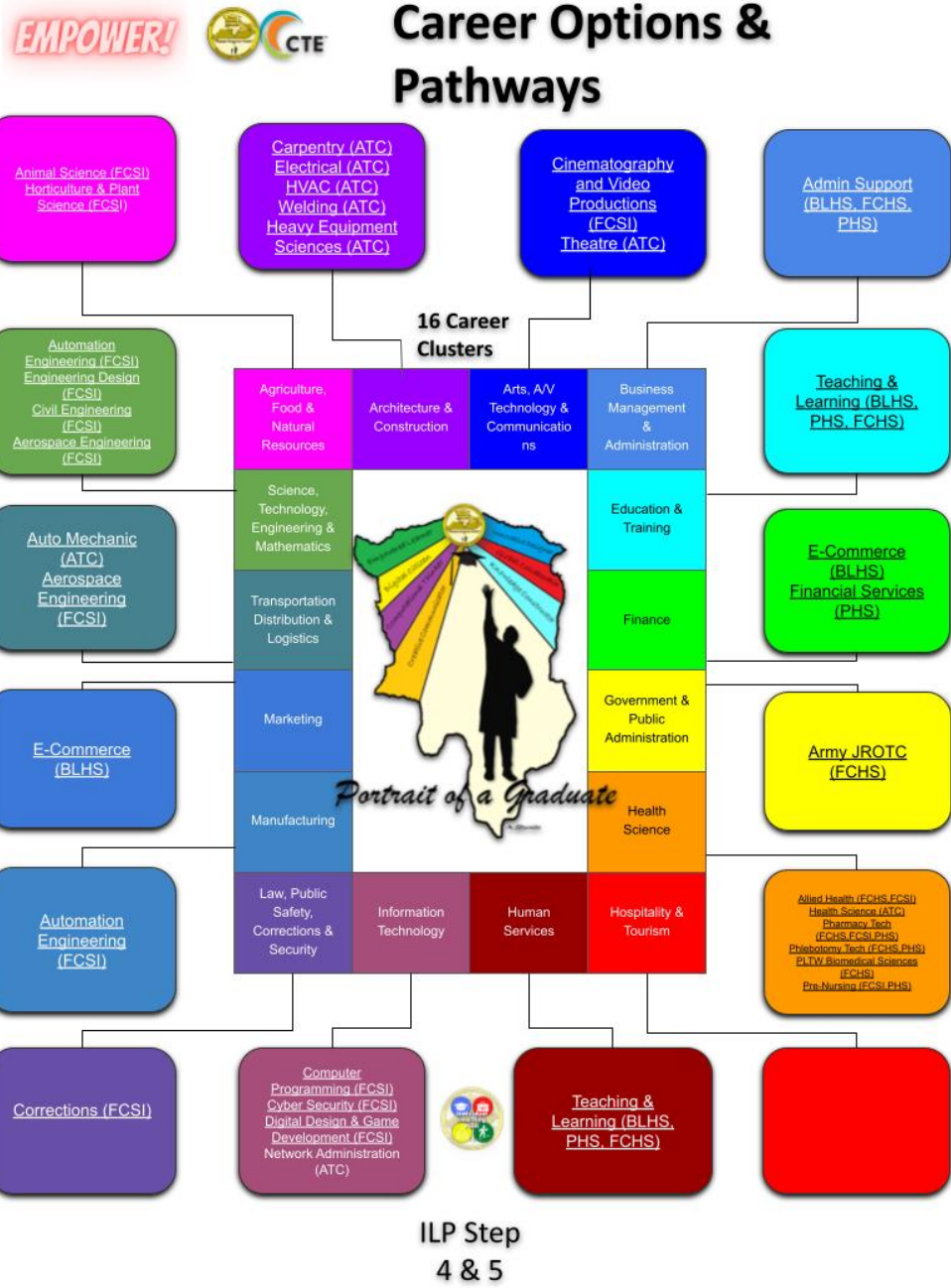
# District Prototype/Efforts

- [Career Connections](#)
- [Individual Learning Plan Site](#)
- [Portfolio Example](#)
- [Video of Defense](#)
- [Lesson Planning Tool](#)



Welcome to our High-Quality Instruction Lesson Creation Center. This tool has been created to allow you more time to focus on your lesson design and execution while making connections to our district initiatives such as Portrait of a Graduate Competencies, Digital Portfolio Evidence, Career and Technical Education, and Workplace Ethics. To begin, click your content area below to start creating.

English / Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies
CTE	Visual & Performing Arts	Health & Physical Ed	Technology



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# Next Steps & Transformation



## Our Commitment

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### Tailored Approach to Development

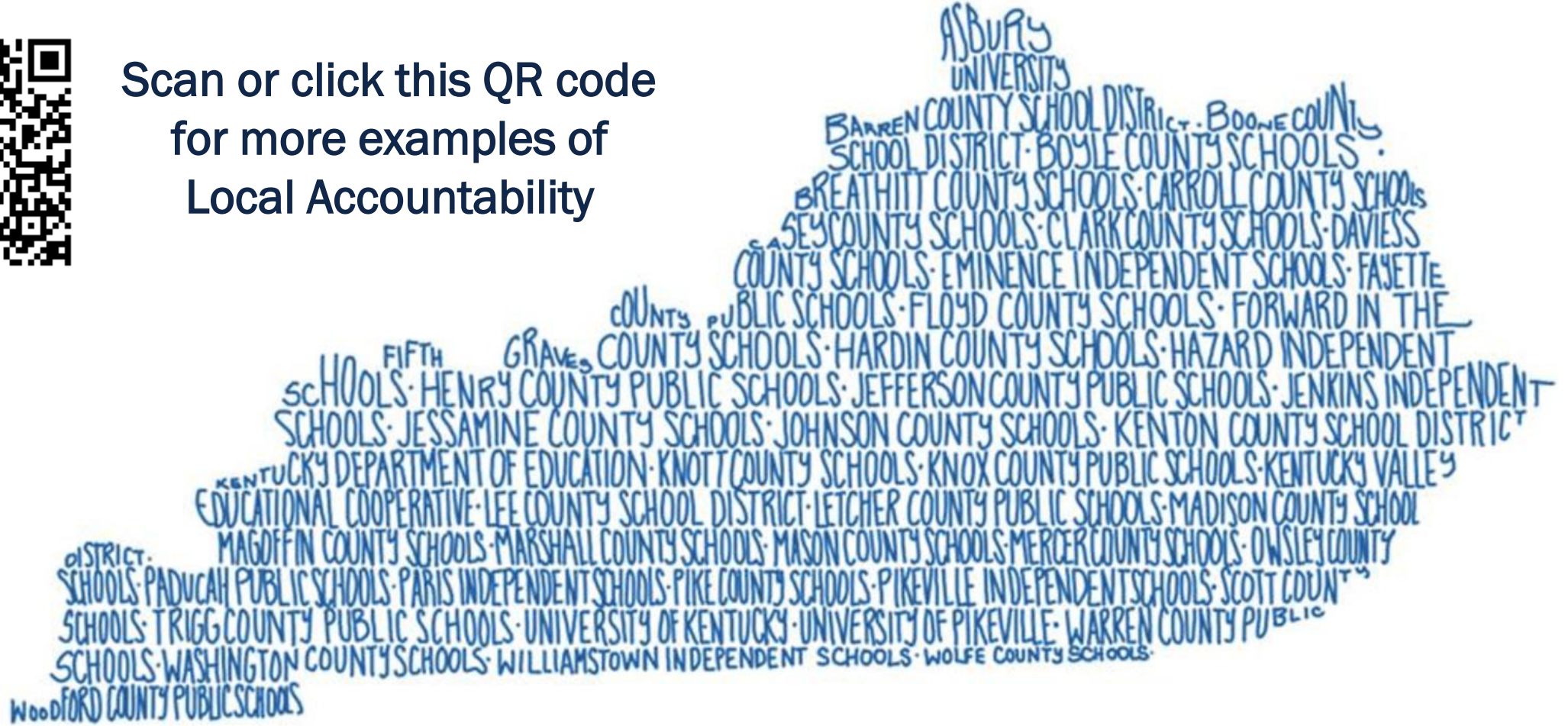
- At the elementary and middle school levels, we've adapted the Portrait of a Graduate to ensure students are introduced to the key competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and engaging.
- Micro-credential Badging

# Questions





Scan or click this QR code  
for more examples of  
Local Accountability



**We find ourselves in the**  
**midst of a movement.**



**“To build a prosperous Kentucky, we will launch an accountability system that is meaningful and useful to all learners.”**

# Framework 2.0 Overview

Jennifer Stafford, KDE

## In the past, systems prioritized...

### Standardization

- Standardized tests for all subjects
- Instruction developed around testing offers little variance

### Comparison

- Limited collaboration across districts or within communities
- Schools rated using the color system

### State Control

- The state decides all measures used for accountability
- The same state accountability system for all schools

### Compliance

- Accountability system designed to “meet requirements” in state and federal law
- Local improvement efforts align to requirements

## Going forward, systems will support more...

### Vibrant Learning

- Students have agency to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a variety of ways
- State tests meet students where they are



### Collaboration

- Districts collaborate in partnership with communities
- The state supports networks of peer districts
- No more color ratings



### Local Innovation

- Districts engage with communities to design custom accountability systems reflecting local values
- Some state requirements allow local choice



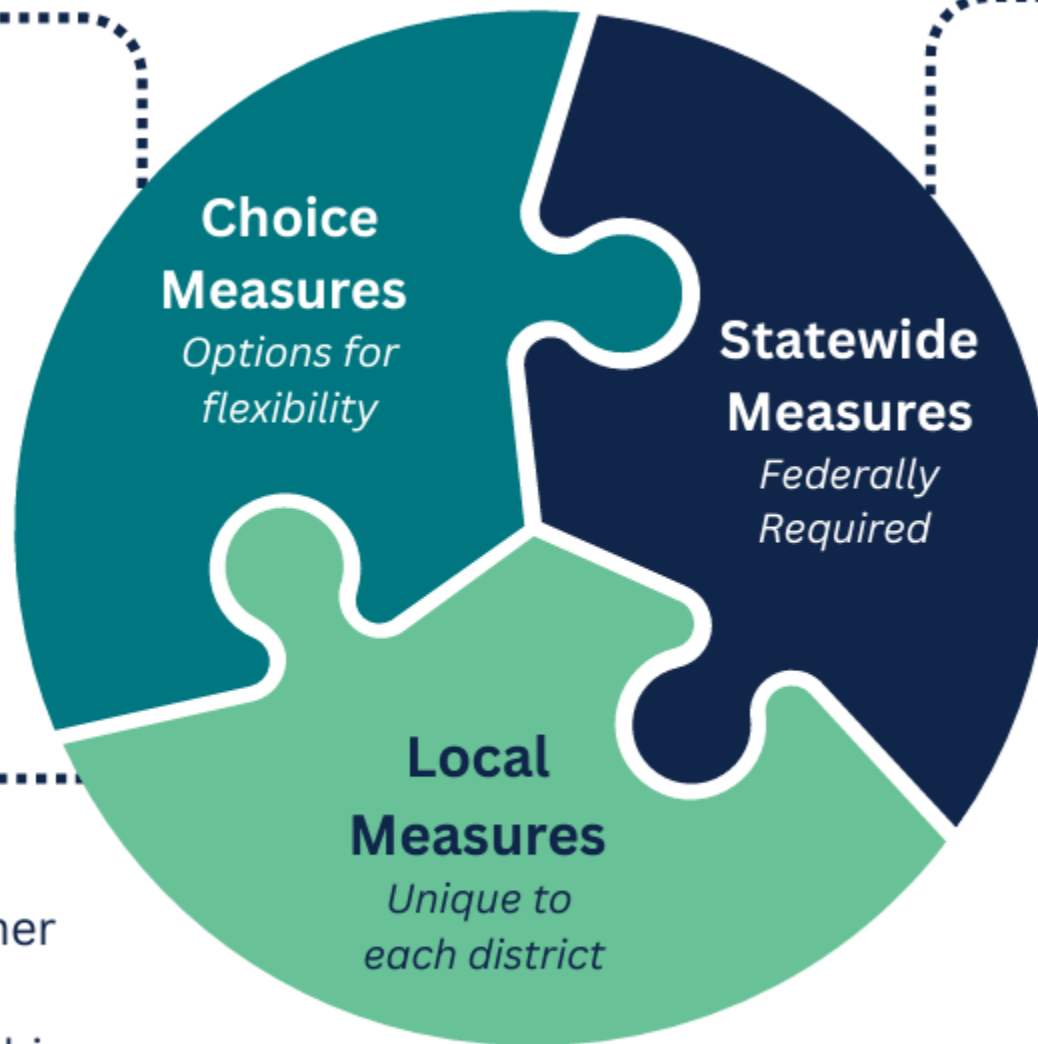
### Feedback and Support

- All schools receive peer and expert external feedback to support improvement
- Local flexibility and data lead to customized support



- Social Studies & Writing
- Vibrant Learning Experiences
- Interim Assessments

- Portrait of a Learner
- Engagement
- Culture & Leadership



- Reading and Math
- Individual Student Growth
- Transition Readiness & Graduation Rate
- English Language Progress
- Climate and Safety Survey
- *Science Assessment -*

*Students must be tested in science using a common statewide measure. However, districts may choose to include it in local accountability and add additional competency based measures.*



**Scan or click for more details.**

*Districts will design and implement local accountability systems - with state and peer support - on a timeline that sets everyone up for success.*

**1**

### Pilot Phase

Continue with a representative pilot group of districts to design and implement local accountability systems. This phase focuses on testing key components, gathering feedback, identifying challenges, and refining processes.

**2**

### Expansion Phase

Expand local accountability systems to more districts, applying lessons from the pilot. State invests in high-quality professional learning systems and strong communities of practice for local system design and stakeholder engagement.

**3**

### Sustainability Phase

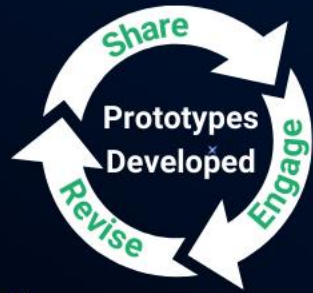
Local accountability systems are scaled across the state with active networks for shared learning, system review, and continuous improvement.

# KENTUCKY UNITED WE LEARN COUNCIL'S: JOURNEY TO THE MOON

“To build a prosperous Kentucky, we will launch an accountability system that is meaningful and useful to all our learners.”

Goal:  
Approved Reimagined  
Accountability System

SUMMER 2026



SUMMER 2024

Legislative Awareness

SUMMER 2024



FALL 2024

Council Recommends  
Accountability  
Model to  
\*KDE

FALL 2024

Council and  
\*KDE  
Recommend  
Model to  
\*\*KBE

WINTER 2024

Engage  
General  
Assembly

SPRING 2025



SUMMER 2025



Kentucky  
UNITED WE LEARN  
COUNCIL

\*KDE - Kentucky Department of Education  
\*\*KBE - Kentucky Board of Education



# Question and Answer Session

Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education  
Jennifer Stafford, KDE





# Reminder:

## Think about a student in your life.....

Pull up a photo on your phone of a child/youth you love. As you think about this child, ask yourself:

- What kind of learner are they?
- What kind of learning experiences do you want for them?



# Thank You!



Scan or click this QR code to submit any additional questions or comments.

You can also hand your question card to any KDE representative.

