Garrard County Schools
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GARRARD COUNTY — EXPECT THE BEST

VISION:
Expect the Best!

Mission

The Garrard County Board of Education, as responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us, affirming the dignity and value of all children of our community, will provide all children an education which enables them to graduate college- and career-ready and become successful, productive citizens in a global society.

Belief Statements

Through a collaborative effort with all stakeholders, Garrard County School System has developed the belief statements outlined below. These statements were formulated by the Comprehensive District Planning (CDIP) Committee and are reviewed annually. These belief statements are a part of the district AdvancEd accreditation report and are referenced in the CDIP Executive Summary. They are used to communicate district-wide beliefs that guide our collective decisions and actions.

What we believe about student learning:

- All students have worth and dignity and should be expected to achieve at high levels.
- All students have the potential for high achievement.
- All students will be challenged with rigorous work at all levels.
- All students will be educated so that they will become productive members of society.

- Every stakeholder is responsible for continuous improvement in student learning.

What we believe about teaching:

- Proficient teaching matters. We will continually train and monitor our professional community to ensure that we are leaving nothing about teaching and learning to chance.
- Planning matters. Teachers will intentionally plan rigorous lessons that address all students' educational needs.
- Student work matters. Learning activities will be relevant, connected to real-life experiences and designed to actively engage all students.
- Results matter. Student learning will be frequently assessed and students who need interventions or enrichment will receive it in a timely manner.
- Character matters. Teaching moral values, self-discipline, respect for authority, as well as respect for others and self are important.
- Culture matters. It is important to immerse students in a school culture that is conducive to optimal learning.

What we believe about schools:

- Schools will be safe places.
- Schools will be organized around the needs of students.
- Schools will generate the active involvement of parents, teachers, students and the community in order to be successful.
- Schools will ensure that all students develop positive relationships with caring adults at every level.
- Schools will focus on helping students develop good character, citizenship, and employability.

What we believe about the role of Central Office:

- Central Office should be a support to the schools.
- One of the goals of Central Office personnel should be to remove barriers to student achievement at the building level.
- Central Office staff should be visible in the schools and community.
- Central Office procedures should be structured to be thorough yet streamlined to reduce burdens on folks at the school level.

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STRATEGIC PLAN
VISION 2010

Our Covenant with the Community

Being driven by dedication to serve our constituents, our district promotes a vision of "Expect the Best". This means we want our "customers"- the students, parents, staff members and our entire community to be able to expect the very best from our school system. We strive for a servant attitude. We believe in providing the best education possible to our students. With this in mind, Garrard County Schools has approved a Covenant with the Community, derived from our belief statements, that stresses ideals we believe are "non-negotiable". The Covenant with the Community is the result of a consensus reached by the Instructional Leadership Team and the Garrard County Board of Education.

Child-Centered – For every decision that is made, we will affirmatively answer the question, "Is this what is best for our students?"

Conservative Stewardship– We will be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us, always mindful of the ultimate goal of providing the best possible education for our students. Budgeting will be transparent; there will be equity for all, and we will work to retain personnel. Energy efficiency in our facilities is a top priority. Students are our most valuable resource and decisions must be based on their best interests – they are our future.

Continuous Improvement – We will be relentless in the pursuit of our goals and of improving each and every day. Continuous improvement tools, including the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model and continuing to implement PBIS will be modeled and utilized to ensure maximum growth. We will be mindful to constantly examine the rigor level of what we are asking our students to do as they will reach the goals we set for them.

Communication – We will engage in effective, two-way communication with all stakeholders.

Communication Is a Key to School Success, submitted to the Garrard County Central Record by Superintendent Paul Mullins, August 6, 2015.

The success of our schools and programs — and all of the students they serve — depend on outstanding communication by everyone involved.

While it is a "given" that excellent schools need great teachers, dedicated administrators, safe facilities and responsive programs, all of these components combined can fail to produce

successful students if the mix is missing one vital ingredient: the active involvement of parents and the community.

Collaboration – We will take every opportunity to partner with and seek input from our parents and community. We realize that we can only achieve our goals by working together. We recognize that all parents want the best for their children and have the capacity to support their learning.

Culture of Safety and Service – We are here for our children. We commit to keep them safe, to serve our students and community, and to be intentional in cultivating a service mindset.

College and Career Readiness – We want every student to graduate college and be career ready. We will partner with all stakeholders to help Garrard County become a "Work Ready" community.

Learn more about Work Ready Community of Kentucky at workready.ky.gov

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Learning Goals

It is our goal to ensure successful transitions (the processes involved in changing from one grade level to another) throughout a student's educational career by identifying and articulating the **learning goals for each level**. We believe it is imperative to help students attain these goals to be ready for success at the next level. We understand the importance of building successful transitions from one level to the next, and from school to adulthood.

Pre-K
Every student is Kindergarten ready. Define key terms according to state guidelines for readiness.

K-5
Every student has fluent, grade-level literacy skills.

Every student has fluent, grade-level numeracy skills.

Every student has fluent, grade-level writing/communication skills.

Middle School
Every student reads on grade level with fluency.

Every student has grade level, fluent numeracy skills.

Every student writes and communicates with grade level fluency.

Every student has critical thinking and problem solving skills that have been enhanced by a technology rich environment in every content area.

Every student has a four-year course taking plan for high school developed and shared with parents including appropriate career pathways and/or explorations.

High School
Every student will be college and/or career ready, **possessing the following 21st century learning skills** to be successful and productive citizens:

CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Reason Effectively
- Use various types of reasoning (e.g., inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation

Use Systems Thinking
- Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems

Make Judgments and Decisions
- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes

Solve Problems
- Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION
Think Creatively
- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming)
- Create new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts)

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- Elaborate, refine, analyze, and evaluate ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts
- Demonstrate imagination and curiosity

Work Creatively with Others
- Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively
- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work
- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas
- View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes

Implement Innovations
- Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Communicate Clearly
- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts

- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g., to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade) and in diverse environments (including multi-lingual)
- Utilize multiple media and technologies, and know how to judge their effectiveness a priori as well as assess their impact

Collaborate with Others
- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal

- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member

VISUAL LITERACY
- Demonstrate the ability to interpret, recognize, appreciate, and understand information presented through visible actions, objects and symbols, natural or man-made2

SCIENTIFIC AND NUMERICAL LITERACY
- Demonstrate the ability to evaluate the quality of scientific and numerical information on the basis of its sources and the methods used to generate it
- Demonstrate the capacity to pose and evaluate scientific arguments based on evidence and to apply conclusions from such arguments appropriately
- Demonstrate ability to reason with numbers and other mathematical concepts

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY THINKING
- Apply knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills across disciplines in appropriate and effective ways

BASIC LITERACY
- Demonstrate the ability to use language to read, write, listen, and speak

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INFORMATION, MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

INFORMATION LITERACY
Access and Evaluate Information
- Access information efficiently (time) and effectively (sources)
- Evaluate information critically and competently

Use and Manage Information
- Use information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
- Manage the flow of information from a wide variety of sources
- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

MEDIA LITERACY
Analyze Media
- Understand both how and why media messages are constructed and for what purposes
- Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors

- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of media

Create Media Products
- Understand and utilize the most appropriate media creation tools, characteristics, and conventions
- Understand and effectively utilize the most appropriate expressions and interpretations in diverse, multi-cultural environments

ICT (INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY) LITERACY
Apply Technology Effectively
- Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information
- Use digital technologies (e.g., computers, PDAs, media players, GPS, etc.), communication/networking tools, and social networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information to successfully function in a knowledge economy
- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information technologies

21st CENTURY THEMES

GLOBAL AWARENESS
- Use 21st century skills to understand and address global issues
- Learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work, and community contexts
- Understand other nations and cultures, including the use of non-English languages

FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC, BUSINESS, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LITERACY
- Demonstrate the ability to make appropriate personal economic choices
- Understand the role of the economy in society
- Apply entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options

CIVIC LITERACY
- Participate effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes
- Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels
- Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions

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HEALTH LITERACY

- Obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services and use such information and services in ways that enhance health

- Understand preventive physical and mental health measures, including proper diet, nutrition, exercise, risk avoidance, and stress reduction

- Use available information to make appropriate health-related decisions

- Establish and monitor personal and family health goals

- Understand national and international public health and safety issues

ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

- Demonstrate ecological knowledge and understanding of how natural systems work, as well as knowledge and understanding of how natural systems interface with social systems

- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between beliefs, political systems, and environmental values of various cultures

- Demonstrate understanding of environmental issues caused as the result of human interaction with the environment, and knowledge related to alternative solutions to issues

- Demonstrate active and considered participation aimed at solving problems and resolving issues3

LIFE AND CAREER SKILLS
FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY
Adapt to Change

- Adapt to varied roles, job responsibilities, schedules, and contexts

- Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities

Be Flexible

- Incorporate feedback effectively

- Deal positively with praise, setbacks, and criticism

- Understand, negotiate, and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments

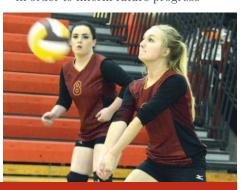## INITIATIVE AND SELF-DIRECTION
Manage Goals and Time

- Set goals with tangible and intangible success criteria

- Balance tactical (short-term) and strategic (long-term) goals

- Utilize time and manage workload efficiently

Work Independently

- Monitor, define, prioritize, and complete tasks without direct oversight

Be Self-directed Learners

- Go beyond basic mastery of skills and/ or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise

- Demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level

- Demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process

- Reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress

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SOCIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS

Interact Effectively with Others
- Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak
- Conduct oneself in a respectable, professional manner

Work Effectively in Diverse Teams
- Respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values
- Leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both innovation and quality of work

PRODUCTIVITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Manage Projects
- Set and meet goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressures
- Prioritize, plan, and manage work to achieve the intended result

Produce Results
- Demonstrate additional attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to:
- Work positively and ethically
- Manage time and projects effectively

- Multi-task
- Participate actively, as well as be reliable and punctual
- Present oneself professionally and with proper etiquette
- Collaborate and cooperate effectively with teams
- Respect and appreciate team diversity
- Be accountable for results

LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY

Guide and Lead Others
- Use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
- Leverage strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
- Inspire others to reach their very best via example and selflessness
- Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in using influence and power

Be Responsible to Others
- Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

1. Except as otherwise noted, the skills definitions are derived from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework (www.21stcenturyskills.org).

2. Derived from definition attributed to John Debes, per the International Visual Literacy Association (www.ivla.org/org_what_vis_lit.htm).

3. Adapted from the Environmental Literacy Council Framework

Blueprint for Success

(what we must do instructionally to be successful)

To attain the identified learning goals, we commit to a clear focus on quality classroom instruction that will lead to the highest level of student achievement. We believe that a focus on "world class instruction" and having a "growth mindset" will yield success for ALL of our students.

World Class Instruction includes but is not limited to:
- Research-based practices with a systematic approach (including effective use of technology
- Quality student engagement by implementing research-based instructional strategies
- Frequent formative assessment (including overt responses and exit slips) that is used to guide instruction
- Common district assessments that are congruent with standards, clear learning goals, and classroom instruction

Growth Mindset includes but is not limited to:
- Data-driven work occurring in professional learning communities at the school and district levels
- Collaboration across disciplines, grade levels and schools
- Continuous improvement planning including CDIP, CSIP, 30-60-90 planning, use of the plan-do-study-act model, plus/delta tools
- Growing teacher leaders
- Central office supports
- Congruence − Vision ➢ Mission ➢ Exit Goals ➢ Strategic Plan ➢ Blueprint for Success ➢ CDIP and CSIPs ➢ 30-60-90 Day Plans

Strategic Goals

Garrard County Schools sets forth the following Strategic Goals to guide us toward our vision of "Expect the Best" for the benefit of our students and the community.

Strategic Goal 1

All students will experience academic success by having grade-level literacy skills; having grade-level numeracy skills; and graduating from Garrard County High School college and/or career ready.

Objective 1
All educators will use "best practice" instructional strategies to help all students be successful.

The Kentucky Framework for Teaching will be used to improve instructional practice through its use in the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System. Kagan Structures will be utilized throughout the district to increase student engagement. A common language will be established though the use and identification of the Artisan Teacher themes.

Next steps will include:

- Focus on a "Kagan Structure of the Month"
- Addition of Kagan structures and Rutherford coaching themes to the district walkthrough template
- Data will be collected at each District Data Day to monitor implementation

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World Class Instruction for Academic Success

Make the Most of all Resources

Organize for Efficiency

Actively Engage and Promote Growth Mindset

STUDENTS

TEACHERS

PARENTS

COMMUNITY

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The miracle of structures is that in the same amount of time that the teacher could call on and respond to two or three students in the class, each giving one answer, the teacher can have every student give several answers. In the traditional, call-on-one-at-a-time approach to instruction, it would take about an hour to have each student speak for a minute because the teacher asks the question, the student responds, and then the teacher responds to the answer, giving either a correction or praise. Further, because it tends to be the same students responding all the time, many students seldom participate, or even not at all. In the traditional approach, we end up calling most on those who least need the practice, and least on those who most need the practice. In contrast, with the structures, because all the students are responding at once, it takes only two minutes to give each student a minute of active engagement time, and it is not just the high achievers responding – everyone responds. Engagement goes up, as does joy in learning and achievement scores.

What are Kagan Structures?

Written by Dr. Spencer Kagan, found at www.kaganonline.com

Structures are simple, step-by-step instructional strategies. Most Kagan Structures are designed to increase student engagement and cooperation. For example, a simple Kagan Structure is a RallyRobin. Rather than calling on one student at a time, the teacher has all students interacting at once by saying, "Turn to your partner and do a RallyRobin." During a RallyRobin, students repeatedly take turns, giving one answer each turn to create an oral list. Each student in the class gives several answers. For longer responses, the teacher might use a different structure, a Timed Pair Share. In a Timed Pair Share, each student in turn shares for a predetermined time, perhaps only a minute each.

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Objective 2

Teachers will receive specific and timely feedback from trained administrators and peers.

Administrators will continue their work with Mike Rutherford and his Coaching Laboratory principles and models. Also, administrators will continue using eWalk to provide feedback to teachers after walkthroughs. The walkthrough template will reflect a focus on best practices.

Data will be collected and shared/analyzed at each District Data Day held at least two times per year.

Objective 3

All teachers will participate in high-functioning professional learning communities.

We will continue our study of effective professional learning community practices from the DuFours and others. Schools will develop and use protocols in a plan-do-study-act format that includes the sharing of:

- Curriculum (standards and learning targets)
- Common assessments
- Instructional strategies used (including Kagan structures)
- Common assessment results and analysis
- Communication with parents
- Next steps for intervention and enrichment
- Student voice
- Teacher self-reflection

Objective 4

All educators will show evidence of the collection and utilization of assessment data to differentiate instruction.

Educators will collect and use data from classroom assessments, common district assessments, MAP, KPREP, EOC's, ACT and other college readiness measures to differentiate instruction. Embedded professional development will occur in professional learning community meetings, department meetings, and staff meetings. Administrators will conference with teachers to review results, give feedback, and assist with next steps.

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Objective 5
We will implement the district writing plan and show evidence of the strategies used for targeted instruction and planning.

Our recently developed K-12 writing plan will be used as a guide for our work in writing. Students will receive feedback throughout the school year. Each student will have a writing folder showing evidence of the writing process and growth during the school year.

Objective 6
We will be data driven by collecting, dissecting and analyzing data and implement strategies to reduce achievement gaps (socioeconomic, students with disabilities) and differentiate instruction for all students (including Gifted/Talented).

Data sources will include but will not be limited to the following:

RTI data, co-teaching CT4GC data, expanded Gifted/Talented services, after-school program data, ESS program data, AmeriCorps, GEAR UP, YCC, Work Ready Community Initiative, AdvanceKY, Kagan work, Rutherford work, ETS, and PBIS data.

Goal 2

We will work to make the most of all resources and organize for efficiency.

Objective 1
The district and each school will identify "big rocks" as areas of focus and develop 30-60-90 day plans to improve in those areas annually.

Based on data, the district and schools will identify 2-4 "big rocks" upon which to focus. 30-60-90 day plans will be developed to strategically plan for growth in the identified areas of need. Progress toward objectives will be monitored and shared with all stakeholders.

Objective 2
We will seek to implement efficiency measures in all that we do.

Our goal is to be as efficient as possible in every area. We will consider performance contracts that would provide us savings on energy costs. Whenever possible, we will utilize talent within our district to provide "in-house" professional development. We will be aggressive in seeking grants that could be used to address needs and help us improve.

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Objective 3
We will always use available data to inform our decisions.

Data sources for this include, but are not limited to: assessment data, perception surveys, financial measures, external reviews and audits, program assessments, attendance data, graduation data, and discipline data.

Objective 4
We will structure meetings to be focused and outcome-based.

We never want to meet simply for the sake of meeting. All meetings should include an agenda and be geared toward accomplishing specific tasks.

Goal 3

Garrard County Schools will actively engage with parents and the community to achieve its goals.

Objective 1
Garrard County Schools will develop a comprehensive communication plan.

The goal of the communication plan will be to maximize the effectiveness of our communication with all stakeholders. The plan will include timelines, contact persons, and modes of communication. It will detail responsibilities at the classroom, school, and district levels.

Objective 2
We will make a concerted effort to increase parent and community involvement and partnerships with Garrard County Schools.

The communication plan will also detail avenues to effectively increase parent and community knowledge of the school system, creating a more engaged base of stakeholders. The extent to which the public becomes partners in educational progress will be monitored and measured. The school system will actively engage with community partners in mutually supportive roles.

Objective 3
We will develop a plan to monitor the customer satisfaction of all of our stakeholder groups.

Our communication plan will include ways to monitor customer satisfaction among all stakeholder groups. Stakeholder perception data will be shared with the public and with the Board of Education regularly.

Objective 4
We will partner with all stakeholders to work toward the goal of making Garrard County a Work Ready Community.

The school system will be an active partner with other community agencies in the Work Ready Community initiative *(see Workready.ky.gov)*. A committee working to gain work-ready status will apply for this status for Garrard County in September, 2016.

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