



# 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?

Sarah Snipes,  
Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

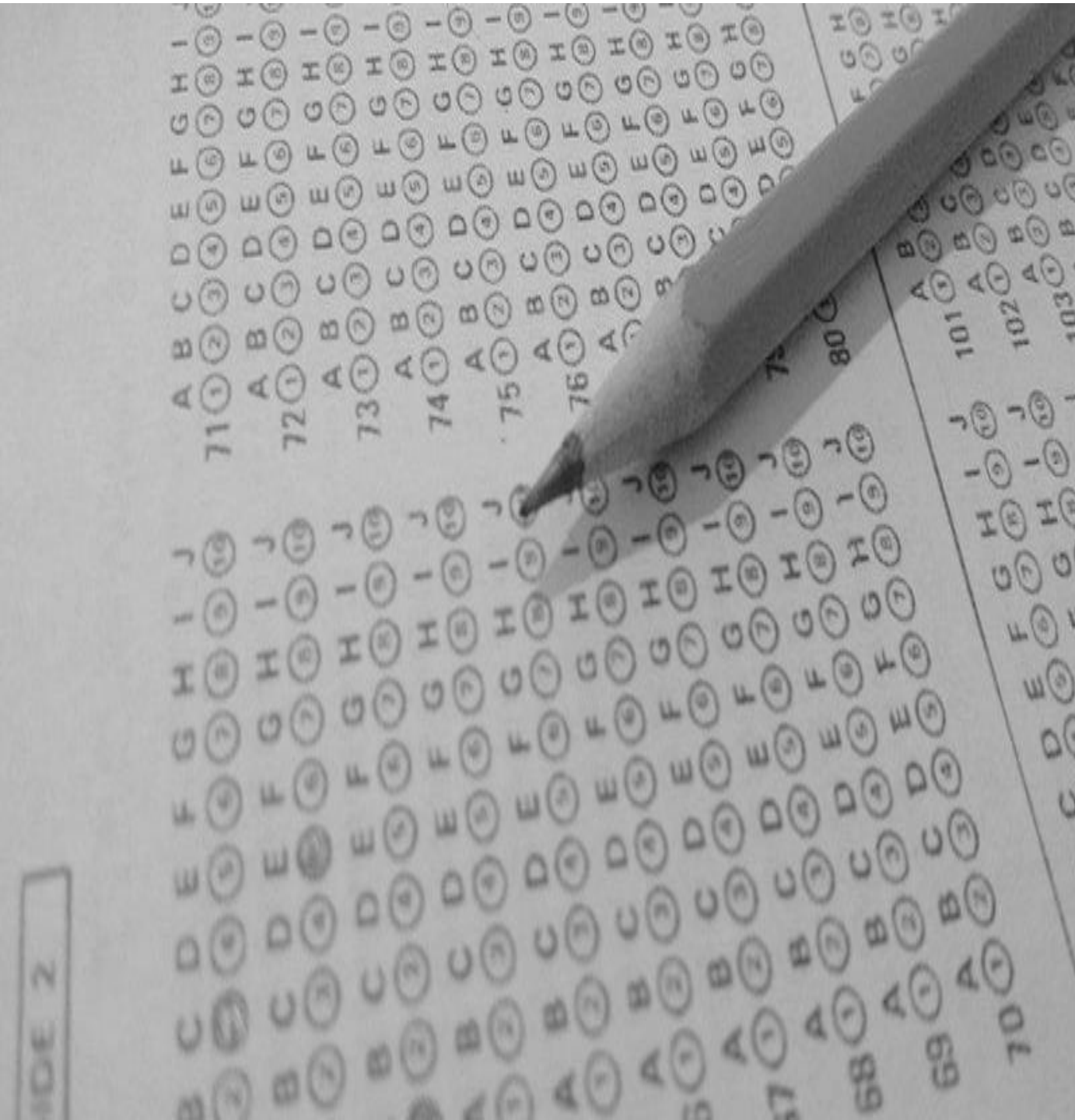


# Think about a student in your life.....

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?

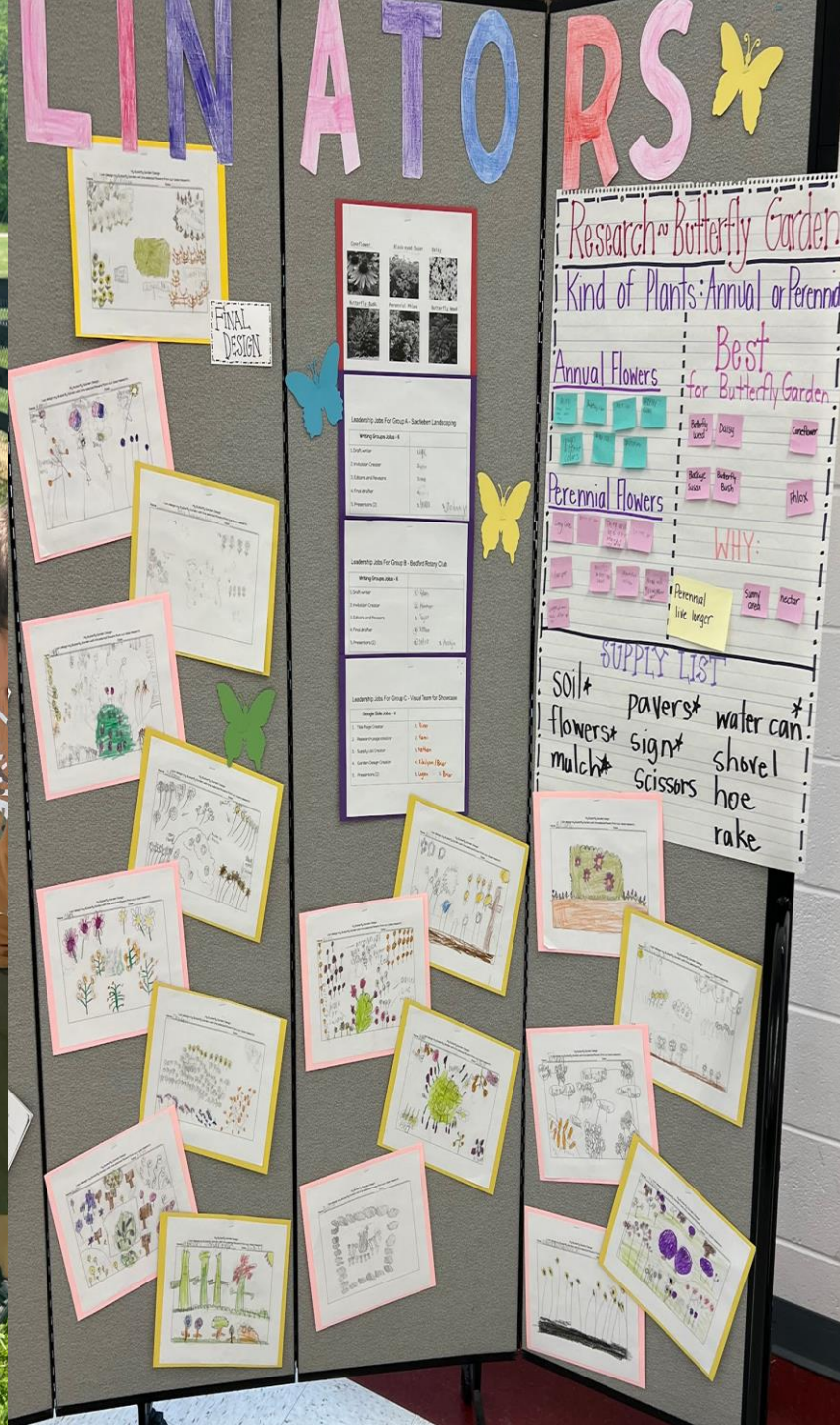




# Pollinator - Traditional

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

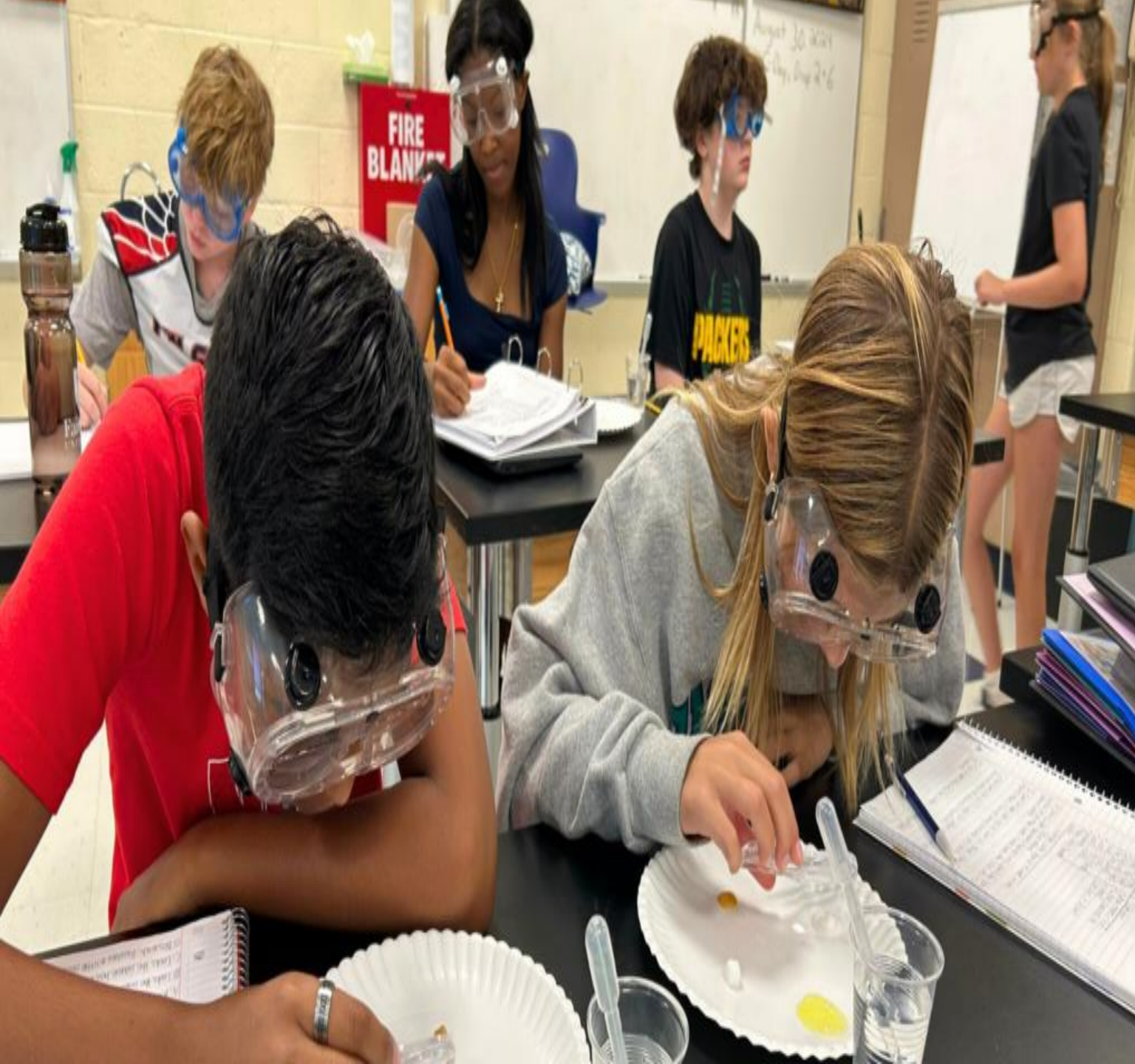
NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

bookd.msscience.com



## 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

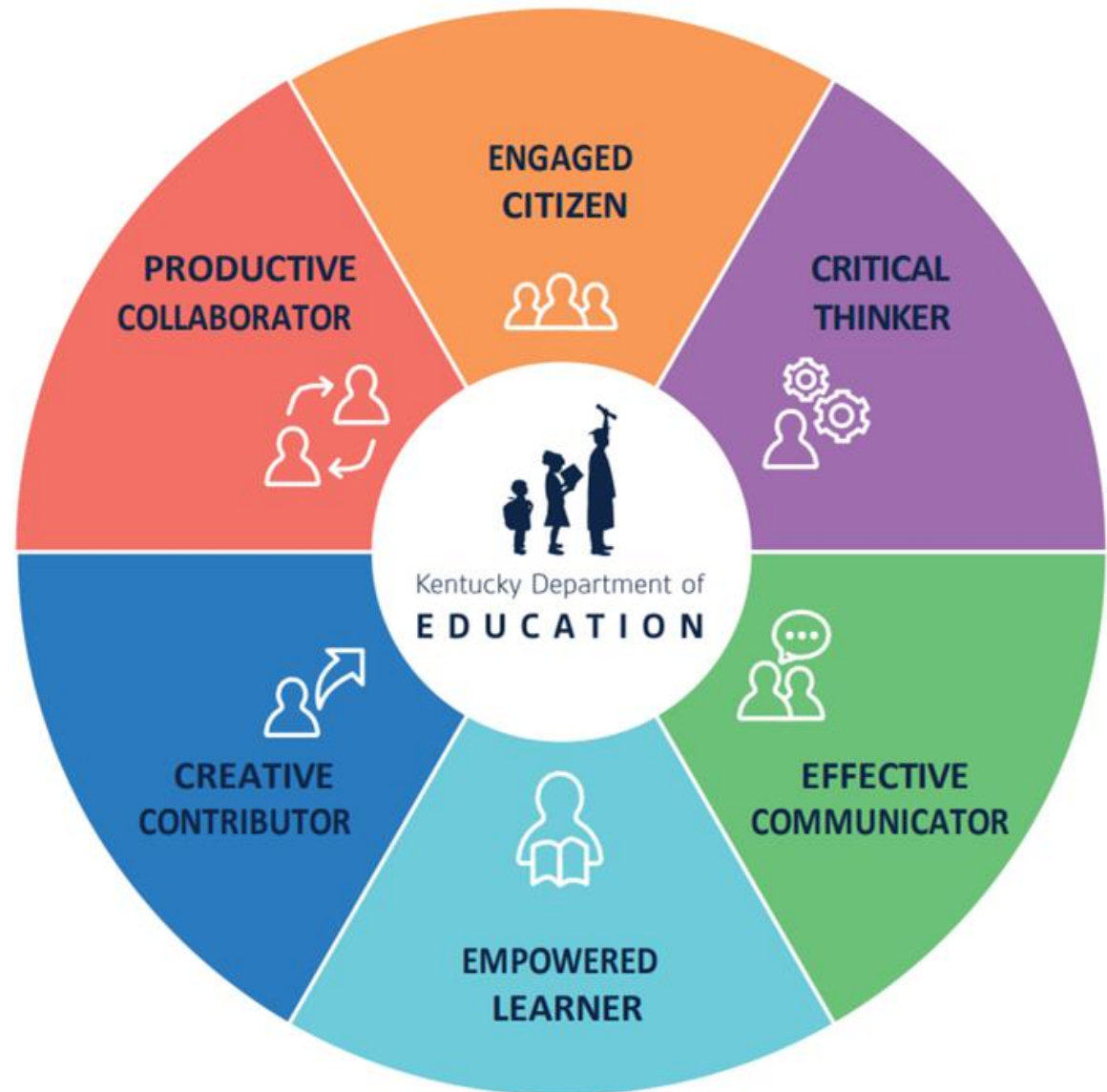
“I like to build things. I like to experiment with things and see how it works in real life. When I first heard about our [dream house project], I was like “yes!” I’ve always loved math, but I didn’t understand how [building a house] would become math. I’m an art person. I like to make it creative, not 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.

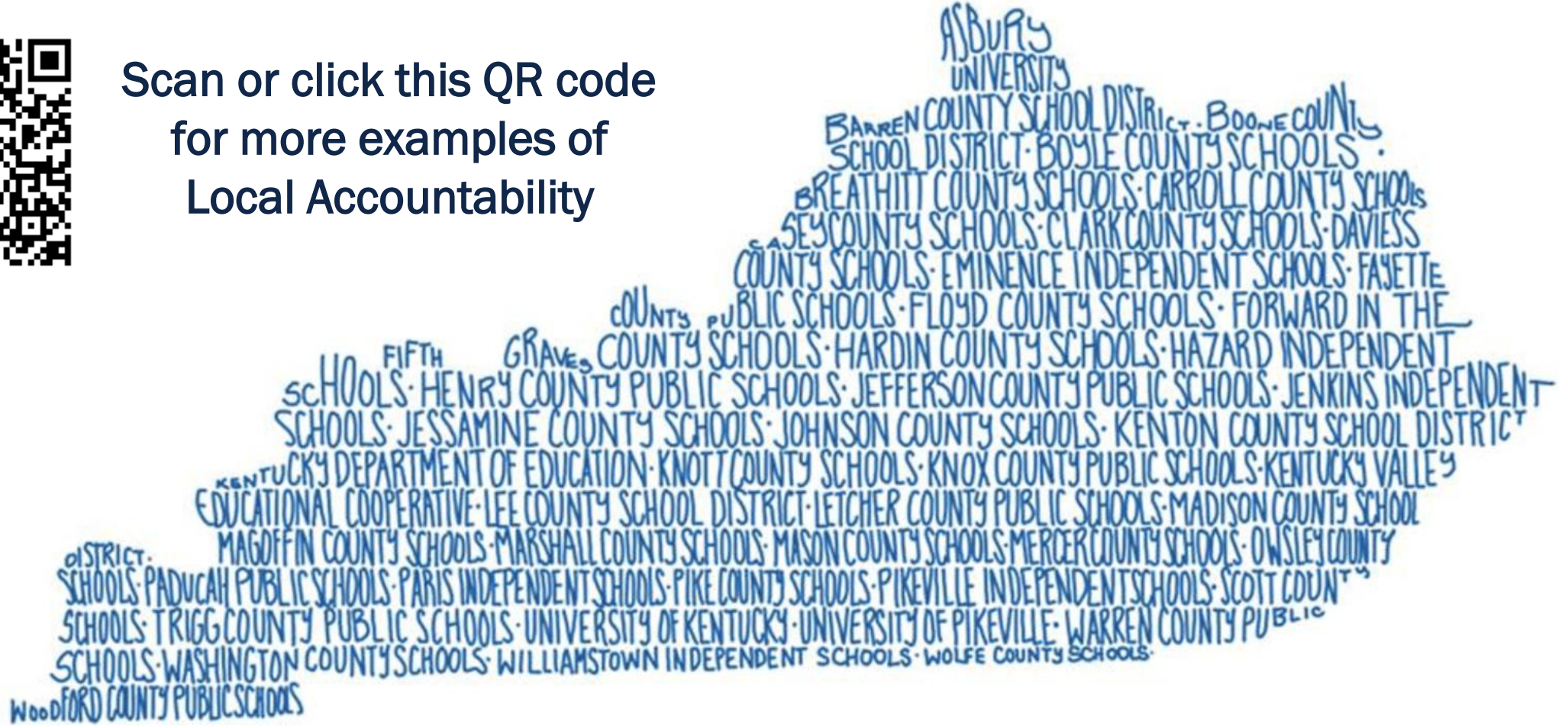
When implemented effectively, it is not only impactful but **transformative, reshaping the learning process.**

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*



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



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





## Local Accountability in Action:

Jesse Bacon, Superintendent

Adrienne Usher, Assistant Superintendent

Brandy Howard, Chief Academic Officer



# Bullitt County Public Schools

13,000 students  
2,300 employees  
7th largest district

2 million square feet of  
facilities  
10 construction projects



300 square miles  
87 bus routes  
7,750 miles per day  
traveled  
Transport 8,500 daily

13 Elementary  
6 Middle  
3 High  
5 Specialized Programs

The idea of local accountability started in  
2018 through the adoption of our Board  
Aspiration Statements, Core Values and  
BCPS Graduate Profile

# COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS WAS OUR MAIN FOCUS



TRENDS INDICATED  
STUDENTS WERE NOT  
READY FOR LIFE AFTER

K-12



CREATED OUR  
GRADUATE  
PROFILE  
AND FINALIZING  
IT AS PART OF OUR  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN



SUCCESS!

## Call to Action in 2016

- What are we missing?
- What is not working?
- What is working?

## Shifting our Focus

- LIFE Readiness
- Students and schools are more than just a “score”
- Business of Human-Centered Development
- Creating the shift with our community
- Allocation of resources for transformational change

# BCPS Guiding Documents

## Bullitt County Public Schools Graduate Profile

**Effective Communicator**  
Engage others with listening, language, and persuasion. Communicate leading or follow-up messages according to the context, purpose, and needs of the audience. Communicate effectively in verbal, written, and digital forms.

**Innovative Problem Solver**  
Analyze and propose solutions to a variety of complex, real-world problems. Apply creative thinking and problem-solving skills to develop new solutions. Identify and propose solutions to complex, real-world problems.

**Productive Collaborator**  
Work with others to share ideas, resources, and information. Collaborate to solve problems and complete tasks. Support and encourage others to achieve their goals.

**Self-Directed Navigator**  
Identify goals and manage time effectively. Monitor progress and adjust plans as needed. Seek and accept feedback to improve performance. Set and achieve personal goals.

**Community Contributor**  
Engage in service and leadership activities. Demonstrate respect for diverse cultures and perspectives. Participate in community and social activities. Advocate for the well-being of the community.

**Mastery Learner**  
Master using the different modes of skills. Demonstrate understanding and application of knowledge and skills. Apply learning to solve problems and complete tasks. Demonstrate growth and improvement in learning.

**Our mission is to inspire and equip our students to succeed in life.**

2016-2019

## Bullitt County Board of Education Aspiration Statements

**Assure our graduates are ready to immediately succeed in life.**

**Provide a solid, useful education that is valued by students, parents, educators, staff, community members, and businesses.**

**Achieve Student Success cost effectively**

**Be a national leader in educational innovation and performance.**

**Collaborate with businesses, education providers, and the community to maximize student learning options.**

**Our mission is to inspire and equip our students to succeed in life.**

2018-2019

## BC Bullitt County Public Schools Core Values

MOVING FORWARD *Our mission is to inspire and equip our students to succeed in life.*

**Students Matter Most**  
1. Will it improve student success?

**Shared Accountability**  
1. Will it improve organizational collaboration or student performance?  
2. Is it ethical?  
3. Is it cost-effective?

**Embrace Differences**  
1. Will it help create acceptance and understanding of people of different backgrounds?  
2. Will it contribute to the development of positive relationships?

**Future Focused**  
1. Is it sustainable going forward?  
2. Are there possible unintended impacts?

**Proactive Innovation**  
1. Will it make us exceptional in quality, opportunities, and results?

**Service Before Self**  
1. Will it improve stakeholder satisfaction (students, staff, parents, community)?

2018-2019

## BULLITT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS INSTRUCTIONAL VISION

Our mission is to inspire and equip our students to succeed in life.

**AUTHENTIC LEARNING EXPERIENCES**  
**Academic Standards + Graduate Profile Competencies= Authentic Learning Experiences**  
Students experience a balance of traditional, transitional, AND transformational learning in and outside of the classroom.

**STUDENT VOICE AND AGENCY**  
Empowering students to have a voice in their learning and school community, involving them in decision-making processes, and co-creating opportunities for student-led initiatives and improvements.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**  
Cultivating partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and community members to provide students with connections and opportunities to bridge school to life.

**DEMONSTRATIONS OF LEARNING**  
Students showcase their learning and personal growth through student-led conferences, exhibitions, and defenses of learning.

**AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS**  
Students explore and utilize innovative formative and summative assessment methods which may include project-based assessments, competency-based assessments, student-curated work, or performance-based assessments that reflect authentic applications of knowledge and skills.

2023



## Problem Statement

Current state accountability systems predominantly emphasize standardized test scores, which fail to fully capture the breadth of student success or align with the specific priorities of local communities. This narrow focus limits the ability to address diverse educational needs and overlook essential factors that contribute to holistic student development. There is a critical need for a local accountability model that offers a more comprehensive, transparent and community-driven approach. Such a model would better reflect local values, provide a deeper understanding of student outcomes and support meaningful improvements that ensure life readiness from an early age.



## Purpose and Why

### Moonshot Statement:

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

# Our Journey

- Building Knowledge From Others' Experience and Partner Expertise
  - Envision Learning
  - Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)
  - KDE
  - Assessment for Learning Project (ALP)
  - Districts across the state and the country already in this work
- Teacher Leadership
  - Starting in the trenches
  - K-12 Focus
  - Developing deep understanding of our competencies
  - Continuous capacity building
  - Take a risk and fail forward


BEGAN REWRITING  
OUR STORY  
BY DEVELOPING  
SEQUENTIAL  
COHORTS OF  
TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

A hand holding a pencil is shown writing on a white notepad. The notepad is tilted, and the pencil is positioned as if in the middle of writing. The background is a light blue circle with some faint, abstract lines.

KDE  
RECOGNIZED  
BCPS  
AS A  
DISTRICT  
OF INNOVATION!

A glowing yellow lightbulb with a black outline and a brown base. The lightbulb is surrounded by several short, orange lines radiating outwards, suggesting it is lit and glowing. The background is a light blue cloud-like shape.

TEACHER COHORTS  
BEGAN CREATING  
AUTHENTIC  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES  
FOR STUDENTS

Four stylized human figures in green, orange, pink, and blue are standing in a row, holding books. They are smiling and appear to be engaged in a learning activity. The background is a light blue circle with some faint, abstract lines.

ASSEMBLED  
COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS  
+ INNOVATIVE LEARNING  
TO REIMAGINE THE EXPERIENCE  
CONNECTED TO:



BCPS  
PARTICIPATED IN THE  
KENTUCKY COALITION  
FOR ADVANCING ED.  
TO HELP CREATE THE  
UNITED WE  
LEARN REPORT

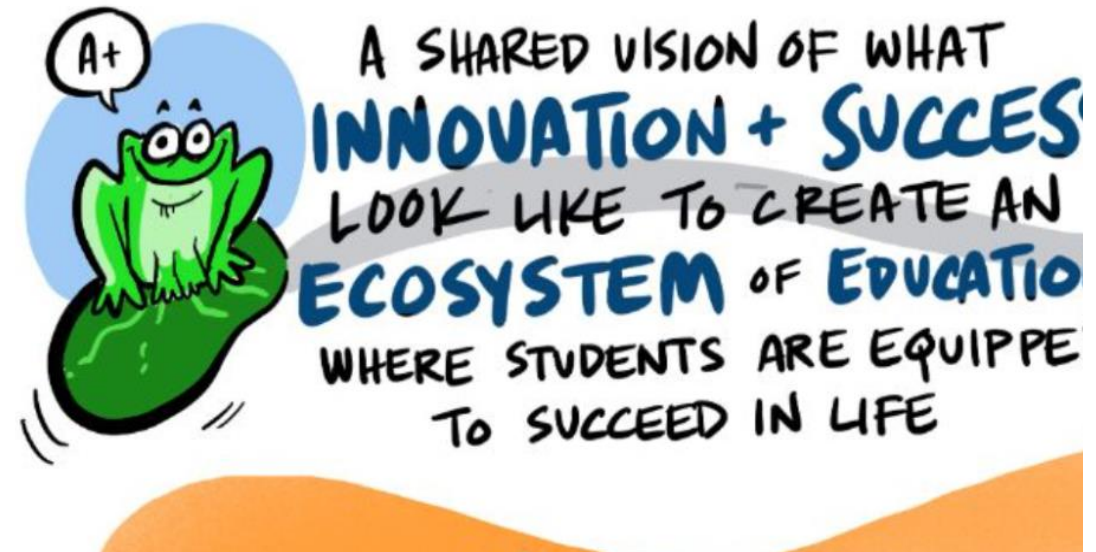
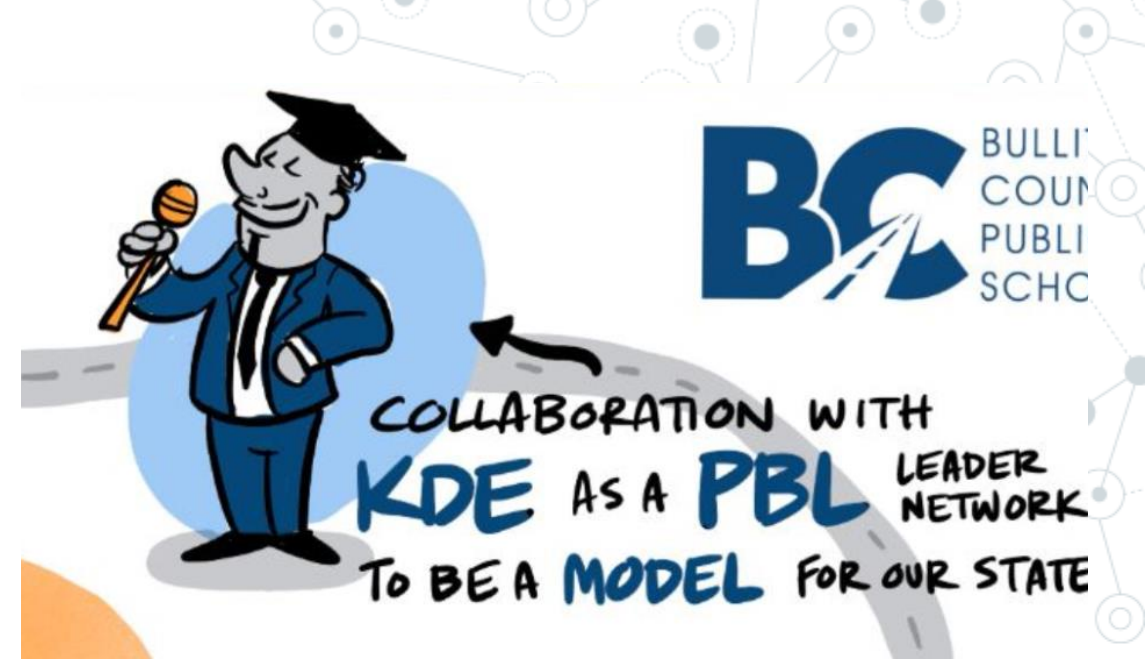


# Our Journey (continued)

- Embracing Larger Vision
  - Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education (KCAE)
  - Partner with a grandparent in another district
  - Empathy Interviews within our community
  - United We Learn Report
  - Kentucky Education Summit
  - Clear vision of next steps
- Engaging ALL Stakeholders
  - L3 Cohort 2 = Community Collaborators for Innovative Learning Team (CCILT)
  - Co-Lead with Parent
  - Collective learning of our current “system of school”
  - Empathy Interviews
  - Currently developing problem of practice

# Our Journey (continued 2)

- **Authentic Learning Experiences**
  - Continued training of teachers with a 3-year support process
  - Growing district and school administrator knowledge
  - Project Based Learning (PBL) Leader Network
  - Creating opportunities for increased student voice
  - Travel...”see” and learn in action
- **New Definition of Student Success**
  - Academics + Life Readiness = Graduate Profile
  - Changing the school “experience” for students starting in the classroom
  - Moving towards assessment practices to demonstrate the application of “knowing”





# Community Engagement



## Engagement

- CCILT
- Community-Based Accountability (CBA) Steering Committee



## Community Partners

- Parent Co-Lead
  - Mike Ekbundit, GE Appliances
- Open Applications
- Feedback Strategies



## Graduate Profile

- Co-created between 2017-2018
- Tested and Revised: 2018
- Approved 2019
- Actionizing Graduate Profile



Phase 1: 2021

Community Collaborators for  
Innovative Learning



Phase 2: 2024

Community-Based  
Accountability (CBA)



# Community Collaborators for Innovative Learning History

## A Different Way to Think

Valuable Learning Experiences



Authentic, real-world learning

+

Assessments to understand what students know and can do



+

Ways to confirm knowledge and skill

+

Accountability types and metrics at schools



+

System that enables all pathways

=

Prepared Graduate

=

Prepared Graduate



# Community Collaborators for Innovative Learning History (continued)

Today:

- GPA
- ACT



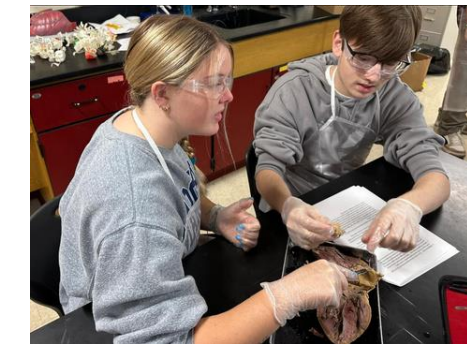
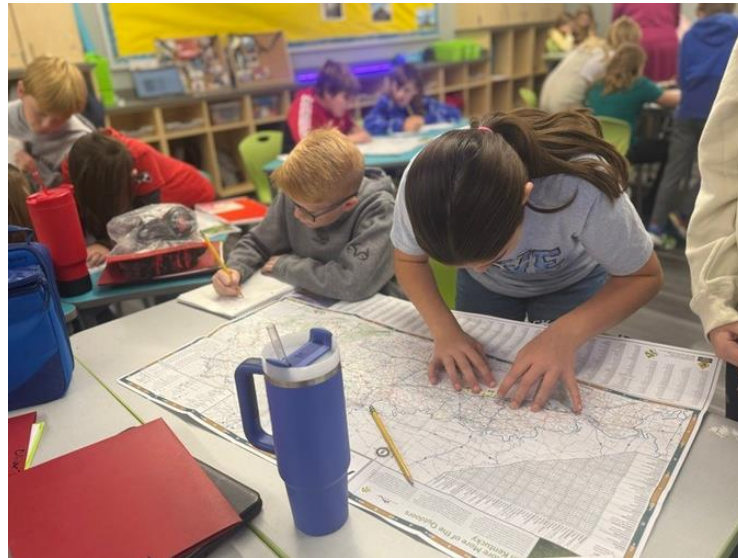
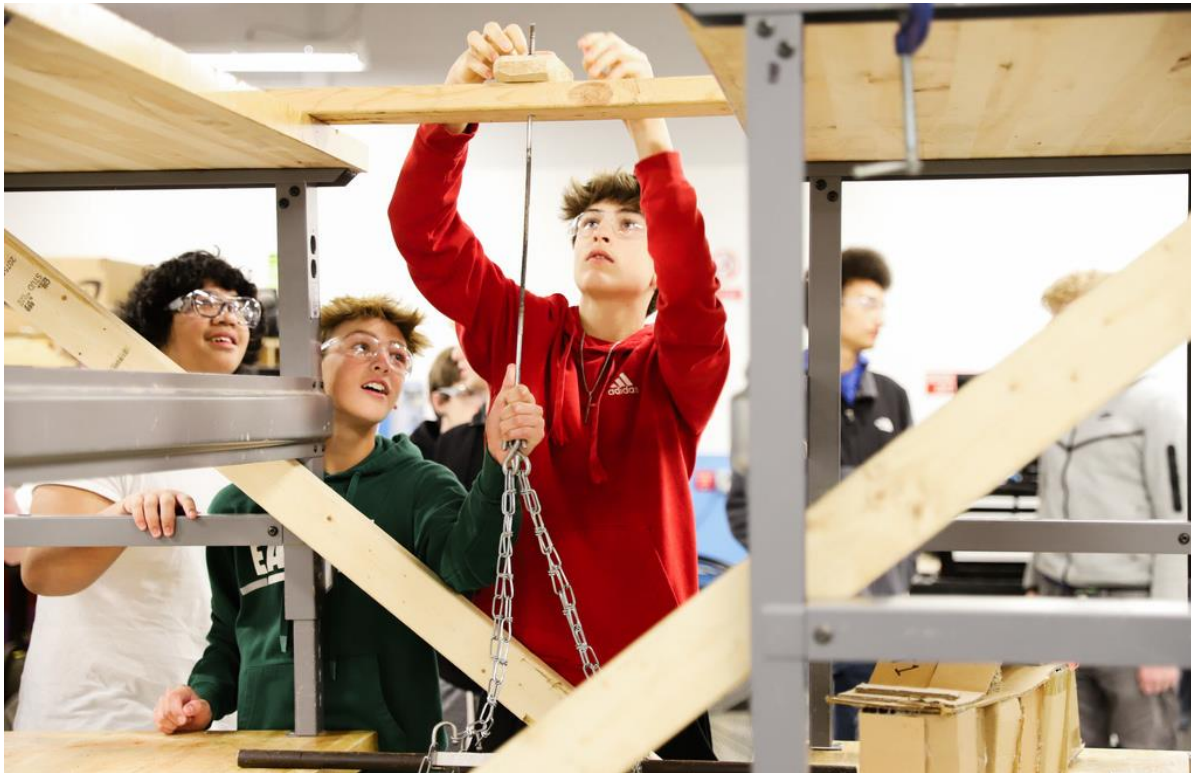
Prepared Graduate

Tomorrow:

- GPA
- ACT
- Effective Communicator
- Mastery Learner
- Community Contributor
- Innovative Problem Solver
- Productive Collaborator
- Self-Directed Navigator

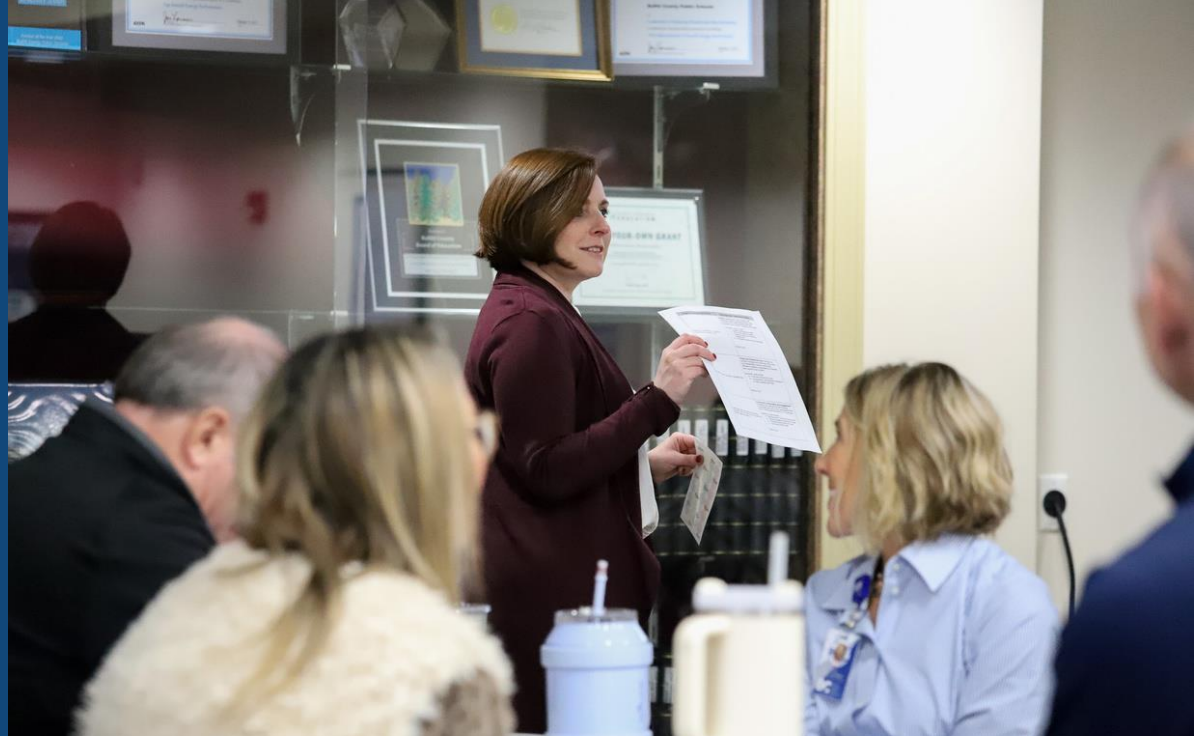
How do we measure all of our students?





# BCPS

## COMMUNITY BASED STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING



# Accountability Pillars





## Community Based Accountability

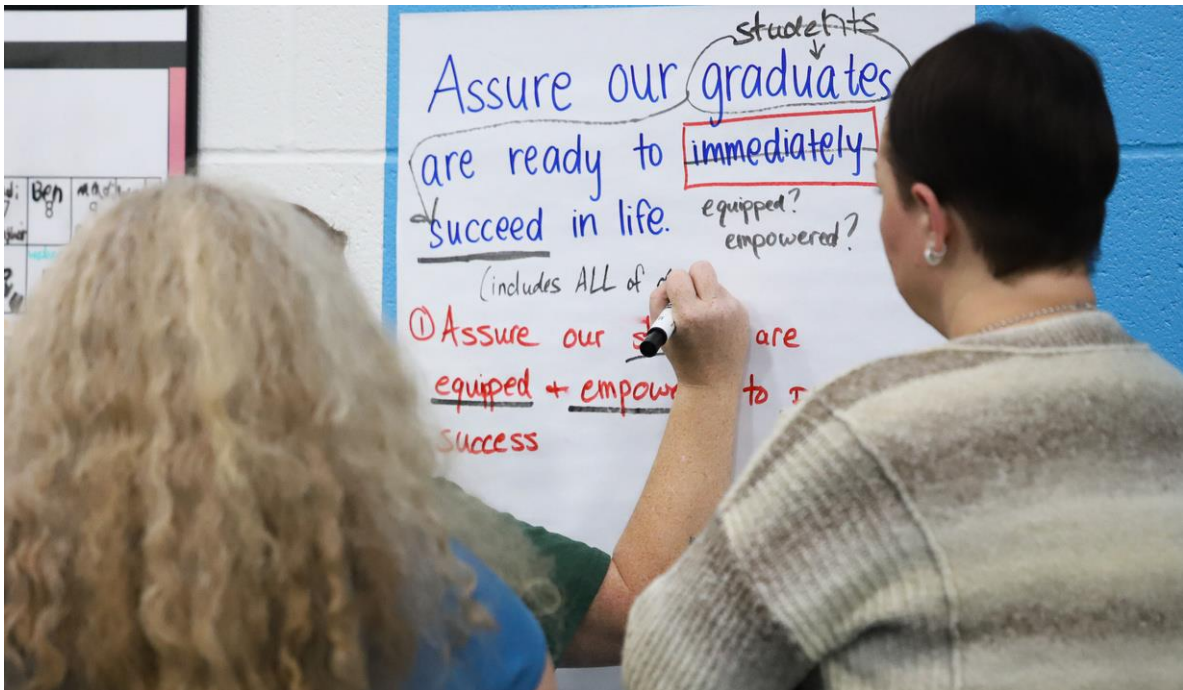
- Student Readiness
- Valued Education
- Cost Effective Systems
- Innovative Leader
- Maximize Learning Options








Original Aspiration Statement	New Aspiration Statement (Pillar)
<p>Assure our graduates are ready to immediately succeed in life.</p> <p><i>Input</i></p> <p><i>appreciation of diverse cultures</i></p>	<p><b>Student Learning:</b> Provide students with meaningful learning experiences that inspire confidence and build essential skills that empower every student to achieve their goals.</p> <p>Aspiration could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic achievement data</li> <li>AP &amp; Dual Credit Programs</li> <li>Quality of classroom learning experiences</li> <li>Graduation Rates and Scholarships</li> </ul> <p>Rating Color: </p>
<p>Achieve Student Success cost-effectively.</p> <p><i>not just manage but invest</i></p>	<p><b>Fiscal and Operational Care:</b> Manage our facilities, finances, and resources responsibly and strategically to ensure operational efficiency, creating a sustainable environment that supports every student.</p> <p>Aspiration could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial transparency data</li> <li>Compensation, Recruitment &amp; Retention of highly qualified staff data</li> </ul> <p>Rating Color:  </p>
<p>Collaborate with businesses, education providers, and the community to maximize student learning options.</p> <p><i>Excited to see the impact of this.</i></p>	<p><b>Community Collaboration and Engagement:</b> Develop strong partnerships with families, businesses, and community organizations that enrich learning and strengthen our community.</p> <p>Aspiration could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business and Community Partnerships</li> <li>Family Engagement/satisfaction data</li> <li>Volunteer opportunities and data</li> <li>Community Share Data</li> </ul> <p>Rating Color: </p>



<p><i>incorporate community service</i></p>	<p><b>Engaged and Well-Rounded Students:</b> Empower every student with diverse &amp; variety of experiences beyond the classroom that spark creativity, inspire leadership, and nurture a lifelong love of learning.</p> <p>Aspiration could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extracurricular programs and clubs available</li> <li>Athletic opportunities/participation</li> <li>Fine arts opportunities/participation</li> </ul> <p>Rating Color: </p>
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# Bullitt County Board of Education Aspiration Statements



Assure our graduates are ready to immediately succeed in life.

Provide a solid, useful education that is valued by students, parents, educators, staff, community members, and businesses.



Achieve Student Success cost effectively

Be a national leader in educational innovation and performance.



Collaborate with businesses, education providers, and the community to maximize student learning options.

Our mission is to inspire and equip our students to succeed in life.



- **Student Learning:** Provide students with meaningful learning experiences that inspire confidence and build essential skills that empower every student to achieve their goals.
- **Fiscal and Operational Care:** Manage our facilities, finances and resources responsibly and strategically to ensure operational efficiency, creating a sustainable environment that supports every student.
- **Community Collaboration and Engagement:** Develop strong partnerships with families, businesses and community organizations that enrich learning and strengthen our community.
- **Engaged and Well-Rounded Students:** Empower every student with diverse experiences beyond the classroom that spark creativity, inspire leadership and nurture a lifelong love of learning.
- **Student Safety and Well-Being:** Create a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued, supported, and safe.
- **Life Readiness:** Prepare students with the knowledge, skills and values for citizenship, employment and impacting the community and world positively.

# Local Accountability: In the Making

## Year at a Glance

Finalize Aspiration  
Statements



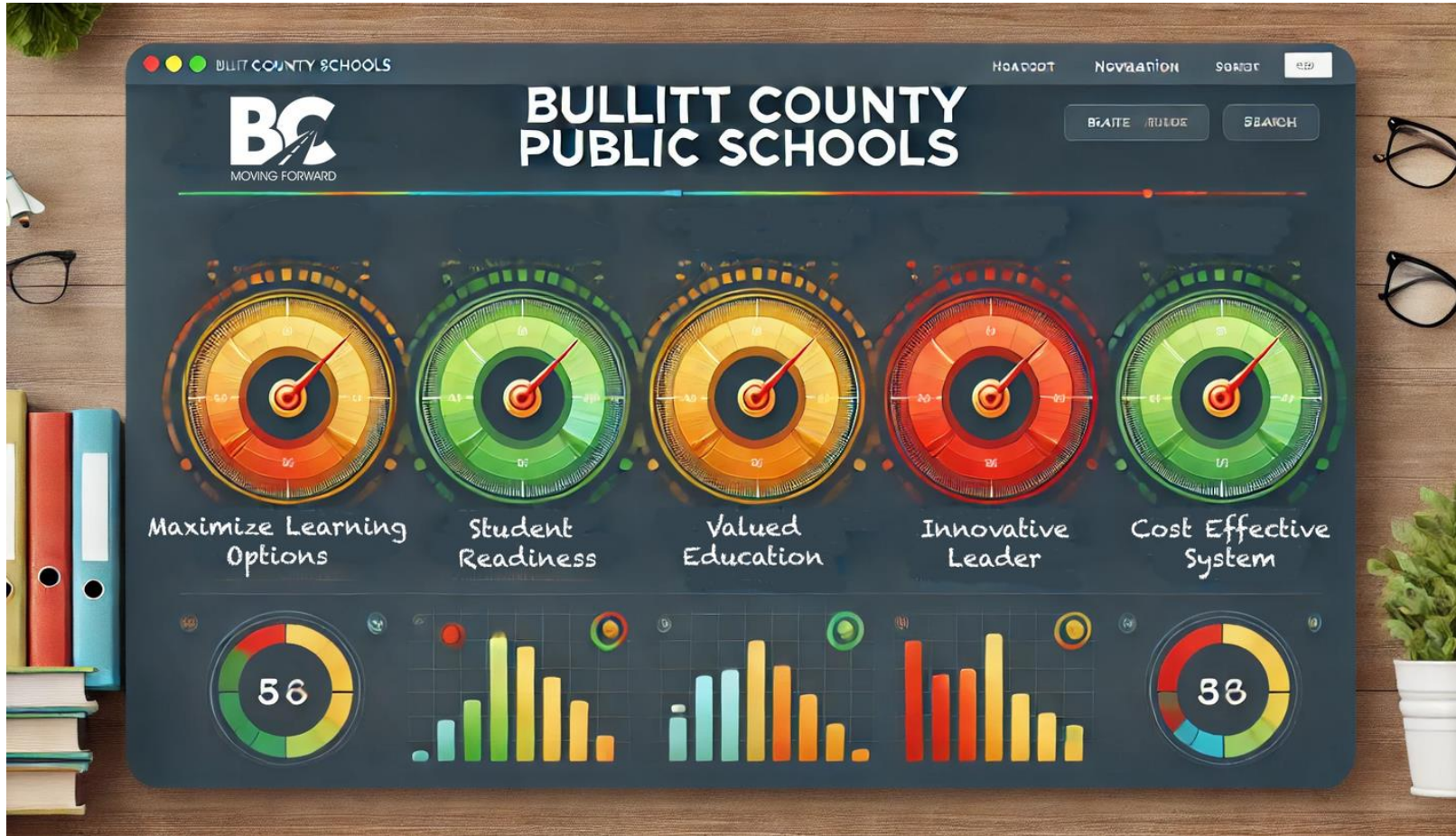
Define Metrics for  
Aspiration  
Statements



Public Facing  
Dashboard



# Moving Forward



- Transparency
- Local Priorities
- Community Co-Created
- Whole Child
- Collaboration
- Holistic View
- Continuous Improvement



# THANK YOU!



BULLITT  
COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS



**Jesse Bacon**

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# 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



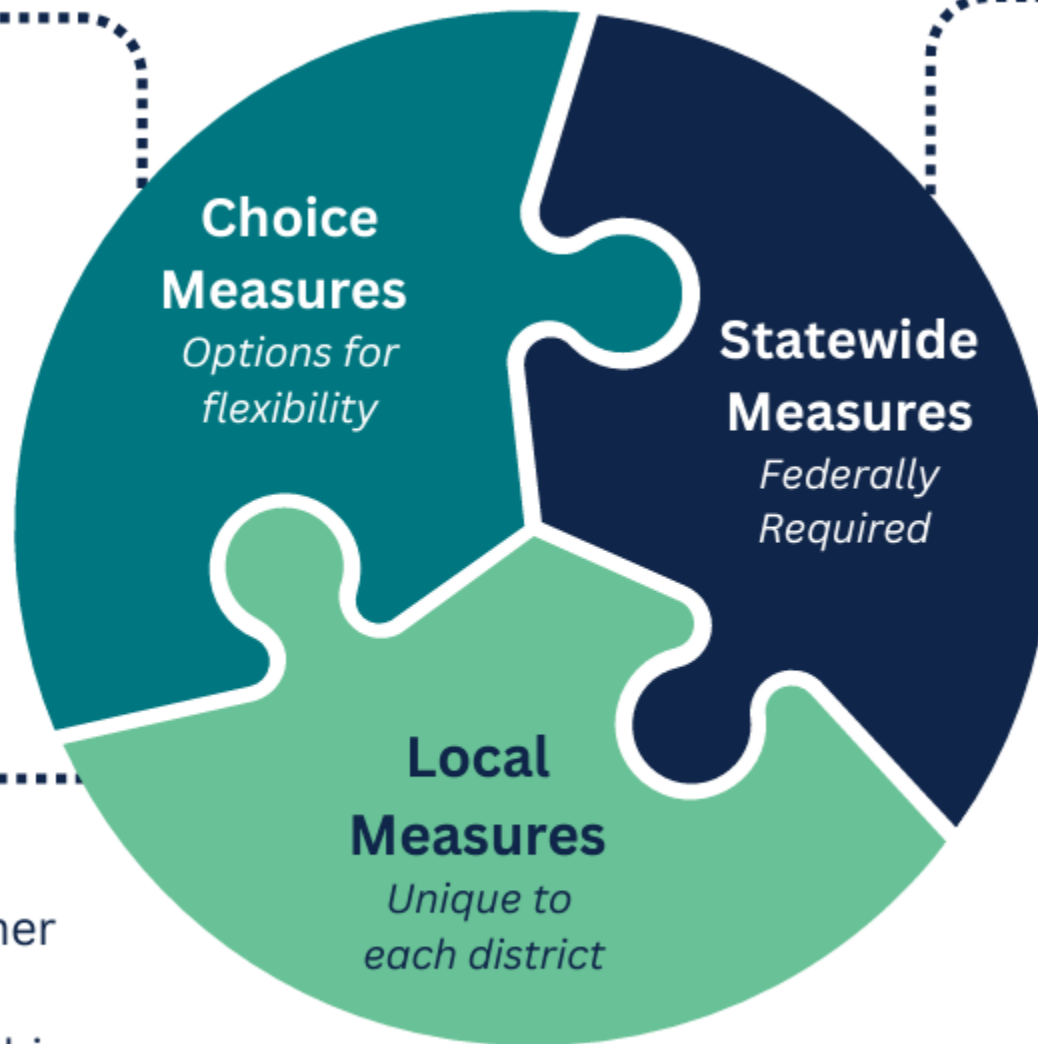
### Feedback and Support

- 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**

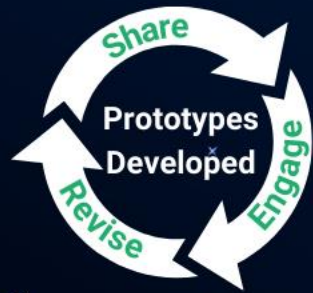
Local accountability systems are scaled across the state with active networks for shared learning, system review, and continuous improvement.

# 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

# 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?



# How can I stay engaged?



Scan or Click the QR code to find out how you can stay engaged.



# Wows and Wonders

Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education  
Jennifer Stafford, KDE



# 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.

