

## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE REVIEW ITEM

**Topic:** Vibrant Learning Experiences

**Date:** June 2026

**Held In:** ☐ Full Board ☐ State Schools ☒ United We Learn


### SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION:

“Vibrant Learning Experiences Across Kentucky” is a presentation focused on showcasing how schools are bringing the Kentucky United We Learn vision to life through student-centered opportunities that are relevant, authentic, and grounded in community. Led by Associate Commissioner Kelly Foster, Director of Innovation Sarah Snipes, and Regional Innovation Specialist Alexa Hardin, the presentation highlights examples of project-based learning, gamification, performance assessment, service learning, and student exhibitions. These models and strategies represent some of the ways educators across Kentucky are empowering students to take ownership of their learning, engage deeply with real-world problems, and demonstrate mastery of academic knowledge and skills through meaningful, personalized products.

The presentation features a diverse sampling of vibrant learning experiences designed by educators across the Commonwealth. At Tates Creek High (Fayette), students addressed environmental issues in partnership with a local sustainability organization; at South Marshall Middle (Marshall), students wrote and published a book capturing the community’s experience of the 2021 tornadoes. Marnel C. Moorman Middle (Shelby) leveraged Dungeons & Dragons as a framework for exploring historical content through creative game-play and story-telling. Bardstown Elementary (Bardstown Independent) engaged families through a public exhibition night aligned to space exploration, while Rowan County Senior High (Rowan) students partnered with local leaders and Morehead State University to explore regional history through roundtable discussions and poetry. Second Street School (Frankfort) integrated gardening and nutrition into hands-on cross-disciplinary content learning for science, math, and literacy. Each example illustrates how vibrant learning fosters deeper academic achievement and skill development aligned to local Portraits of a Learner, while strengthening student agency and community connections.

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**Commissioner of Education**

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