Kentucky United We Learn Regional Town Halls

The Future of Assessment and Accountability in Kentucky

January 2025

Kentucky Department of EDUCATION

Welcome

Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

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

KUWL Moonshot Statement (01/24/2024)

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

Kentucky UNITED WE LEARN COUNCIL

Kentucky Department of EDUCATION

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?

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?
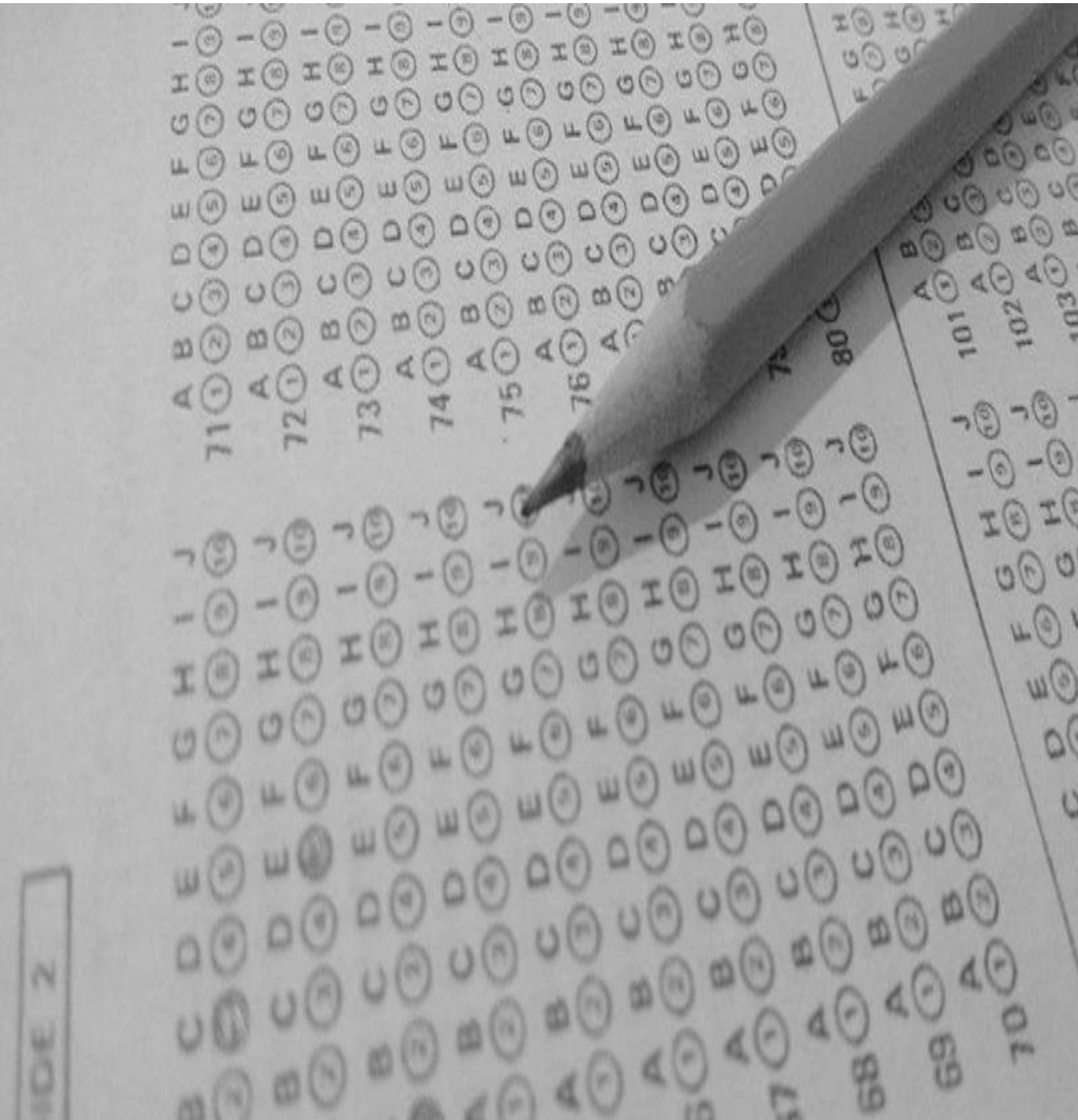
Pollinator - Traditional

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.

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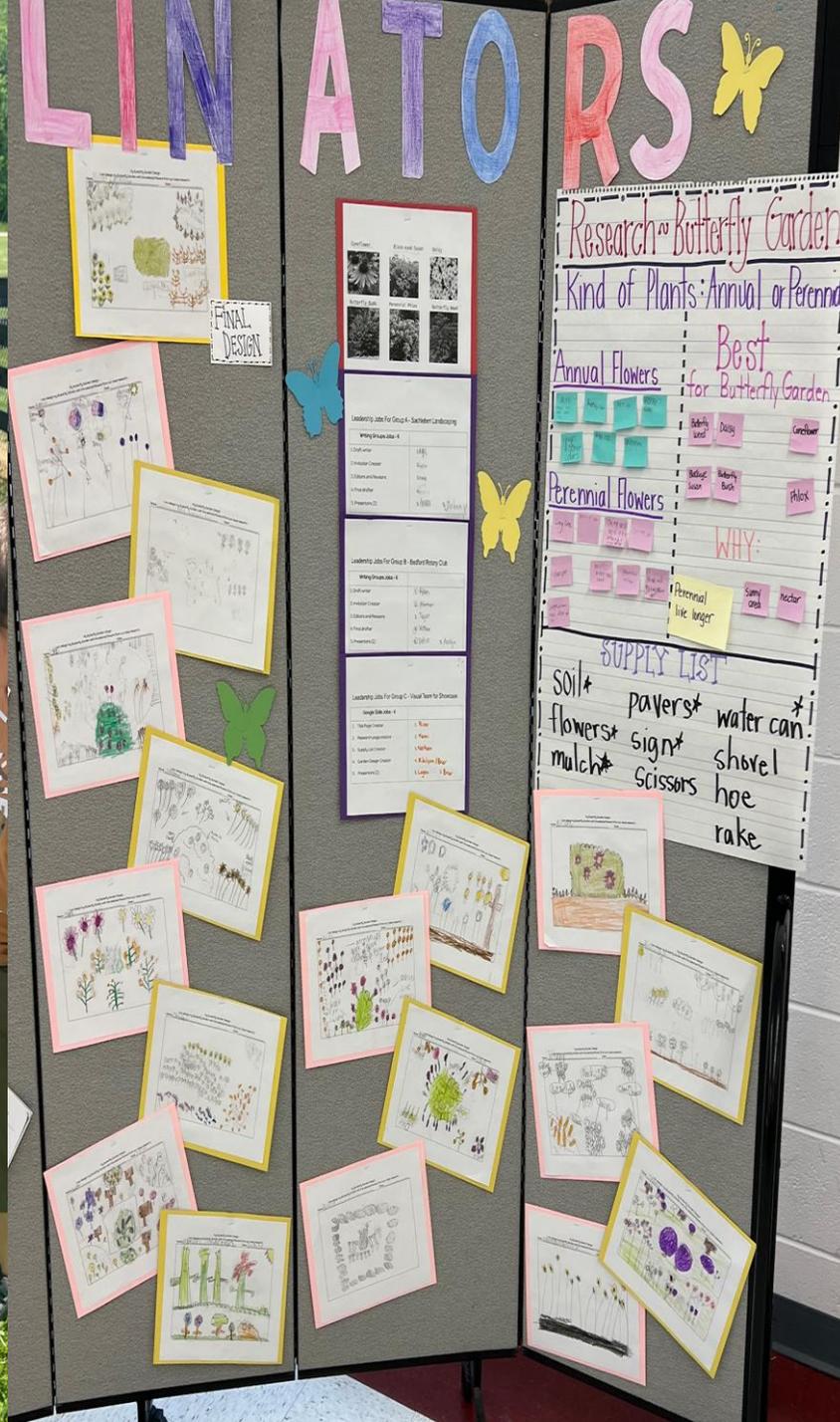
Pollinator - Vibrant

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

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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.
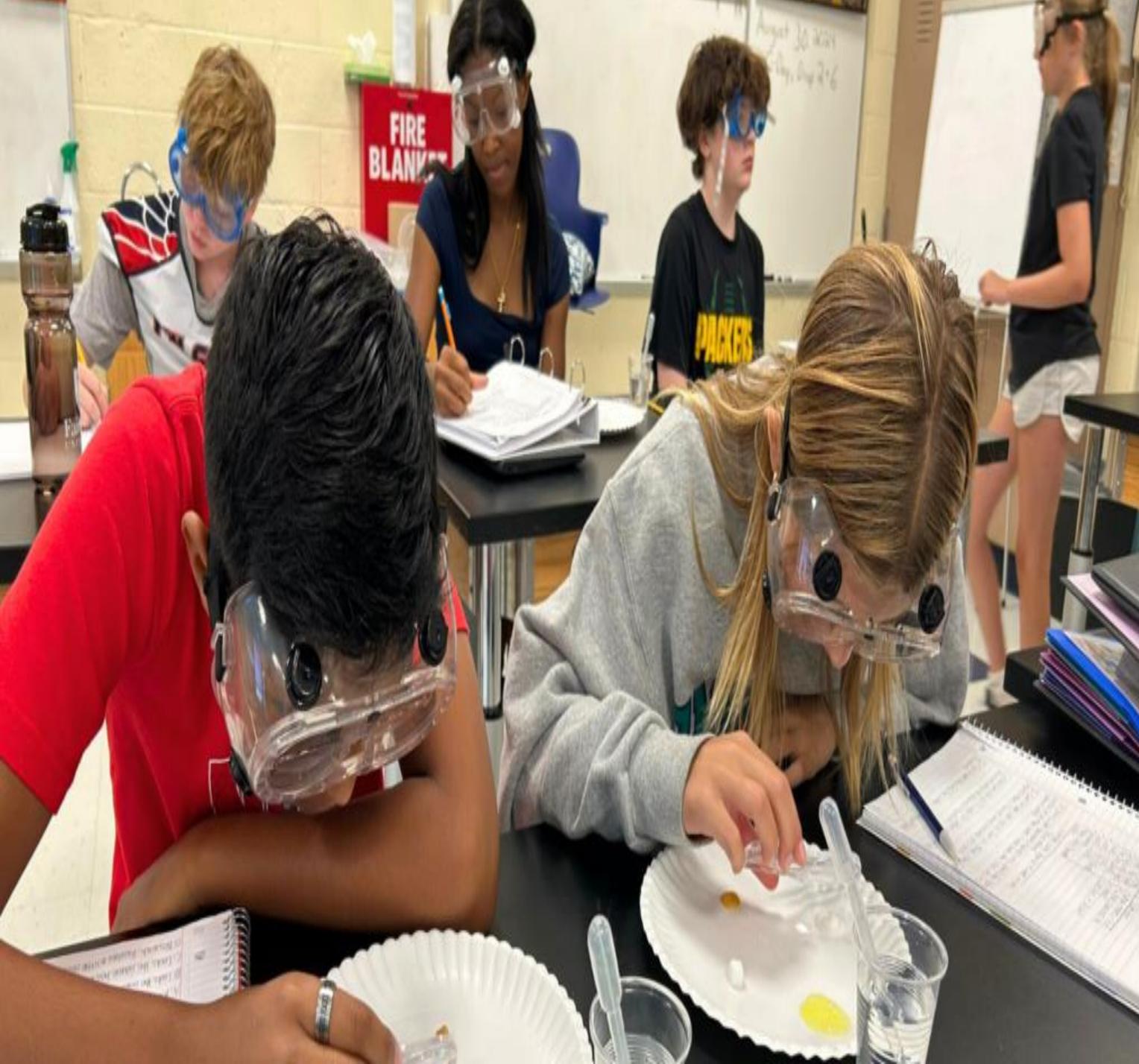
Human Body Systems Vibrant

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.

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.

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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
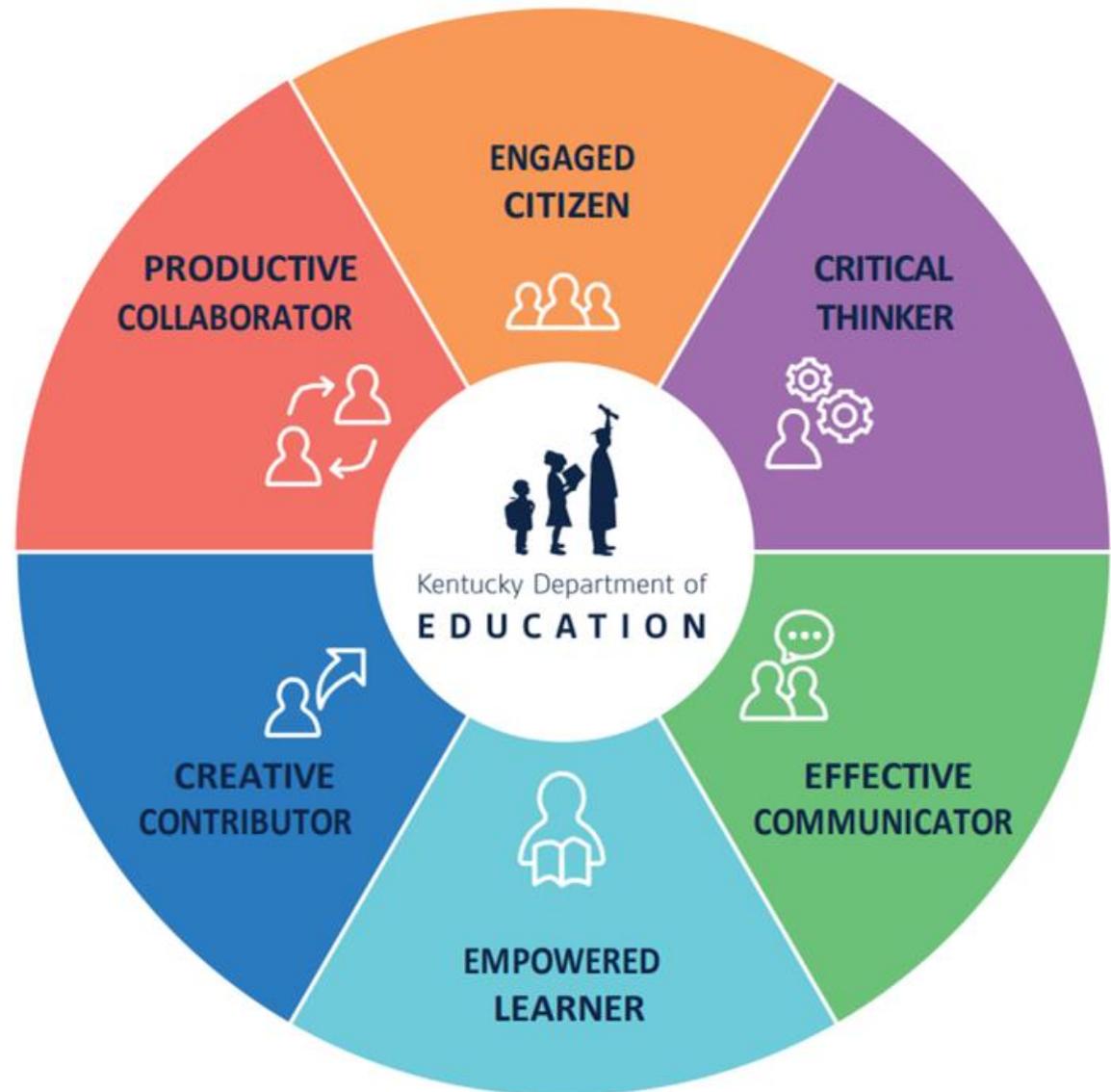
140+

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.

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

KUWL Moonshot Statement (01/24/2024)

"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:

Ryan Asher and Susan Tracy
Woodford County Public Schools (WCPS)

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Woodford County Public Schools Introduction

- ## WCPS Details
  - 7 Schools: 4 Elementary, 1 Middle School, 1 High School, 1 Alternative Program
  - 4,152 Students
  - Pre-Kindergarten-12
  - 248 Teachers

- **What brought WCPS to local accountability?**
  - Inspired by "United We Learn" and supported by Deeper Learning Grant to develop a collaborative team.
  - We focused on establishing learning competencies for all WCPS students and classroom experiences and instructional strategies to match those competencies … our Portrait of a Learner (PoL)
  - Along with a group of teachers and administrators, included parents and community members to develop our PoL over the course of four months.

- **Why do we need a "Portrait" of our learners?**
  - Creates a collective vision of student success for the entire school community.
  - Establishes a set of competencies, skills and qualities a school community believes every student should possess.
  - Provides a foundational tool that should shape all school design work.
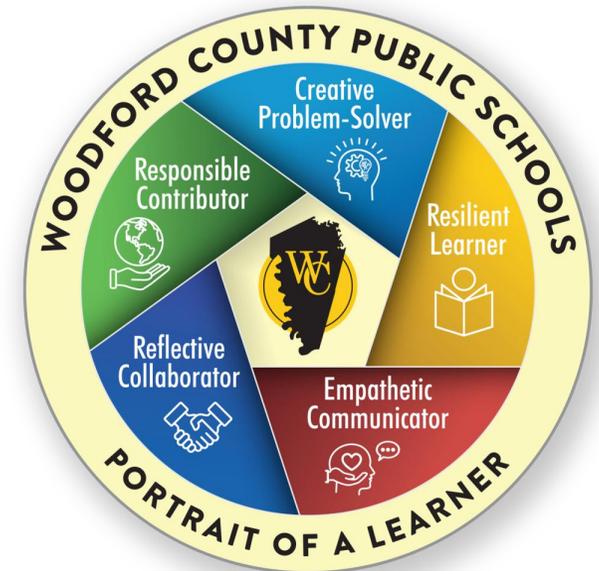
Portrait of a Learner

- What did we do with our Portrait of a Learner in first year of implementation?

  - **LEARN** the competencies and the characteristics of each one.

  - **LAUNCH** the language in schools and classrooms.

  - **LOOK** through the PoL lens to find ways to incorporate these competencies.
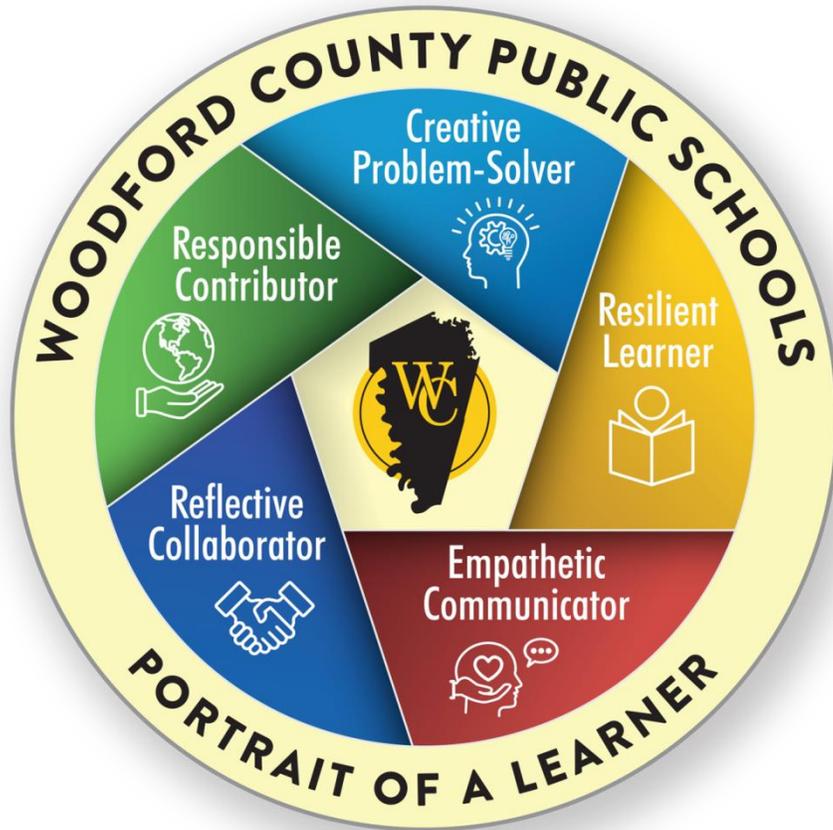
Community Engagement

- How has WCPS engaged the community as part of your local accountability work?

  - The **Woodford Wins Community Partner Network** is a collaborative group of organizations and individuals working together to enhance the educational experience for our students, as well as address both school and community needs.

- **Woodford Wins Actions and Strategies in the Works**
  - "Help Wanted" virtual board for community partners to post service project opportunities.
  - Collaborative effort to support Post-Secondary Readiness status for all students.
  - Enhance or establish partnerships with local churches to help meet needs.
  - Create an inventory of local "experts" to share their expertise to relevant classes.
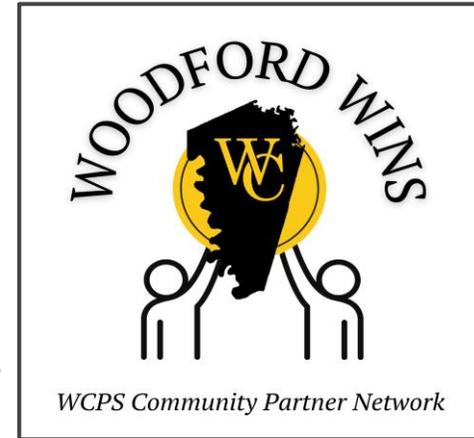
Paths to the Portrait
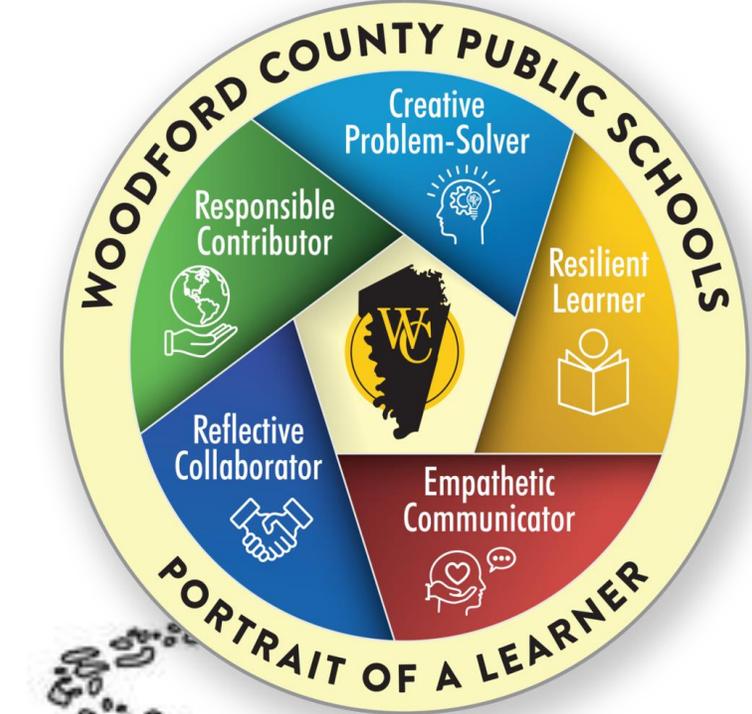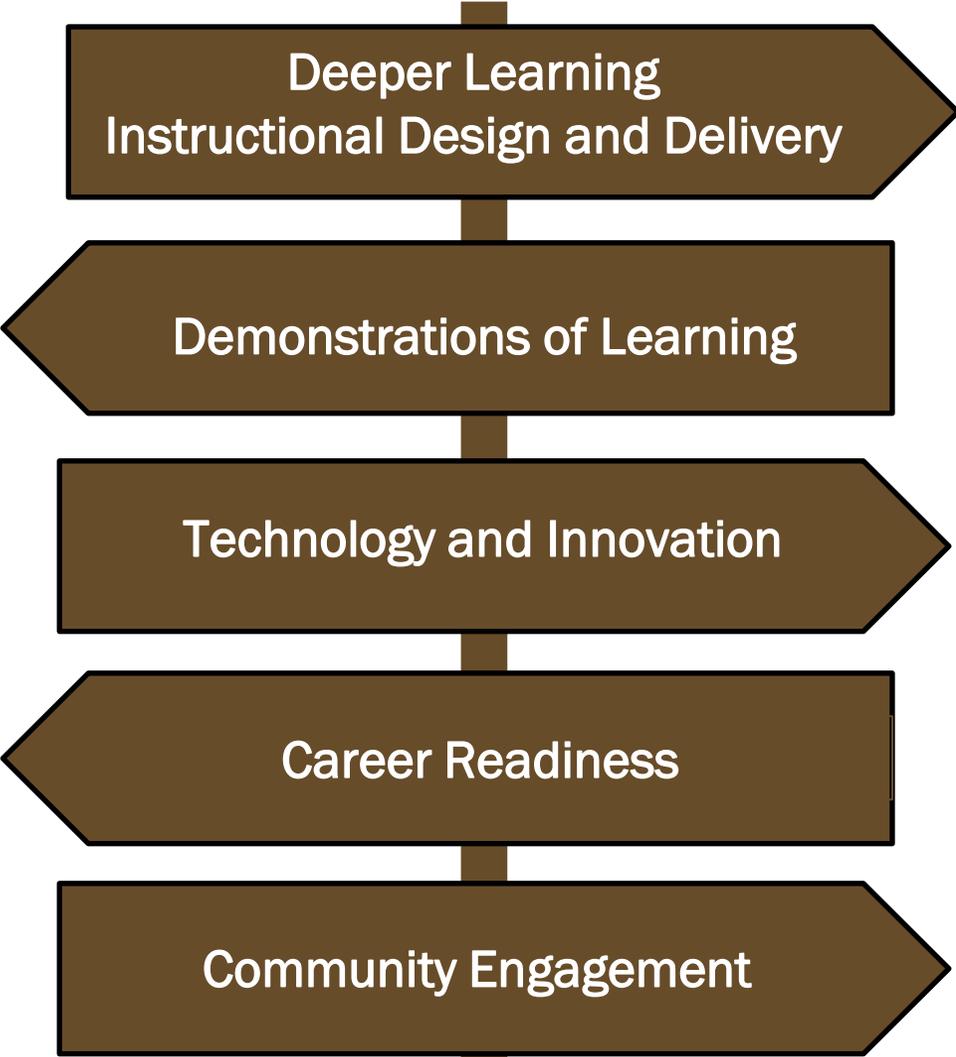
- Deeper Learning Instructional Design and Delivery
- Demonstrations of Learning
- Technology and Innovation
- Career Readiness
- Community Engagement

WOODFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

Creative Problem-Solver
Responsible Contributor
Resilient Learner
Reflective Collaborator
Empathetic Communicator
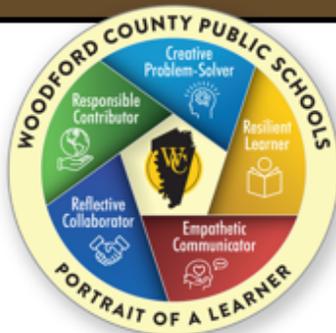
Paths to the Portrait
Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Deeper learning is a broad term that encompasses multiple learning methods to integrate the competencies of our Portrait of a Learner.

Deeper learning is not about neglecting the standards but rather focusing on the application of the standards to empower students to utilize the competencies.
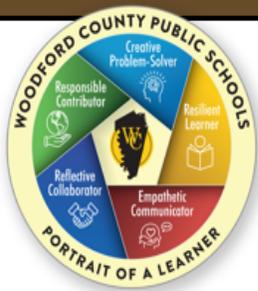
Speaker Notes on
Deeper Learning Examples
Instructional Design and Delivery

Examples of Deeper Learning work in which students are demonstrating the competencies of our Portrait: Resilient Learner, Empathetic Communicator, Reflective Collaborator, Creative Problem-Solver, and responsible Contributor.

Picture 1 - 1st grade students participating in critical thinking doing an activity called Hexagonal Thinking to determine connections between words.

Picture 2 & 3 - Students from Southside elementary learning about the construction process visiting a nearby worksite located next their playground. They then were able to design and build their own structure applying some the concepts learned.

Picture 4 - Forensic science students from Safe Harbor Academy collecting evidence from a "crime scene" to examine and analyze in order to solve the case.

Picture 5 & 6 - High School students that participated in the Purpose in Action Challenge in which they designed and created a manufacturing prototype work cell that will allow individuals with a range of disabilities the opportunity for a career at Parker Hannifin manufacturing.

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

- Demonstrations of Learning
- Technology and Innovation
- Career Readiness
- Community Engagement

Paths to the Portrait
Deeper Learning Strategic Plan
Instructional Design and Delivery

2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
All Levels: Identify the "Essential" standards using the REAL protocol in order to make room for Deeper Learning initiatives. **District:** Explore instructional design and "4 Shifts Protocol" to improve deeper learning, authenticity, student agency and tech integration. **District:** Implement a Deeper Learning Academy to build teacher capacity and leadership.	**All Levels:** Deconstruct essential standards down to the target level for clarity. **District:** Continue to implement a Deeper Learning Academy to build teacher capacity and leadership.	**All Levels:** Professional Development focus on Summative assessments tied to learning targets and review pacing. **District:** Continue to implement a Deeper Learning Academy to build teacher capacity and leadership.	**All Levels:** Professional Development focus on Common Formative Assessments within pacing.
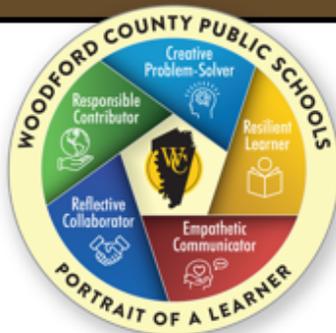
Paths to the Portrait

Demonstrations of Learning

All the ways students can show you what they've mastered, not just tell you. It's like a grand finale where they get to use their newfound knowledge and skills. Examples include student-led conferences, exhibitions of learning and defenses of learning.

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

Technology and Innovation

Career Readiness

Community Engagement
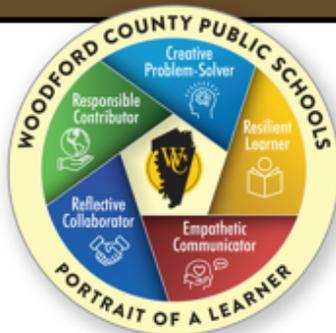
Paths to the Portrait
Demonstrations of Learning Examples

Speaker Notes on
Demonstrations of Learning Examples

Picture 1 & 2 - 5th grade students from Northside Elementary participating in an exhibition of learning in which groups of students collaboratively developed their own colony and presented the distinguishing features that make the colony successful and sustainable. Picture 3 & 4 - Woodford Middle School students participating in an exhibition of learning in which they present how they personally relate and demonstrate the competencies of the Portrait of a Learner.
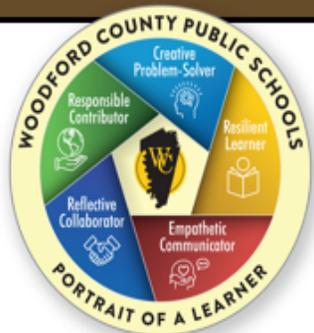
Paths to the Portrait Examples
Demonstrations of Learning Strategic Plan

2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
All Levels: One exhibition of learning as follows: 2nd-5th grades, 6th-8th grades, high school departments	**All Levels:** Continue exhibitions of learning **District:** Refine the processes and protocols for Defenses of Learning.	**All Levels:** Continue exhibitions of learning **All Levels:** Mini-Defenses at 4th, 7th and 11th grades.	**All Levels:** Defenses of Learning at 5th, 8th and 12th grades with community participation.
District: Begin to develop the processes and protocols for Defenses of Learning	**All Levels:** Small scale pilots of Defense of Learning using the established processes, protocols and rubric.	**District:** Establish an authentic audience of community members.	
District: Refine Performance Outcomes and develop rubrics. Introduce to staff in Spring.	**District:** Communicate expectations of Defenses of Learning and Performance Outcomes to all staff through Best Practice Academy and other professional learning opportunities.		
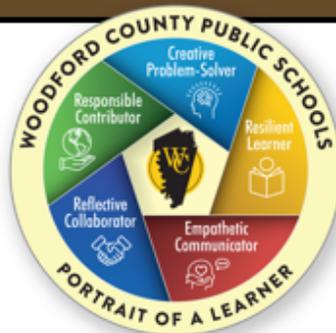
Paths to the Portrait
Technology and Innovation

Equip students and teachers with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the ever-evolving world of technology. Through a blend of hands-on learning and innovative thinking, everyone can develop the problem-solving abilities needed to be future leaders and innovators.

# Paths to the Portrait
Technology and Innovation Examples

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

Technology and Innovation

Career Readiness

Community Engagement
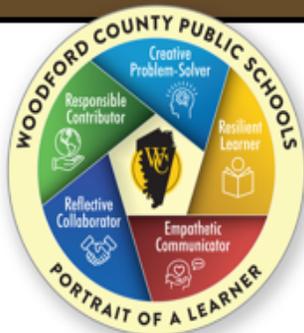
Focus Areas

Digital Citizenship

Agency and Personalization

Deeper Thinking and Learning

Authentic Work

Technology Infusion

Assessment/Feedback

EARLY LEARNING BUS
PLAY · EXPLORE · LEARN · GROW

Speaker Notes on
Technology and Innovation Examples

Picture 1 & 2 - Team of teachers participating in Tech & Innovation Academy to build teacher capacity and leadership.

Picture 3 - Elementary students learning about the functions and capabilities of a robotic "dog".

Picture 4 - High school student that has taken a leadership role in technology and innovation. Here he is with a laser cutter that he not only helped assemble, but also became the resident expert to teach other students and teachers.

Picture 5 - Students participating in virtual field trip using VR goggles

Picture 6 - An innovative "Early Learning Bus" that will be used throughout the community to provide outreach and educational services for children ages 3 to 5, including preschool screenings and parent education.

Deeper Learning Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

Technology and Innovation

Career Readiness

Community Engagement
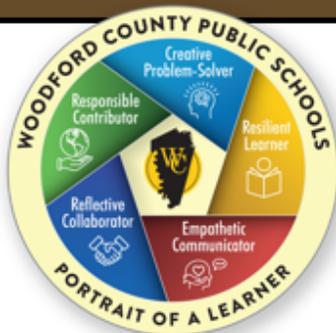
Paths to the Portrait
Career Readiness

Career Readiness is a K-12 process that requires students to align interests, values and skills as well as explore opportunities in order to develop both short and long-term goals. The demands of today's 21st-century workforce requires individuals who demonstrate the skills and attributes of our Portrait of a Learner.

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

Technology and Innovation

Career Readiness

Community Engagement

WOODFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Creative Problem-Solver
Responsible Contributor
Resilient Learner
Reflective Collaborator
Empathetic Communicator
PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

Paths to the Portrait
Career Readiness Examples

JA Junior Achievement
BizTown
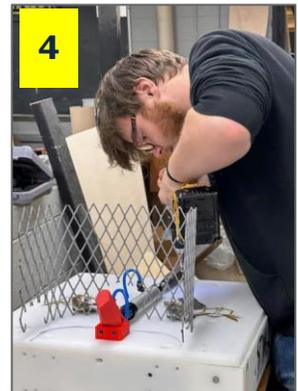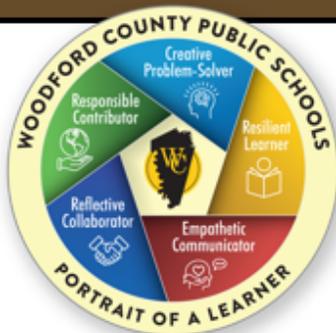
Speaker Notes on
Career Readiness Examples

Picture 1 - All 5th grade students will participate in the Junior Achievement BizTown program which combines in-class learning with a day-long visit to a simulated town. This learning experience allows students to operate banks, manage restaurants, write checks, and vote for mayor. Students are able to connect the dots between what they learn in school and the real world.

Picture 2 - Middle School students participating in the Reality Store. Similar to BizTown, students are assigned jobs and manage all things involved with "adulting" including utility bills, car payments, and child care. Local organizations work the booths to enhance the local community connection.

Picture 3 & 4 - High School students getting real world experiences in the areas of ag and engineering. WCPS is making a greater effort to provide such opportunities and experiences in order to engage ALL students.

Picture 5 - Another pic of the students that participated in the Purpose in Action Challenge. This particular picture is from the event in which the student team was recognized as the big winners of the challenge.

Picture 6 - Another pic of the elementary students observing the big machinery involved in home construction. Their hands on the head poses capture the awe and excitement of the experience.
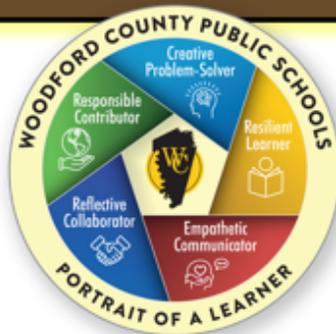
Paths to the Portrait
Community Engagement

Building partnerships fosters a sense of community involvement and support for the school system. When local businesses, organizations and residents are engaged, there is a shared responsibility for the success of the students and the school district.

# Paths to the Portrait
Community Engagement Examples

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

Technology and Innovation

Career Readiness

Community Engagement

WOODFORD WINS
WCPS Community Partner Network
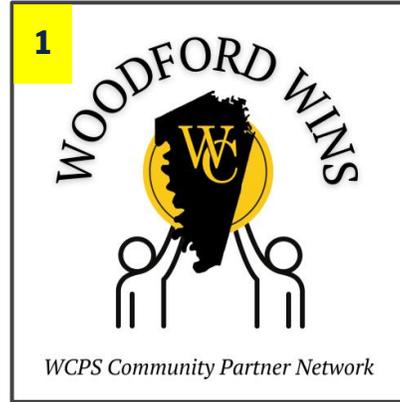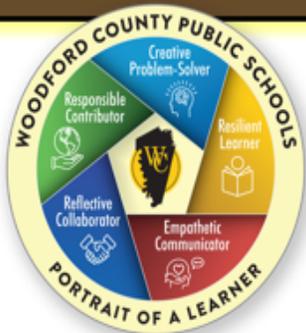
Speaker Notes on
Community Engagement Examples

Picture 1 - As already mentioned, our Woodford Wins Community Partner Network is the primary structure we're using to enhance community engagement.

Picture 2 - High school students participating in annual Industry Day in which they tour local companies and industries to learn and establish connections. This particular picture is at Ruggles Sign that specializes in the design, manufacturing, and installation of signs throughout the world.

Picture 3 - Representatives from Woodford County Library, a strong community partner, at a back to school event promoting literacy to parents and students.

Picture 4 & 5 - GEMS program (Girls in Engineering, Math, and Science) in action with the support of community partners. This program provides elementary age young ladies to get hands-on experiences in the STEM field.

Peer Supported Network

Next Steps and Transformation

- Continue down these paths with ongoing strategic planning and action.

- Continue to create a collective vision of student success for the entire school community.

- Use our Portrait of a Learner as the foundational tool that should shape all school design work.

Deeper Learning
Instructional Design and Delivery

Demonstrations of Learning

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WOODFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Creative Problem-Solver

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PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER
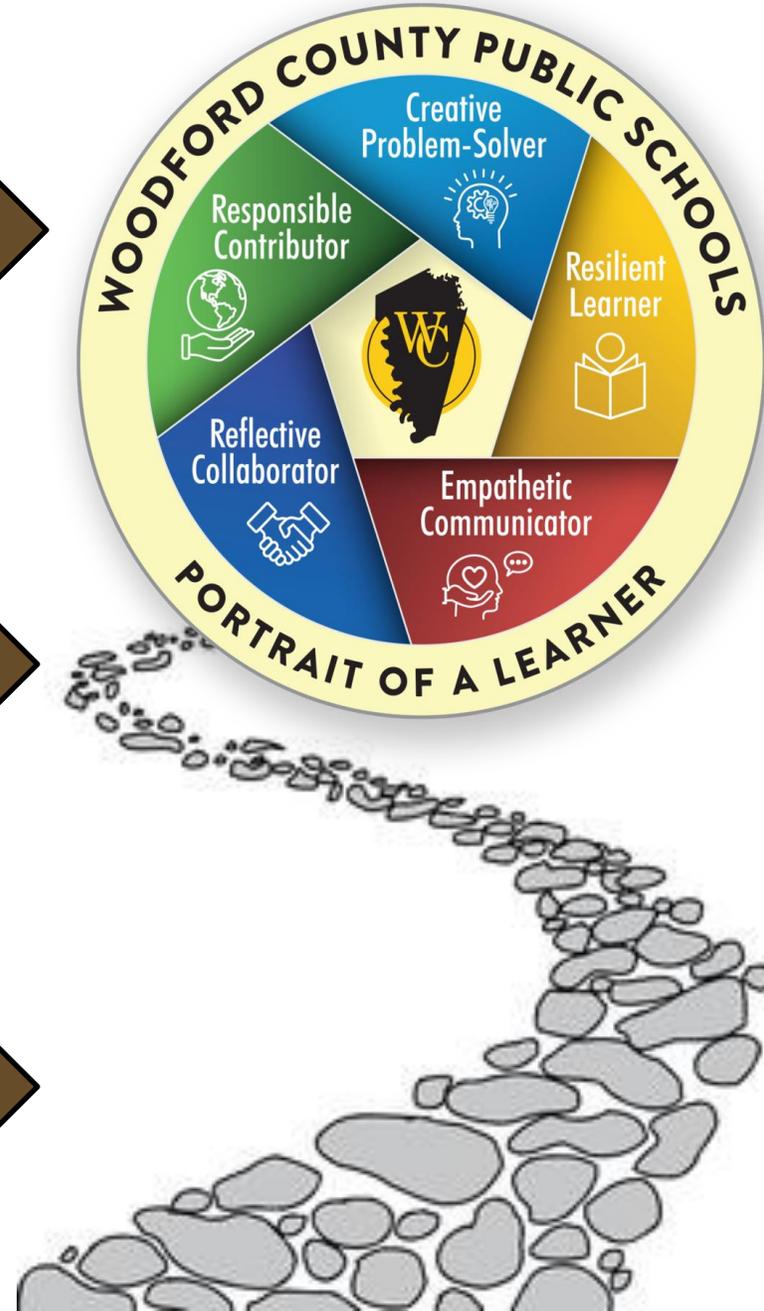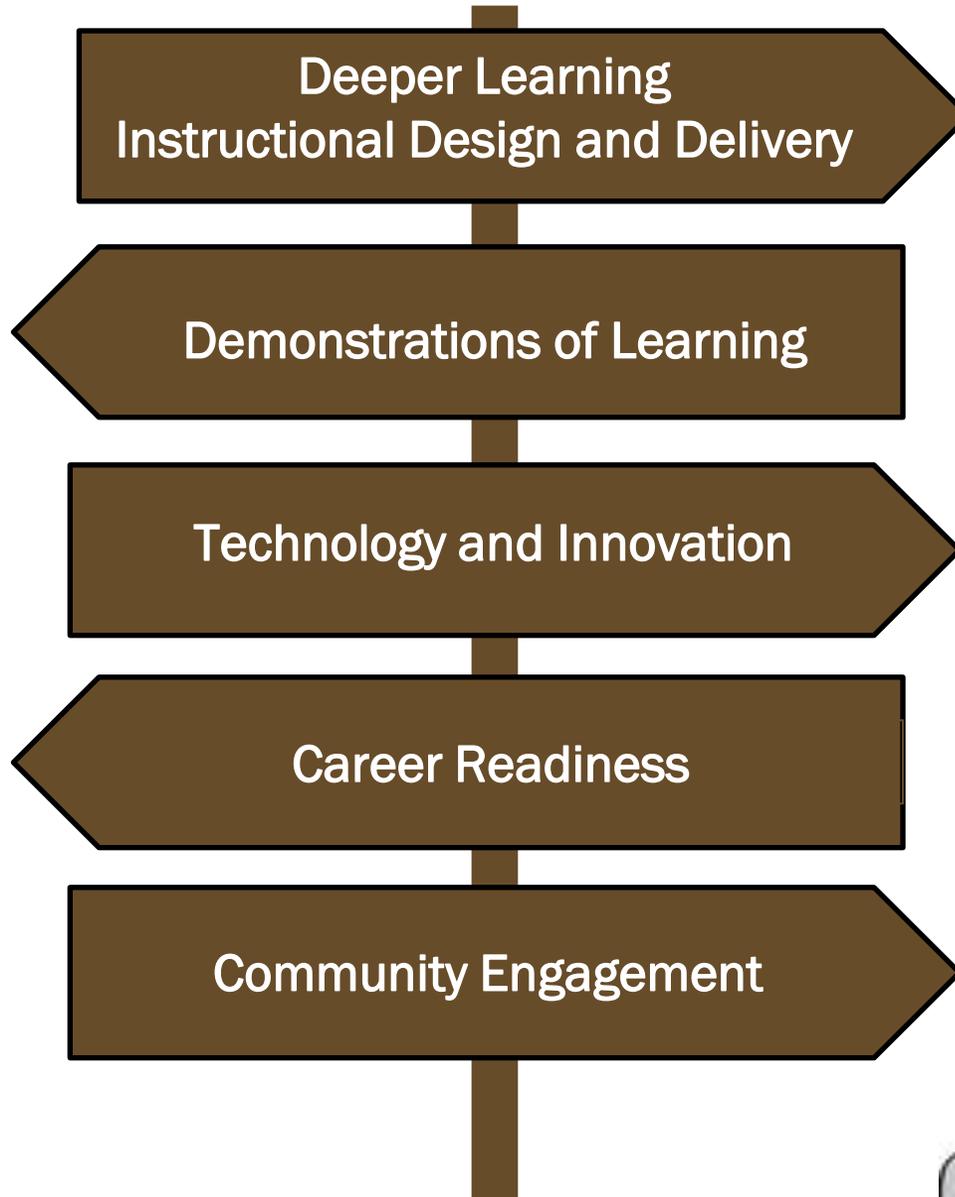
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Questions

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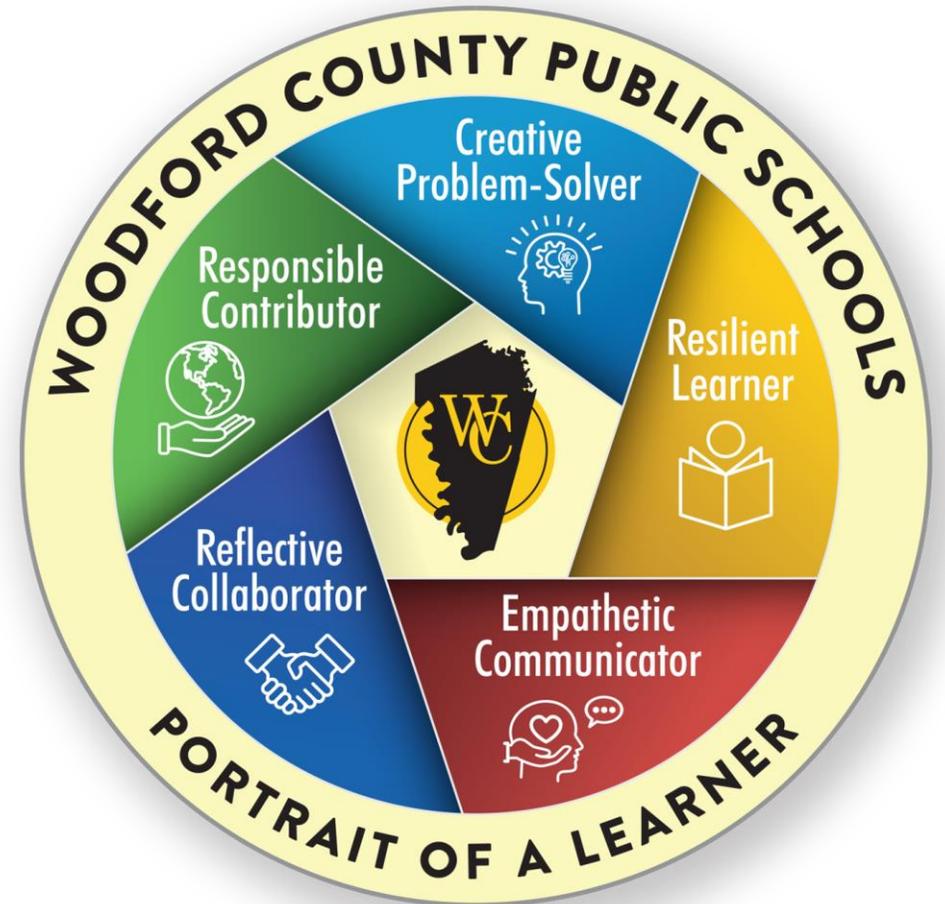
Scan or click this QR code for more examples of Local Accountability

ASBURY UNIVERSITY · BARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT · BOONE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT · BOYLE COUNTY SCHOOLS · BREATHITT COUNTY SCHOOLS · CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOLS · CASEY COUNTY SCHOOLS · CLARK COUNTY SCHOOLS · DAVIESS COUNTY SCHOOLS · EMINENCE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · FLOYD COUNTY SCHOOLS · FORWARD IN THE FIFTH · GRAVES COUNTY SCHOOLS · HARDIN COUNTY SCHOOLS · HAZARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · JENKINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · JESSAMINE COUNTY SCHOOLS · JOHNSON COUNTY SCHOOLS · KENTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT · KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION · KNOTT COUNTY SCHOOLS · KNOX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · KENTUCKY VALLEY EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE · LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT · LETCHER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · MADISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT · MAGOFFIN COUNTY SCHOOLS · MARSHALL COUNTY SCHOOLS · MASON COUNTY SCHOOLS · MERCER COUNTY SCHOOLS · OWSLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS · PADUCAH PUBLIC SCHOOLS · PARIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · PIKE COUNTY SCHOOLS · PIKEVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · SCOTT COUNTY SCHOOLS · TRIGG COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY · UNIVERSITY OF PIKEVILLE · WARREN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS · WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOLS · WILLIAMSTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS · WOLFE COUNTY SCHOOLS · WOODFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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."

KUWL Moonshot Statement (01/24/2024)

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

Choice Measures
Options for flexibility

Statewide Measures
Federally Required

Local Measures
Unique to each district

- Portrait of a Learner
- Engagement
- Culture & Leadership
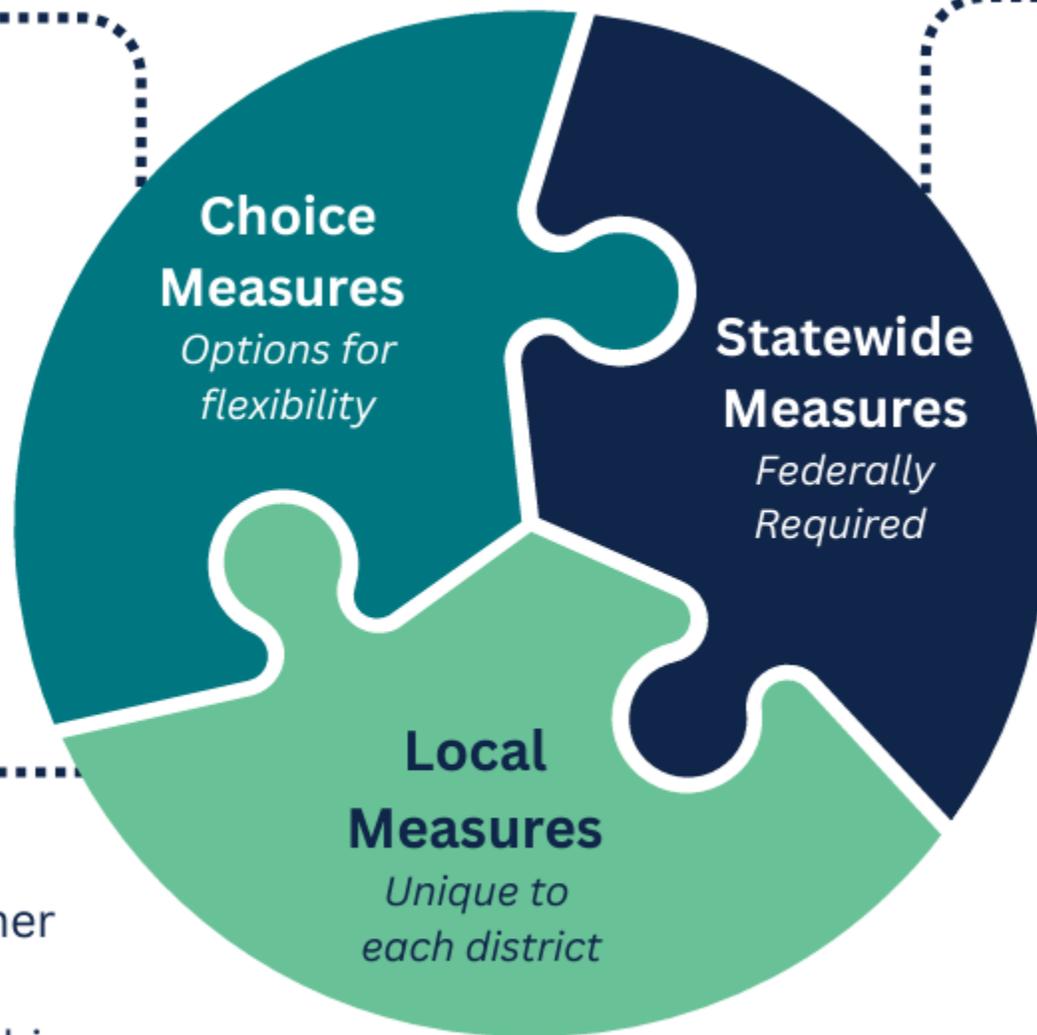
- Reading and Math
- Individual Student Growth
- Transition Readiness & Graduation Rate
- English Language Progress
- Climate and Safety Survey
- *Science Assessment -*

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.

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.