



**PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER  
IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH**

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# Objectives of the Research

Investigate the implementation status of local Portraits of a Learner across districts in Kentucky.

## Objectives:

- Identify and evaluate the various stages of local Portrait of a Learner implementation across districts
- Understand needs for support and guidance in next steps of local implementation
- Gather information to aid the development of future plans for statewide portrait implementation
- Build a repository of examples from local work conducted in districts

## Goals:

- To support reciprocal partnerships between local districts and the state and to honor the local efforts made in enhancing the educational landscape
- To provide an enriched, comprehensive understanding of the Portrait of a Learner across different district contexts



# Portrait of a Learner Implementation Continuum

1. Development of a Portrait of a Learner
2. Published Portrait of a Learner
3. Development of a Performance Assessment System
4. Instructional Design Based Upon Vibrant Learning Experiences
5. Community Engagement in Instruction & Assessment
6. Locally-Adopted Policies to Support Deeper Learning Instruction & Assessment
7. Fully Functioning Instructional & Assessment System

Source: [UK Center for Next Generation Leadership](#)



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# Portrait of a Learner Implementation Continuum (cont).

Development of Portrait of a Learner	Published Portrait of a Learner	Development of Performance Assessment System	Instructional Design based upon Vibrant Learning Experiences	Community Engagement in Instruction & Assessment	Locally Adopted Policies to Support DL Instruction & Assessment	Fully Functioning Instructional & Assessment System
<p><i>District has convened a committee of stakeholders to determine what students should know and be able to do. A public feedback process has been established and/or implemented.</i></p>	<p><i>District has attained School Board approval of an agreed upon set of competencies for all learners in the district. A common set of descriptors for each competency has been published on a poster or other written and/or digital platform.</i></p>	<p><i>District has begun development of a system of measurement of the PoL competencies that may include the following: performance outcomes, rubrics, student-led conferences, performance tasks, exhibitions, portfolio defenses.</i></p>	<p><i>District is providing deeper learning opportunities for all students and educators such as: project-based learning, inquiry, workshop, leaving to learn, informed action, authentic problem-solving, conferring/ feedback</i></p>	<p><i>District and community partners are working together to provide deeper learning opportunities within the school and community. This may include: work-based learning, field trips, expert speakers, panelists, informed action to solve a community problem, grants, sponsorships, etc</i></p>	<p><i>Local School Board and Site-Based Decision Making Councils have adopted policies to support deeper learning instruction and assessment. These policies may address: portfolio defense as graduation requirement, local assessment system involving PoL competencies, flexible scheduling, advisory system, etc.</i></p>	<p><i>All district schools have well-defined instructional structures and an assessment system that measures academic skills and PoL competencies along with policies and professional learning to support sustainability and building capacity among instructional staff.</i></p>

Source: [UK Center for Next Generation Leadership](#)

# Alignment to United We Learn Vision - 3 Big Ideas

Purposive alignment between the *United We Learn Vision's 3 Big Ideas* and the Portrait of a Learner implementation continuum:

- **Big Idea 1 - Creating vibrant learning experiences:**
  - Instructional design based upon vibrant learning experiences
- **Big Idea 2 - Accelerating innovation, especially in assessment:**
  - Development of a performance assessment system
- **Big Idea 3 - Collaborating with communities:**
  - Develop a Portrait of a Learner
  - Community engagement in instruction & assessment



# Research Design

## Context:

Survey provided to districts (79) identified as having:

- *Finalized* set of competencies  
OR
- *Developing* a set of competencies

40 (51%) districts responded as of 6/23/2023

## Sample was identified through the “continuum”:

*Finalized set of competencies:* 42 districts

*Developing a set of competencies:* 37 districts

*Considering development:* 21 districts

*Not considering development:* 8 districts

*Unknown status:* 63 districts

## Key Survey Questions Structure:

- “Looking across all of your schools and the grades that they serve, how far along are you in the following lines of work related to...”
  - Focused on each of the areas of the implementation continuum
- What services and supports would be most helpful to your current or next step in Portrait of a Learner implementation?
- Does your district currently have locally-adopted graduate requirements that support the Portrait of a Learner? (e.g. successful Senior defense of learning, etc.)
- Please share some examples of district-level work and/or school level initiatives that demonstrate the competencies that are either described in your district’s local portrait OR the [Kentucky PoL](#).

# Focus Question 1:

Looking across all of your schools and the grades that they serve, how far along are you in the following lines of work related to developing a performance assessment system?

(Answer Options:  
completed, in progress, not yet started, not relevant)

*\*40 responding districts*

- **Develop performance outcomes at different grades or grade bands**
  - 5 completed, 17 in progress, 17 not yet started
- **Develop common rubrics that can be used to evaluate performance**
  - 4 completed, 16 in progress, 20 not yet started
- **Develop guidelines for or examples of performance tasks**
  - 2 completed, 15 in progress, 22 not yet started
- **Conduct student-led conferences**
  - 3 completed, 17 in progress, 19 not yet started
- **Conduct exhibitions of learning for formative purposes**
  - 3 completed, 15 in progress, 21 not yet started
- **Conducting portfolio defenses for summative purposes**
  - 4 completed, 10 in progress, 25 not yet started

# Examples of Performance Assessment Systems

## Boone County:

Developed performance outcomes by school levels

## Rowan County:

Senior Defenses of Learning;

8th, 5th and 4th grade Defense of Learning pilots;

PBL culminating exhibitions of learning K-12, Student-led conferences

## Shelby County:

Profile of a Graduate Dashboard

LEARNER MINDSET (Elementary)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eagerly explores the world around them, and inquisitively seeks answers and understanding.</li> <li>Embraces curiosity to experience new ideas.</li> <li>Develop positive attitudes and beliefs about learning.</li> <li>Demonstrates persistence and resilience.</li> <li>Find and maximize opportunities to actively listen and elicit diverse perspectives from others.</li> <li>Acquire discipline knowing that it is clear, rational, open-minded, and informed by evidence.</li> <li>Identify, evaluate, and prioritize solutions to difficult or complex situations.</li> <li>Demonstrates flexibility when acclimating to various roles and situations.</li> <li>Possess a lifelong desire to learn, understand, and engage.</li> </ul>	
Grades K-2 Performance Outcomes	Grades 3-5 Performance Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can ask questions that are on topic in order to explore the world around me.</li> <li>I can describe my academic and personal strengths and identify areas for growth.</li> <li>I can set academic and personal goals, identify the next step to take towards my goal, and apply strategies to meet my goals.</li> <li>I can identify and describe how my actions help and/or hinder me or others and make <b>different/better</b> choices that will help me or others to achieve our goal(s).</li> <li>I can apply grade level numeracy and literacy skills and strategies to gain knowledge and make sense of new texts and ideas.</li> <li>I can demonstrate and apply numeracy and literacy skills and practices to make connections within and across disciplines.</li> <li>I can describe the strategies I used, identify my mistakes/challenges and use my strengths, resources, and strategies when facing similar situations/experiences.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can ask questions that are relevant and investigable to explore the world around me.</li> <li>I can identify and describe my academic and personal strengths and set goals to address my areas for growth, and</li> <li>I can identify steps to take towards my goal, monitor my progress and apply and adapt strategies to meet my goals.</li> <li>I can analyze how my actions impact mine and others' learning and growth, and make <b>different/better</b> choices to help me and others meet our goals.</li> <li>I can demonstrate and apply grade level numeracy and literacy skills and practices in order to acquire new information, make sense of new texts and topics, and/or make connections within and across disciplines.</li> <li>I can evaluate the effectiveness of my plan and strategies, identify the challenges I faced and how I overcame them, and apply strategies and lessons learned to new situations/experiences.</li> </ol>

		ShelbyInspired Learning, Creating, Living												
		PROFILE OF A GRADUATE DASHBOARD												
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Responsible Collaborator		Overall Continuum												
	Video Exemplars	ESE (1:34-5:01) - WL (1:55-5:01) - LLS (10:22-5:01) (1:47)				MCC (1:48-5:01) (1:43-5:01)				MCC (1:40-12:01) (1:15-5:40)				
Single Point Rubric	Grades K-2 (E2 / S2)	Grades 3-5 (E2 / S2)			Grades 6-8 (E2 / S2)			Grades 9-12 (E2 / S2)						
Effective Communicator		Overall Continuum												
	Video Exemplars	ESE (1:48-5:01) - ESE (1:08-5:01) - SE (1:45-5:01) (2:30-5:01) - LLS (1:58-5:01) - LLS (2:10)				MCC (1:00-5:01) (1:15-5:01)				E2 (1:15-5:01)				
Single Point Rubric	Grades K-2 (E2 / S2)	Grades 3-5 (E2 / S2)			Grades 6-8 (E2 / S2)			Grades 9-12 (E2 / S2)						
Critical Thinker		Overall Continuum												
	Video Exemplars	MCC (1:25-5:01) (1:30-5:01)				MCC (1:15-12:01) - E2 (1:15-12:01)				MCC (1:15-12:01) - E2 (1:15-12:01)				
Single Point Rubric	Grades K-2 (E2 / S2)	Grades 3-5 (E2 / S2)			Grades 6-8 (E2 / S2)			Grades 9-12 (E2 / S2)						





# Examples of Instructional Design Practices to Support Vibrant Learning

## **Bullitt County:**

Incorporating authentic (PBL) learning experiences into classrooms. Freedom Elementary teacher example of a 4th grade Hunger Project and Erosion Project.

## **Trimble:**

Project and PBL learning in elementary grades. High Quality Performance Assessment training included in professional development series.



4th Graders participated in a Hunger Project PBL where we collected 847 cans of food and other non perishable food items for the Hillview Food Pantry. Students also created a 'Can'struction Exhibition to raise awareness to food insecurity in our community.

**Performance  
Assessment  
PD Series**

Katie Morgan



Kentucky Department of  
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## Focus Question 2:

Looking across all of your schools and the grades that they serve, how far along are you in implementing the following instructional design practices to support vibrant learning experiences?

*\*40 responding districts*

- **Project-based learning**
  - 2 completed, 31 in progress, 7 not yet started
- **Learning through inquiry**
  - 4 completed, 29 in progress, 7 not yet started
- **Authentic problem-solving**
  - 2 completed, 32 in progress, 6 not yet started
- **Conferring with students / providing feedback for revisions**
  - 5 completed, 29 in progress, 6 not yet started
- **Allowing for student voice and choice**
  - 5 completed, 30 in progress, 5 not yet started
- **Deeper professional learning opportunities for educators**
  - 4 completed, 34 in progress, 2 not yet started



## Focus Question 3:

Looking across all of your schools and the grades that they serve, how far are you in implementing the following community engagement practices to support instruction and assessment?

*\*40 responding districts*

- **Work-based learning opportunities**
  - 15 completed, 22 in progress, 3 not yet started
- **Field trip opportunities**
  - 16 completed, 22 in progress, 2 not yet started
- **Inviting expert teachers to schools**
  - 16 completed, 20 in progress, 4 not yet started
- **Including community members as panelists**
  - 13 completed, 17 in progress, 10 not yet started
- **Students work on solving real community problems**
  - 6 completed, 26 in progress, 8 not yet started
- **Obtaining grant funding for community engagement**
  - 4 completed, 13 in progress, 22 not yet started, 1 not relevant to us
- **Obtaining sponsorships from community programs**
  - 2 completed, 17 in progress, 20 not yet started, 1 not relevant to us

# Examples of Community-Based Practices

## Woodford:

High school class participates in Purpose in Action program.

## Owensboro:

District partnerships with local community sponsors. The 6-12 Campus of Innovation embraced PBL.

## Rowan:

Senior Community Service Day



## Focus Question 4:

Are you establishing any locally-adopted policies around deeper learning, instruction, and assessment such as...

*\*40 responding districts*

- **Graduation requirements that include portfolio defenses**
  - 3 completed, 3 in progress, 32 not yet started, 2 not relevant to us
- **Local assessment systems that involve competencies from the portrait of a graduate / learner**
  - 1 completed, 12 in progress, 25 not yet started, 2 not relevant to us
- **Schools have flexibility in scheduling courses / programs**
  - 12 completed, 21 in progress, 7 not yet started
- **Advisory systems / processes are encouraged / required**
  - 8 completed, 23 in progress, 9 not yet started

## Examples of locally-adopted policies around deeper learning, instruction, and assessment...

**Frankfort School District:** In year 8 of implementing senior-wide work-based learning placements. Senior presentations and defenses has been a "requirement" of FHS seniors dating back to the 1990s, but not a requirement for graduation. An area of growth is for the BOE to approve our POG/POL competencies and determine whether this is a graduation requirement or another type of requirement for lower grade levels. High school students defense of learning tied to Portrait of a Graduate.



## Focus Question 5:

What services and supports would be most helpful to your current or next step in Portrait of a Learner implementation?

*\*40 responding districts*

- Guidance for developing a system of measurement of PoL competencies (performance outcomes/indicators, rubrics, students-led conferences, performance tasks, exhibitions, defenses, etc.)
  - 28 districts (70%)
- Guidance for providing deeper learning opportunities such as project-based learning, inquiry, workshops, conferring/feedback, etc.
  - 25 districts (63%)
- Guidance for community partnerships to support deeper learning: work-based learning, field trips, panelists, internships, etc.
  - 27 districts (68%)

## Focus Question 5 (cont):

What services and supports would be most helpful to your current or next step in Portrait of a Learner implementation? (Check all that apply)

- Guidance for developing a system of measurement of PoL competencies (performance outcomes/indicators, rubrics, students-led conferences, performance tasks, exhibitions, defenses, etc.)
  - 28 districts (70%)

\*40 responding districts

*In response, KDE has co-created a set of **Performance Outcomes & Indicators** aligned to the KBE-adopted set of competencies. Developed in collaboration with educators across Kentucky Innovative Learning Network districts.*



# Locally-adopted graduate requirements that support the Portrait of a Learner

Yes, has graduation requirement policy (2)	In development (9)
<p data-bbox="185 416 413 495">Logan County Shelby County</p> <p data-bbox="185 642 884 749">*Breckinridge County indicated in Q.4 that they are establishing portfolio defenses as graduation requirement, answered “no” to this question.</p>	<p data-bbox="971 416 1315 812">Bullitt County Fulton County Johnson County Boone County Woodford County Nicholas County Anderson County Jackson Independent Fayette County</p>

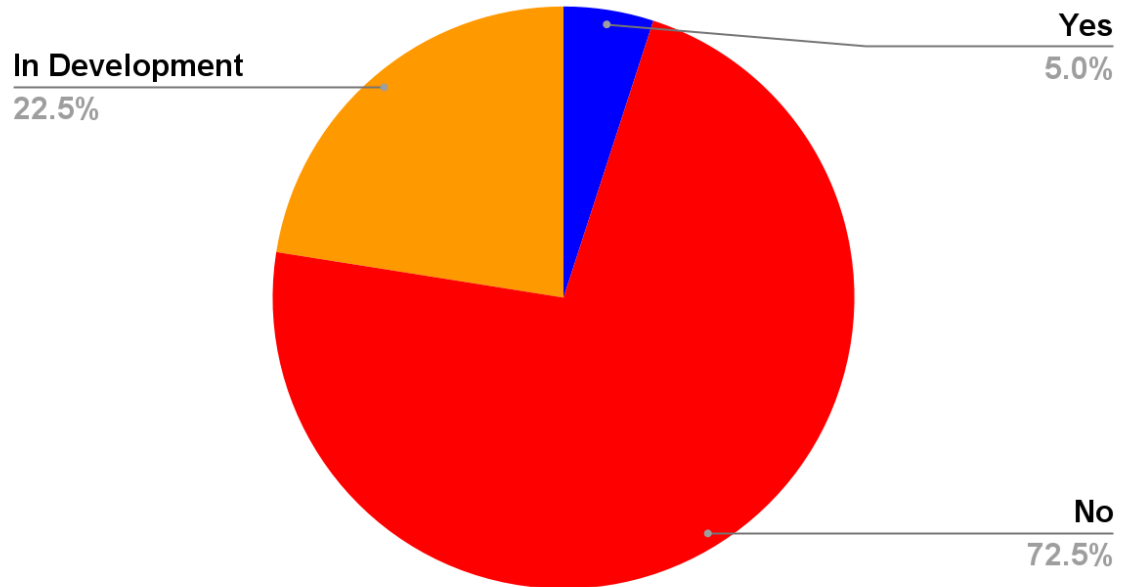
## Focus Question 6:

Does your district currently have locally-adopted graduate requirements that support the Portrait of a Learner? (e.g. successful Senior defense of learning, etc.)

- 22.5% of districts are in development
- 5% have adopted local graduation requirements
- 72.5% districts have not.

*\*40 responding districts*

### Locally-Adopted Graduation Requirements for PoL



# Examples of local graduation policy

Shelby County: Students must successfully complete a Defense of Learning including evidence of Profile of a Graduate competencies and a post-secondary plan.

# Next Steps

- Continue to solicit survey responses as districts move to the “finalized” or “developing” stages on the *implementation continuum*.
- Continue to build a repository of examples of district-level work and/or school level initiatives that demonstrate the competencies described in local portraits OR the Kentucky PoL.
- Communicate progress across districts to encourage collaboration and shared learning experiences as PoL efforts evolve.



# Takeaways

79 of the 171 districts eligible to participate based on their place on “Implementation Continuum”, with 40 (51%) completing the survey

## Portrait of a Learner:

- Communities are at different stages and phases of development and implementation.
- Positive perceptions around current progress, value, future benefits of portrait of learner implementations.
- Development of PoL-informed rubrics and assessment systems is progressing.
- Guidance desired and needed for: **a system of measurement of PoL competencies, providing deeper learning opportunities such as project-based learning, and community partnerships to support deeper learning.**

## Graduation Requirements:

- Implementation of defenses of learning are the stepping stone to policy changes.
- Most districts are in the “developing” stages of requirements tied to PoL.
- Few districts have fully implemented policy changes, still in the early stages.





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