



# REIMAGINING ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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In service to the  
Kentucky United We Learn Council's  
Moonshot

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**Version 4.0**

Glossary of Terms



Kentucky Department of  
**EDUCATION**



**Accountability:**

A system of responsibility tied to achieving designated outcomes; Kentucky school and district accountability is based on multiple measures of school performance that results in the assignment of a one-to-five-star designation. See also the 5-star accountability system.

[\(KDE Glossary\)](#)

**Accreditation-style Accountability model:**

An accreditation-style accountability model is a formal process that involves an external review, self-assessment and continuous improvement efforts to ensure quality. Schools can use various forms of evidence and adapt criteria to their local context. Unlike traditional accreditation, this model does not label schools and districts as “accredited” or “non-accredited.” Instead, it focuses on continuous improvement and accountability.

**Assessment:**

An assignment, task or test that seeks to measure a student's skills or knowledge in a subject area; state assessments are currently given in grades 3-11.

[\(KDE Glossary\)](#)

**Color Rating System:**

Overall performance ratings are reported using a color rating system to communicate performance of schools. Color ratings include five performance levels from highest to lowest, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange and Red.

[\(KDE Office of Assessment/Accountability\)](#)

**Consolidated State Plan (CSP):**

Kentucky's plan for fulfilling the provisions of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. The plan outlines how the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will implement specific federal programs, hold schools accountable, ensure equity and promote success for every Kentucky student.

[\(KDE Glossary\)](#)

**Dashboard:**

A dashboard is a way of displaying various types of visual data in one place. Usually, a dashboard is intended to convey different, but related information in an easy-to-digest form.

[\(Tableau\)](#)

**Deeper Learning:**

The acquisition and development of content, skills and dispositions that ALL learners need to thrive in life. Deeper Learning competencies promote the ability to transfer learning and apply it to new and complex situations in an ever-changing global environment.

[\(Kentucky Association of Educational Cooperatives\)](#)

**ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act):**

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act signed into law in December 2015. It is the main federal law governing K-12 education.

[\(KDE Glossary\)](#)

**Gradespan:**

Gradespan refers to the range of grade levels that a particular school or educational program includes. For example, a typical elementary school with a grade span of K-5 includes kindergarten through 5th grade, while a middle school with a grade span of 6-8 includes 6th through 8th grades and high school includes 9th through 12th grades.

**Indicator:**

An indicator means a component of the accountability system that provides specific information on the school or district.

[\(KDE School Report Card Glossary\)](#)

**KAS (Kentucky Academic Standards):**

The concepts that students are expected to learn, know and demonstrate at each grade level to succeed through their academic career. Developed through a state-level collaborative effort.

[\(KDE Glossary\)](#)

**Local Accountability System:**

The set of system-management policies, instruments, resources and practices that a district (district leadership) uses to engage in school improvement work with their schools (school teams). This work generally extends the minimum work required to comply with federal accountability mandates and includes broader efforts for school improvement work. Some professionals include parental engagement, community partnerships and non-academic considerations of school quality that affect schooling experiences (e.g., food, safety, buildings, transportation) in the system concept.

[\(Kentucky United We Learn Council Glossary\)](#)

**Phased Approach of Implementation:**

A phased approach refers to a method of implementing changes or new systems gradually, rather than all at once. Each phase is completed and evaluated before moving on to the next, allowing for adjustments and improvements along the way.

**Performance-based Assessment:**

Performance-based assessment is an evaluation method that requires students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities through authentic tasks or projects.

**Personalized Learning:**

Personalized learning is a student-centered, customized learning model that addresses the diversity of a student's background and needs and sets high expectations for all students. This may entail a formalized plan and process that requires students to set learning goals based on personal, academic and career interests with the close support of adult mentors that include teachers, parents and other members of the community.

[\(Knowledgeworks and KDE's Division of Innovative Learning\)](#)

**Service Based Learning Experiences:**

Activities that combine community service with academic learning.

**Student Capstone Projects:**

A student capstone project is a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students, typically during their final year of high school or middle school or at the end of an academic program or learning-pathway experience. Capstone projects may take a wide variety of forms, but most are long-term investigative projects that culminate in a final product, presentation or performance.

[\(Knowledgeworks and KDE's Division of Innovative Learning\)](#)

**Student Defenses of Learning:**

Formal presentations that students make to community members, educators or experts where they use examples of their work to show they have the skills and knowledge they were expected to learn.

**Student-led Conferences:**

Meetings where students take the lead in sharing examples of their work, describing what they have learned and discussing their progress and goals with teachers and parents.

**Through-year Assessment:**

A through-year assessment program consists of multiple distinct assessments administered across the school year where information from the multiple assessments is (i) combined to yield a summative determination of student performance to support federally required systems of school identification and support, and (ii) used to support at least one additional purpose.

[\(Center for Assessment\)](#)

**Work-based Learning:**

Work-based learning is a type of learning experience, such as job shadowing, internship, apprenticeship or a service-learning project, that allows students to apply academic and technical knowledge and skills through real-world experience and engagement with adults outside of high school and gain experience working in an environment related to their career pathway.

[\(Knowledgeworks and KDE's Division of Innovative Learning\)](#)