

BELPRE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EAGLE FLIGHT PLAN



MOVING FROM PORTRAIT TO PRACTICE

## Background:

Belpre City Schools is dedicated to ensuring that each child in the district is challenged, prepared, and empowered instructionally and socially to succeed upon graduation. That goal has never been more difficult to achieve given the rapidly changing world that awaits our graduates.

Researchers posit that our students will hold ten different jobs over the course of their career and that eight of those jobs do not yet currently

exist. This new reality is best described by Alvin

Toffler who observed that “[t]he illiterate of the 21st

century will not be those who cannot read and write,

but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

In order for us to prepare our students, Belpre

City Schools must use a comprehensive and strategic

plan to grow current teachers in the competencies

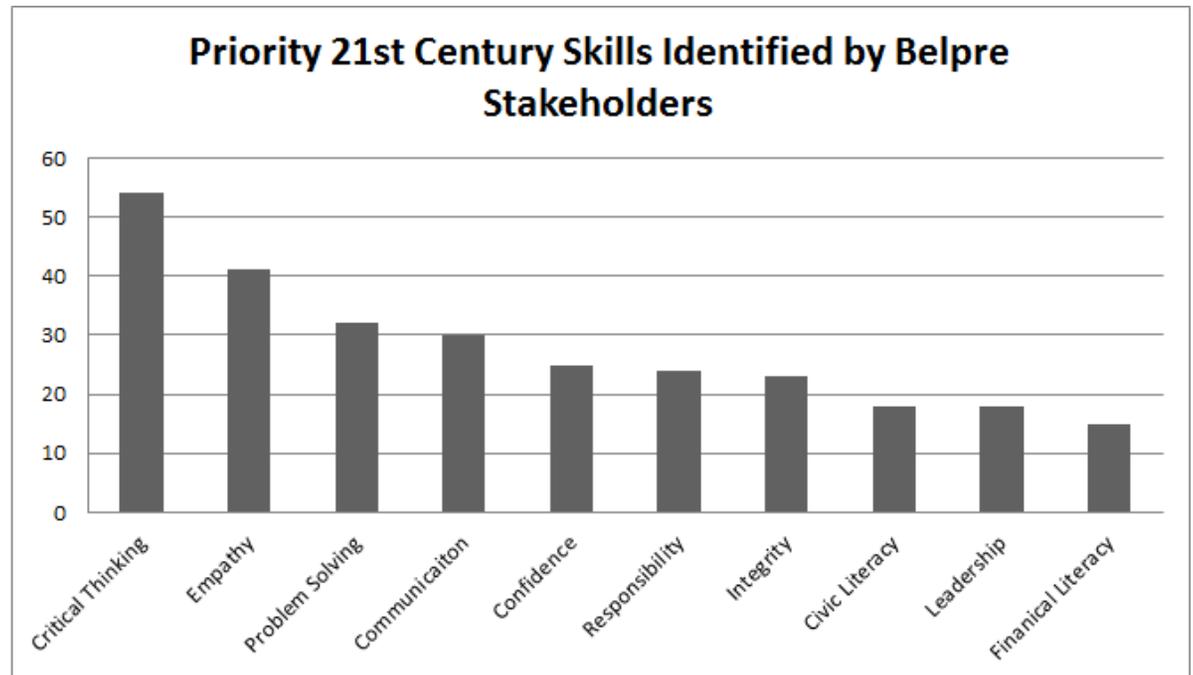
they will need to deliver a 21st century education to

students as well as to develop systems and routines to

train teachers that are new to the district to preserve that learning. In order to create that plan, district administration collaborated with over 200

stakeholders across the school district (including staff, community members, students, business leaders and many other groups) to understand what

skills, mindsets and dispositions our community desires its students to have when they graduate, as seen in Figure 1 above.



The Board of Education took that data and met with administration, teacher leaders, business leaders and student body leaders during a two-day retreat in September 2019 to produce a Portrait of a Graduate to serve as our district's north star moving forward. That culminated in the Board identifying the following 21st century skills as its focus: Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, Integrity, Hope, Leadership and Goal Orientation. The Superintendent went back out and held meetings with stakeholders to mold consensus around the Board-identified priorities. After a full year of engagement, the Belpre City Schools Board of Education formally passed the Portrait of a Graduate during its February 2020 meeting. We are currently working with a graphic designer to create a visual representation of that document which we hope to release at our Convocation in August 2020.

While that work was unfolding, the District Leadership Team partnered with the School Performance Institute to identify a common theory of improvement. As part of that work, the DLT traveled to exemplar school districts across Ohio, and even outside of Ohio, to spend time in their systems and reflect on good work being done and identify best practices. The news section of our website includes photos and narrative summaries of what we learned at those visits. After that exercise and some context building, the DLT began to think about the current system in Belpre and engaged in a fishbone exercise to analyze the weak spots in our system. At the end of the exercise, the team identified six primary categories of issues within the system: weak student support systems, students not engaged or motivated/lack of support, lack of leadership cohesion, unclear curriculum, instruction & assessment systems and inconsistent communication and collaboration. That analysis is reproduced as Figure 2 on the next page. Zooming out on these issues as a whole, the team identified the following problem statement: "Wide variability in academic expectations between grade levels leads to wide variability on both student achievement and growth measures on end-goal assessments."

The district has therefore identified two goals for its collective work moving forward. First, in order to respond to shifting landscapes across the country and produce a more prepared graduate, Belpre City Schools has created clear aspirational goals for its graduates to possess when they depart for adulthood. At the same time, the school improvement work has identified significant deficits in curriculum, instruction and assessment systems, student engagement and lack of leadership/collaboration on district initiatives. There is a clear intersection between the stakeholder work asking for graduates with a different skill set and the need to recalibrate the curriculum, instruction & assessment systems while creating district cohesion and creating experiences to boost student engagement.

## Current State v. Desired State

### Current State

As our problem statement concluded, there is very wide variability in our current system both within and between grade levels. In April 2019 K-6 teams submitted their curriculum maps for review by the district office. That review showed significant variability in the selection, pace and scope of standards. On average, ELA teachers indicated that they would cover 32.5 standards over a six week unit with a range of 14 – 44 standards. Math was more narrow but still showed significant variability with an average of 6.5 standards per six week unit with a range of 3 -13 standards. A 7-12 review did not occur because not all subject areas were able to produce a pacing guide/curriculum map to analyze. In October 2020 the inquiry team did an analysis on the assessment systems and processes utilized by the various grade levels and subjects. The conclusion was consistently inconsistent: teams used several different vendors for short cycle assessments and interim assessments while others could not indicate any assessment for parts of a balanced assessment system. Broadly, a significant amount of classroom time is allocated towards standards-based instruction with little purposeful emphasis on any of the portrait competencies we have identified as critical for our graduates to possess. Finally,

there are different and inconsistent continuous improvement processes utilized in the district. K-6 teams do utilize the Ohio Five Step process for data review but there is not a lot of time devoted towards that effort. Those teams that do utilize it frequently analyze data and indicate areas of improvement but seldom follow the full process to evaluate whether new instructional approaches that were deployed were implemented with fidelity, and if so, whether they had an impact on student learning. Anecdotally, many teachers report very little continuity between the elementary and high school and many members of the faculty have expressed that they are unfamiliar with members serving in the other building.

### Desired State

In our desired state, we would work to eliminate the variability in outcomes and expectations by carefully reviewing current pacing guides, curriculum maps and unit designs in both buildings. These documents would be more focused on priority standards, and trade-offs in what we want to focus on would be more consistent across and between grade levels. Those materials would also proscribe how the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills we have identified in the Portrait of a Graduate would be addressed in each unit. Assessment would vary between traditional forms of assessment (with the rigor found on next generation tests) as well as performance tasks that are designed to help students produce work with content while practicing the portrait competencies. We already do performance tasks in many classes. Performance tasks could be an essay, a lab or an oral presentation. It could also be a project based learning opportunity. At first, our system would focus on unit/lesson design to assess whether or not students are being exposed to portrait competencies. Eventually grading practices would align and students could curate their own work during the year to show how they have grown not just academically but in their quest to acquire the competencies. Finally, our teams would have a more robust continuous improvement process where educators would frequently meet together in teams to review artifacts of student work and teacher-prepared materials

to discuss, reflect and modify their practice to improve performance on their next attempt. Short cycle and summative assessments would also be regularly analyzed to discover trends in unfinished learning and point teams towards new instructional approaches that could address those gaps.

## Implementation Plan

The remainder of this document articulates an implementation plan of first steps to move from our current state towards our desired state.

Faculty members will be assigned to a cohort that will engage in professional learning over the next four years around three primary areas:

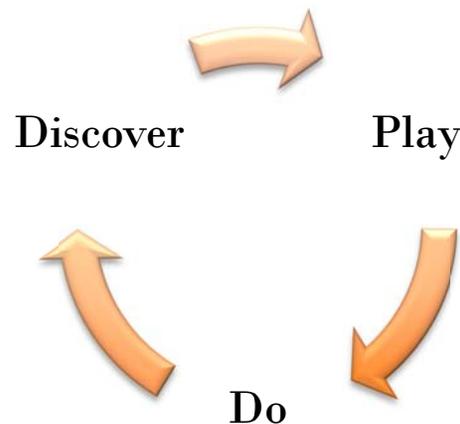
Curriculum and Instruction, Project Based Learning\4Cs and Inquiry\Continuous Improvement.

## Terms of Reference

**Discover-** Discovery is level 1 and is exploration of the topic assigned. During this time, teachers will have formal professional learning experiences about the topic and will help brainstorm the process in which Belpre City Schools will systematize the learning. Each team will also be responsible to meet clear goals of practice to enhance their learning once they have completed the initial training. Coaches will be available to support.

**Play-** Playing is level 2 and is taking part in attempting to make more use of the content in level 1 by practicing with the content in the classroom. Teachers will be encouraged to try new things and build upon current practices. The best part about play is it is okay to make mistakes—mistakes will help us grow as individuals, teams, and as an organization! Coaches will be more involved in supporting teachers as they refine their practice after more at-bats. Towards the end of the play year, teams will submit a formal plan outlining what the final “Do” year will look like with clear goals and implementation timelines.

**Do-** Doing is level 3 and is full implementation of the content knowledge, processes, and practices learned in levels 1 and 2. Teams will also be responsible for supporting the next cohort to prepare them for their discover year. Teams will also be responsible for suggesting how to embed the skills learned into our hiring and onboarding processes.



## The Cohort Approach: Timeline

School Year	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
2020 – 2021	Curriculum and Assessment (Discover)	PBL (Discover)	Inquiry (Discover)
Fall 2021	Curriculum and Assessment (Play)	PBL (Play)	Inquiry (Play)
Spring 2022	Curriculum and Assessment (Do) and Inquiry (Discover)	PBL (Do) and Curriculum and Assessment (Discover)	Inquiry (Do) and PBL (Discover)
Fall 2022	Inquiry (Play)	Curriculum and Assessment (Play)	PBL (Play)
Spring 2023	Inquiry (Do) and PBL (Discover)	Curriculum and Assessment (Do) and Inquiry (Discover)	PBL (Do) and Curriculum and Assessment (Discover)
Fall 2023	PBL (Play)	Inquiry (Play)	Curriculum and Assessment (Play)
Spring 2024	PBL (Do)	Inquiry (Do)	Curriculum and Assessment (Do)

## The Cohort Approach: Participants should be ready to...

<b>Discover</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participate in professional development</li><li>• Participate in a book study</li><li>• Be open to new ideas</li><li>• Be prepared to engage in professional conversations with honesty, courage, and respect</li><li>• Provide meeting minutes and document learning</li><li>• Complete small, incremental attempts of practicing what you are learning</li></ul>
<b>Play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participate in professional development</li><li>• Reference cohort book study text frequently</li><li>• Be open to new ideas</li><li>• Design and implement a PBL unit, engage in full Authentic Intellectual Work reflections, and/or implement the Curriculum &amp; Assessment process for at least one unit</li><li>• Be prepared to engage in professional conversations with honesty, courage, and respect</li><li>• Share implementation “glows and grows” with colleagues</li><li>• Be receptive to feedback &amp; fail forward</li><li>• Provide meeting minutes and document learning</li><li>• Have a clear learning plan</li></ul>
<b>Do</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participate in professional development</li><li>• Reference cohort book study text frequently</li><li>• Be open to new ideas</li><li>• Implement several PBL units, systematize the Authentic Intellectual Work framework, and create and implement a full Curriculum &amp; Assessment plan</li><li>• Be prepared to engage in professional conversations with honesty, courage, and respect</li><li>• Share implementation “glows and grows”</li><li>• Be receptive to feedback</li><li>• Provide meeting minutes and document learning</li><li>• Support the next cohort who is discovering the topic and help brainstorm ways to imbed the learning in employee hiring and on-boarding</li></ul>

## Cohort 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Focus: The curriculum team will be focusing on the Rigorous Curriculum Design process to improve curriculum maps, pacing guides and unit designs. To prepare for this, the team leaders visited schools in Georgia and Michigan to explore how they designed and assessed their curriculum and participated in three book studies. Additionally, the team attended the Standards Institute in February to learn how to determine priority standards, assess for rigor, and build scaffolding into a unit to help students access rigorous content. To take this learning forward, the teachers on this team will meet with small subject teams to work through prioritizing standards and designing units which emphasize performance tasks and lend themselves to the development of Project Based Learning.

Team Roster: Erica Wright, Kevin Dennis, Beth Mercer, Deb Edgar, Summer Anderson-Beach, New 7-12 Language Arts, Tara Ollom, Lori McNabb, Debbie Decker, Erik Arnett, New Math Teacher, Jen Wells, Dawn Dunlap, Stacy Moore, Josie Fivecoait, Suzanne Halterman, , Lana Johnson, Christa Benson, Peyton Cochran, Brooke Cieslewski, Ally Trew, Lauren Keeling.

### Professional Development 2020 – 2021 Schedule:

August 12 – 13, 2020	Instructional Shifts & RCD Training Overview
August 14, 2020	Priority Standards & Competencies
September 25, 2020	Priority Standards & Competency Team Time
October 15-16, 2020	Assigning Standards, Preparing a Pacing Calendar & Customizing the Unit Organizer
February 4-5, 2021	Team Time & Support: Unit Construction for Pilot in 2021-2022 School Year

## Cohort 2: Project Based Learning and the 4 Cs

Focus: The Project Based Learning (PBL) and 4 C's (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, and Critical Thinking) Committee has participated in book studies, professional development sessions, monthly district meetings, and a site visit to the Dayton STEM School in order to learn more about PBL and experiential learning. Our work has centered around PBL as a fun and engaging way to teach 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies, including those which our Board of Education adopted as our district's Portrait of a Graduate. The skills we have identified that our Belpre graduates need in order to be prepared for college and career, especially for rigorous college programs (e.g. Ohio State) and/or careers in which you earn a living wage (e.g. welding) are: Critical Thinkers with Integrity, Communicators, Leaders and Collaborators, Creative, Hopeful, and Goal-Oriented. We will spend our time together helping teachers learn how to infuse their lessons with more hands-on/relevant/real-world learning opportunities within their classroom. This will be a shift in mindset for us, our students, and our families. Over the next three years, this will be initially accomplished through professional development and coaching with Cultivate 21, and then will evolve into peer coaching and support to teams across the district and across subject areas.

Team Roster: Kathy Scimia, Kyle Scott, Suzanne Halterman, 5th Grade Teacher, Brittany McNabb, Ashley Matheny, Becci Hartline, Robin White, Margie Orcutt, Joey Rodgers, Chris Byron, Haley Bonar, Katie Pintz, Mike Williams, James Vondenhuevel, Tyler Leasure, Cheri Helgesen, Angie Kitts, New 2<sup>nd</sup> Teacher, Juli Blaney, Adam Greene, Tori Morgan, Bill VanPelt, Sam Pepper.

### Professional Development 2020 – 2021:

August 12 – 14, 2020	Introduction to PBL Training
September 25, 2020	Team Time for PBL Development
October 15-16, 2020	PBL Coaching with Molly
February 4-5, 2021	PBL Coaching with Molly

## Cohort 3: Inquiry and Continuous Improvement Team

Focus: Our Data and inquiry group has been looking at data from across the district and examining how teams work to analyze data to make improvement. We visited several schools in the Boston Public school system to see how they were implementing a program called Data Wise and recently learned about Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW), a system of inquiry designed to help teachers analyze, adjust and increase the rigor of their lessons/performance tasks with the help of cross-district peer review. Our goal is to more clearly define how we use artifacts of both student learning and adult implementation to continuously improve our collective effort. We will be directly supported by a consultant from AIW and Molly Kaplet from the ESC.

Team Roster: Wendy Calaway, New Science, Jessica Spears, Lisa Grays, Chad Stevens, Ryan Leasure, Jen Miller, Nicole Rodgers, Jamie McBride, Becky Inman, Kirsten Hannah, Eileen Cieslewski, Tracy Varner, Sherri Greene, Jamey Erb, Mary Miller, Donna Curfman, Beth Simperts, Nate Watson, Jacob Baker, Kellie Krason, Stephanie Evans.

### Professional Development 2020 – 2021:

August 12 – 13, 2020	AIW Initial Training
August 14, 2020	AIW and Ohio 5 Step Process
September 25, 2020	AIW Team Meeting
October 15, 2020	AIW Coaching
October 16, 2020	AIW Team Meeting

February 4, 2021	Data Meetings with Molly
February 5, 2021	AIW Coaching
April 2021 (date TBD)	AIW Coaching (substitutes provided)

## A Final Word about School Culture

We recognize that an organization’s culture will eat its strategy for breakfast. In other words, we must work to adjust our building cultures to support the academic reforms that we have proposed. We had a team of educators work very diligently to examine our school culture this year, yet there isn’t a coordinated district-level implementation plan for school culture. We believe ultimately the building leadership teams own the culture in their buildings and therefore we have not created any district-wide initiatives towards that end. A positive school culture promotes students’ ability to learn. The goal of the culture team in our Portrait of a Graduate is to promote a safe, inviting place to be and to learn. We want to build this culture by instructing, guiding, and mentoring our students to be leaders in the school and community. This far-reaching goal includes parent involvement and will blend with all areas of academics to support content and rigor. Students will develop confidence and leadership skills as they grow emotionally, socially, and academically. Belpre Elementary School will be implementing the Leader in Me system in its building to improve its culture and foster leadership and goal-setting in our students. Belpre High School will implement the ICU system next year and Link Crew the following year. The building leadership teams in both schools will continue to monitor those initiatives and make course corrections to create the environment needed for our students and staff to thrive.