



SUMMARY REPORT FOR:

Portrait of a Graduate

PRESENTED TO:

LINCOLN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

August 9th, 2022

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Realizing the power and
promise of 21st century
learning for every student

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Lincoln Consolidated Schools

Providing an exemplary educational experience where students develop the foundation for lifelong learning.

A premier learning community whose students are consistently high achieving, compassionate, and inspired to make a difference.

Why Develop a Portrait of a Graduate?

A “Portrait of a Graduate” (Portrait) serves as a visioning device for a school system. It establishes the purpose for schools because graduates represent the culmination of the K–12 learning experience. Most families hope their children wear their cap and gown and walk across the graduation stage. A student’s successful graduation is one of the first rites of passage that can have significant implications on the scope of life choices to follow. While graduation itself is not enough to help young people maximize life’s opportunities, the competencies students develop by the time they graduate often inform the opportunities available to young people after high school.

Lincoln Consolidated Schools engaged in the Portrait development process to discuss with community members the competencies Lincoln Consolidated Schools prioritizes for its graduates. This process addresses several limitations in current education systems. Historically, education has emphasized content over skills and mindsets. A focus on coursework is necessary, but insufficient to prepare graduates for their post-secondary lives. As such, information about what students know and are able to do is either unclear or short in supply. The Portrait re-orientes how learning is organized and reported, based on a manageable set of prioritized competencies that best prepare students for success after high school. Consequently, the “target” becomes clearer for how Lincoln Consolidated Schools community wants to prepare students for their futures, and information about the same is clearer to all stakeholders. This has implications for aligning curriculum, assessment, and designing students’ learning experiences.

Lincoln Consolidated Schools and its community members wish to develop in students a set of key competencies that are transferable across time, space, and life’s myriad situations. Few, if anyone, can predict what situations students will find themselves in when they leave Lincoln Consolidated Schools. It is difficult to know exactly what content and skills they will need. To hedge against this uncertainty, it is critical to develop in our students’ transferable skills and mindsets that can be applied in many situations, so they will meet challenges, seize opportunities, and continually grow throughout life.

The Portrait Development Process

Lincoln Consolidated Schools assembled a Portrait Design Team, a diverse team of community members that represent the various stakeholder groups. The Portrait Design Team identified the competencies for its Portrait through a rigorous process, including research, concept design and development. Through this process, many stakeholders had opportunity to interact in the community conversation on Lincoln Consolidated Schools Portrait of a Graduate. Per communications from Lincoln Consolidated Schools Leadership to their Portrait Design Team, this group's charge was to "develop a collective vision that articulates our community's aspirations for **all** of our students," including the youngest learners all the way to the district's graduates.

APPROACH AND OBSERVATIONS

The Portrait Design Team's approach included these steps:

1. **Landscape Shift Study:** The Portrait Design Team began their work with a study of a variety of societal changes (i.e., landscape shifts) that have occurred over the last several decades. This study helped the team understand the extent to which our schools are preparing students for success amidst these shifts. There were four key shifts with support evidence within each shift. Among the landscape shifts studied were:
 - Workforce
 - i. Routine to Non-Routine Work
 - ii. The "Gig" Economy
 - iii. The Service Economy
 - Pace of Change
 - i. Technology
 - ii. Information Explosion
 - iii. Innovation
 - Global
 - i. Environment
 - ii. Demographics
 - Human Interaction
 - i. Design for Meaning
 - ii. Civic Discourse
 - iii. Empathy
 - iv. High Concept/High Touch

During this study of various landscape shifts, Portrait Design Team members rated the importance of each shift based on their relevance to Lincoln Consolidated Schools and the community. During this process they considered how these landscape shifts may impact students' prospects for current and future success. The following chart illustrates the landscape shift results, where each landscape shift was rated on a three-point scale:

All supporting data is listed below.

LINCOLN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Landscape Shift Results

The Design Team Participants responded to a prompt of how critical various concepts were for the design of learning experiences for all students. Design Team members were asked to consider specifically if each concept was

Interesting, but Not Compelling = 1

Important = 2

Critical = 3

Participants = 63

Pace of Change: Technology- <i>How do we prepare all our students to most effectively use the continually advancing technology to the benefit of themselves and the greater community?</i>	2.94
Human Interactions: Empathy- <i>How do we help our students develop the ability to emotionally connect with others, understand their perspectives, and act accordingly?</i>	2.84
Pace of Change: Innovation- <i>How do we approach the concept of failure/errors/etc. so students feel supported to take risks to innovate and so they keep pace with the acceleration of new ideas?</i>	2.69
Human Interaction: Civic Discourse- <i>How do we encourage students to value the opinions of others and the importance of effectively using disagreement as an opportunity for progress, especially in light of our changing demographics and too-often impersonal forms of communication?</i>	2.61
Pace of Change: Information Explosion- <i>How do we help children prioritize and navigate all the information that's at their fingertips?</i>	2.42
Global: Environmental Considerations- <i>How do we prepare our children to address the economic, health, sustainability, and cultural issues of our current and future environmental challenges?</i>	2.38
Human Interactions: Design for Meaning- <i>How do we set up children for success in a future where people expect experiences, products, and services to be more than just functional?</i>	2.38
Human Interactions: High-Concept/High-Touch- <i>In a world that is so connected, yet very disconnected, how do we encourage our students to remain focused on what it means to be human?</i>	2.38
Global: Demographic Considerations- <i>In a world with more diverse sets of needs and wants—as well as an aging population—how can we ensure our youngest generation is prepared to thrive individually, communally, and nationally?</i>	2.23
Workforce: Service Economy- <i>How do we prepare our children for the human interactions needed to thrive at work?</i>	2.21
Workforce: Routine to Non-Routine- <i>Since anything that is repetitive can and will be automated, how do we prepare our students for non-routine work?</i>	2.20
Workforce: Gig Economy- <i>Since anything that is repetitive can and will be automated, how do we prepare our students for non-routine work?</i>	2.05

- Community Aspirations for their Graduate:** Portrait Design Team members used an online crowdsourcing tool to share their “hopes, dreams, and aspirations” for their young people. Through this activity, members rated the responses anonymously. The data from the

exercise helps identify thoughts and comments that trend and resonate strongly with the whole group.

One observation around these shared aspirations speaks to the desire of the community to have graduates who are critical and adaptive thinkers who are prepared cognitively and emotionally for whatever they choose to pursue in life. The highest ranked thoughts in this activity are associated with a shift toward “helping our students discover their innate talents and cultivate those talents in each individual to help them leverage those toward their own success—instead of our idea or the state’s idea of what constitutes a worthy talent or what constitutes success.” Specifically, the team is hopeful that future Graduates have a “sense of community, connection and healthy relationships”. This theme is echoed throughout the remainder of the shifts. The complete report is within the supplemental materials that accompany this document.

3. **Competency Identification to Meet Shifts:** Following the group study of societal changes, Portrait Design Team members reviewed an inventory of skills, literacies, and mindsets to broaden their consideration of the possible competencies that could be included Lincoln Consolidated Schools Portrait. Then, each team member submitted individual selections of the top seven competencies he or she prioritized based on the landscape shifts study. Then the group reviewed and discussed the aggregate results of team’s submissions. The results from the individual submissions were as follows:

Results of Individual Design Team Submissions

Competency	Individual %	Competency	Individual %	Competency	Individual %
Empathy	69%	Resourceful	28%	Innovation	11%
Critical Thinking	65%	Conflict Resolution	23%	Technology Literacy	9%
Communication	55%	Creativity	23%	Civic Literacy	7%
Perseverance	38%	Curiosity	21%	Media Literacy	7%
Problem Solving	38%	Learner’s Mindset	21%	Conscientious	3%
Adaptability	34%	Courageous	19%	Contributors	3%
Collaboration	34%	Financial Literacy	13%	Rational Optimism	3%
Integrity	30%	Leadership	13%	Content Knowledge	1%
Responsibility	30%	Self/Goal-Directed	13%	Entrepreneurial	1%
Confidence	28%	Environmentally Responsible	11%		
Global Citizens	28%				

4. **Small Group Consensus to Prioritize Competencies:** The Portrait Design Team then worked in small groups to develop a set of prioritized competencies and shared their rationale with the broader group. This allowed team members to “test” their initial ideas with their peers. The results the group submissions were as follows:

Results of Small Group Submissions

9 groups	7 groups	5 Groups	4 groups	3 Groups	2 Groups	1 Group
Critical Thinking Empathy	Communication	Collaboration Global citizen Adaptability	Learner’s mindset	Perseverance Responsibility Problem solving	Confidence Leadership Resourceful Financial literacy	Curiosity Civic literacy Media literacy Self directed Rational Optimism Integrity Creativity Courageous

There were 10 groups in total

5. **Further Refinement of Competencies:** After the pros and cons of competency set options were shared, a sharper list of competencies was devised and discussed with the Portrait Design Team. Then the team provided feedback on the starter definitions for each competency. Through this process they worked to embed language that describes the competencies that resonate with Lincoln Consolidated Schools broader community.

CRITICAL THINKING
Our students....

- Apply systematic thinking that is clear, rational, openminded, and informed by evidence
- Understand a global view of societal issues and propose solutions
- Reflect critically on solutions and outcomes in order to effect change
- Take action through skillfully analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing

EMPATHY
Our students...

- Demonstrate awareness, sensitivity, concern, and respect to connect with others’ feelings, opinions, experiences, and culture
- Actively chose to consider what others are thinking, feeling, or experiencing when seeking to understand various perspectives and opinions

COMMUNICATION
Our students...

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms, tools, and contexts
- Listen effectively to understand values, attitudes, intentions, and knowledge
- Use communication for a range of purposes and audiences (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade)

COLLABORATION Our students...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognize personal strengths and validate strengths of others to build collective commitment and action •Enrich the learning of both self and others •Seek, contribute, and respond to feedback and diverse perspectives to achieve inclusive, collective outcomes through cooperation and teamwork
GLOBAL CITIZENS Our students...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Value and embrace diverse cultures and unique perspectives through mutual respect and open dialogue •Demonstrate integrity and responsibility through equitable and empathetic behaviors •Contribute and affect positive change in the health, balance, and sustainability of the world around one's self •Will leave a personal positive legacy for tomorrow's citizens
ADAPTABILITY Our students...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work effectively in a climate of changing priorities •Demonstrate agility in thoughts and actions •Are resilient when faced with adversity •Understand and balance diverse views and beliefs •Acclimate to various roles and situations with flexibility

6. Portrait Visual Design:

Sample Portraits from across the country were shared with the Lincoln Consolidated Schools Portrait Design Team to help spark thinking about the School District’s Portrait of a Graduate, and the visual story it tells. The community was asked for input to inform the creative inspiration behind the Portrait of a Graduate. The district leadership team considered all creative inspiration and helped provide creative direction to showcase the strong iconography of the Graduate. The final Portrait of a Graduate design was inspired by student input, as well as local context, and continues to communicate a consistent, compelling story from Lincoln Consolidated Schools School District



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

The following emerged during the development and vetting processes of Lincoln Consolidated Schools School District's Portrait:

- The leadership team assembled a strong, dynamic, and committed team of community members and educators. This team worked well together and stayed mostly intact throughout the entirety of the process and provided critical input to inform the Portrait of a Graduate.
- The leadership team, consisting of the superintendent and other district leaders, were mindful throughout the process of the needs of the students and community. Clearly, this team was uniquely committed to envisioning a brighter future for students in addition to the needs for a continued relevant and rigorous curriculum.
- As the district engaged in the discussions around how the world has changed over the last generation it almost unanimously found **technology** to be a critical consideration.
- Throughout the design process, the leadership team pushed for unique ways to surface voice and choice by constituents and members of the design team. This process was enhanced as time was used to clarify messages and messaging strategies for the roll-out.
- Lincoln Consolidated Schools Portrait of a Graduate will be presented to the school board

Activating Lincoln Consolidated Schools Portrait of a Graduate

The Portrait of a Graduate should serve as a North Star. Turning the Portrait of a Graduate into a reality for each student means re-examining teaching and learning.

Once the board has embraced the Portrait of a Graduate, the leadership team intends to build the work into the district professional development plan in a manner consistent with the strategic plan.

With a Portrait, Lincoln Consolidated Schools should consider the implications for:

- **Visionary Leadership:** Establishing a unifying and enduring vision for the community's shared aspirations for all students, a 21st century vision that is locally developed and globally positioned.
 - Share competencies with the board and describe rigorous process to understand learning.
 - Align board meetings to uplift ideas embedded within the Portrait of a Graduate.
 - Work to ensure collective 21st century vision and ideas are an integral part of the strategic planning process.

- **Measurable Impact and Stewardship:** Leverages meaningful evidence to demonstrate progress, inform continuous improvement, and elevate confidence in the impact of the system to prepare graduates as lifelong learners and contributors in the 21st century.
 - Communicate to stakeholders and create a gap analysis to determine where these competencies are currently being elevated in classrooms and throughout the community.
 - Establish a communication forum to share ideas and then integrate ideas into the existing curriculum.
- **Empowered Workforce:** Elevates all staff in the service of students with human capital systems that attract, grow, and retain innovative talent equipped to realize the district's 21st century vision.
 - Determine a course of action for the Portrait of a Lincoln Consolidated Schools employee.
 - Consider onboarding and professional learning opportunities for employees around the Portrait of a Graduate.
 - Consider using PBL units to foster thinking associated with competencies.
- **Thriving Ecosystem:** Fosters a high functioning, equitable, interdependent system, including the broader community, ensuring support for and alignment to the district's 21st century vision.
 - Continue to seek input from strategic planning teams or community members to gain various perspectives on the work around competencies. Continue to build relationships.
 - Engage in a network to elevate the work.
- **21st Century Learning Design:** Purposely integrates rigorous academic content with experiences that intentionally cultivate skills, mindsets, and literacies essential for all students to become lifelong learners and contributors in the 21st century.
 - Work with staff to understand the selected competencies and understand the process used.
 - Develop outcomes for the competencies and possible assessment strategies to allow students to demonstrate specific learning.
 - Create a look-for/listen-for document to allow teachers to deepen their understanding of what the portrait looks like in practice.
 - Create scope and sequence for scaffolding competencies.
- **Caring, Responsive Culture:** Nurtures a welcoming, inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives and cultivates engagement across a safe school community.
 - Provide opportunities for all students to see themselves in the portrait.
 - Vertically align and articulate competencies.
 - Ensure all students have access to and intentional engagement in learning outcomes.

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