

Making Inquiry Possible Project

The *Making Inquiry Possible Project* is a University of Kentucky (UK) professional learning initiative sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to help educators implement the new Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies (KASSS) recently adopted in February 2019. The project outcome will feature a set of three 30-minute documentaries that “show” not “tell” educators about recent efforts in Kentucky to shift towards inquiry-based instruction in the social studies. The project will also include online professional development materials to accompany the documentaries designed to facilitate discussions about the triumphs and challenges that teachers, students, and districts experience as they implement the new standards.

The Documentaries

The purpose of this project is to help educators understand how inquiry-based curriculum and instruction are made possible by the collaborative efforts of teachers, their students, and supportive administrators. We are calling this the *inquiry ecosystem*. Our experience watching early adopters in Kentucky is that individual commitment is important but is insufficient in making inquiry a reality.

The documentaries will feature three case studies of diverse places in Kentucky. We are partnering with a rural elementary classroom, an urban middle school classroom, and a suburban high school classroom. In this way, we can examine the factors that make inquiry possible across three distinct Kentucky locations and grade levels.

The Agreement

For any project, involving data collection (e.g., surveys, interviews, video development) or research (e.g., program evaluation or monitoring activities), JCPS student or staff participation is voluntary. As a federally authorized Institutional Review Board (IRB), JCPS complies with the federal definition for research, which includes sharing of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for the purposes of answering a question or evaluating activities for effectiveness beyond standard educational or operational procedures. Thus, all data collection and research activities must be approved by the JCPS IRB and shall not begin before approval is secured from the JCPS IRB.

Upon approval by the Jefferson County Public Schools IRB office, UK agrees to complete the following:

- Three days of filming at Kammerer Middle School (KMS).
- The focus of the documentary is on JCPS instructional lead in social studies, Ryan New. We will interview him on camera and film while he meets with teachers or administrators.
- We will interview 3-4 of the social studies teachers on camera and also capture any departmental meeting they have related to inquiry in social studies during those three days.
- We will capture footage of one or two of the teachers teaching with inquiry-based methods. This would involve capturing students on film. We might interview 1-2 students as well.
- We will only film and interview students for whom we have received parental consent and staff member who have provided consent. These consent forms will be submitted to the JCPS IRB for approval to distribution to students, parents, or staff.

There is no cost to the school district associated with this project. This project is being completed through a grant from the Kentucky Department of Education.

Any persons from UK entering a school building or classroom for this project will have gone through the proper background check procedures according to Jefferson County Public Schools policies.

Termination

Either party may terminate this MOU in whole or in part at any time by giving written notice to Dr. Kathy Swan (UK) or Dr. Carmen Coleman, of such termination and specifying the effective date thereof, at least thirty (30) days before the specified effective date.

SIGNATURES



David Blackwell
Provost
University of Kentucky

3 / 10 / 2020

Date of Signature

Martin A. Pollio, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Jefferson County Public Schools

____/____/_____
Date of Signature