



1 **SB 2196 – ND Competency Framework**

2 **NDCEL Testimony in Support**

3 Senator Schaible, members of the Senate Education Committee – for the record my name is Dr.
4 Aimee Copas – I serve as the Executive Director for the North Dakota Council of Educational
5 Leaders. I’m here today to share our support with the concepts before you. What is laid out before
6 you today is a product of much work. The bill before you today is not just an idea that is coming
7 together in bill form like spaghetti that we are trying to stick to the wall. This is a result of time
8 intensive, ongoing, and still going work for our students of North Dakota. This is work ground in
9 real data, science, and competencies for students.

10 You are going to hear behind me professionals that have been working on this for years. You are
11 going to hear about how multiple efforts (Portrait of a Graduate, Learning Continuum,
12 Competency Pathways) – all efforts grounded in student success are coming together this summer
13 to finish the certifiable pathway. While the words are few, the impact of this bill is HUGE and it
14 is what is right for kids. There are fine folks behind me today who are going to help teach you
15 about all of this and help you see and support this work. We are asking for this NOW because our
16 students can’t wait another two years. This bill would allow much needed pathways for our current
17 high schools and could provide real avenues to address workforce needs this fall.

18 In the bill you will see that we ask that this framework be certified by the State Board of Public
19 Education. Why that board, you might ask? Because of the expansive breadth of this work – it
20 needs the review and feedback of many. The field is CRYING for a way to do the right thing
21 without yet another waiver process. This bill would preserve that wish. It would not eliminate the
22 work that a district would need to do to appropriately implement the work, but it would; with an
23 approved framework, leave the power to decide curriculum, delivery, and instruction where it
24 belongs – with the district and their locally elected school board rather than needing to seek the
25 approval from a state entity.

26 Further clarification: The State Board of Public Education has broad representation of the state –
27 NDDPI, CTE, School Boards, and education representation. It is also the board that has under its

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality
education for all students in North Dakota.*

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler



1 purview the K12 Coordination Council. We'd suggest that the board ask the K12 Coordination
2 council to review and make a recommendation of the work done before certification. As a
3 reminder, the K12 Coordination Council has representation from the Governor, ND Legislators,
4 the State Superintendent, Director of CTE, Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Counselors,
5 Special Education, Federal Schools, NDCEL, NDSBA, NDUnited, REA's, NDSOS, & others.
6 Once the work is done, the K12 Coordination council has weighed in, then the State Board, we
7 believe the legislature can feel confident that the work, if certified, would absolutely be more than
8 credible.

9 There are several here who will be sharing with you the nuts and bolts and I yield my time to the
10 experts in the field. Thank you for your consideration and we ask for a strong DO PASS on this
11 bill.



CRITICAL THINKING

A North Dakotan...

- Consistently improves the quality of one's own thinking by being socially aware, questioning bias and assumptions.
- Applies disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded.
- Understands the global perspectives while also proposing solutions that are mindful to the impact they may have on the local communities.



EMPATHY

A North Dakotan...

- Seeks, understands, and productively responds to the points of view, feelings, and experiences of others.
- Embraces, global, local, and personal responsibility for making the world a better place.
- Understands that addressing societal challenges often requires compromise while promoting understanding of complex issues and varying perspectives.



PERSEVERANCE

A North Dakotan...

- Understands the relationship between effort, attitude, and achievement.
- Embraces the idea that failure is a part of success and quickly pivots to keep moving forward.
- Navigates adversity by identifying its source and duration, utilizing strengths and available supports.
- Demonstrates grit, curiosity and positive attitudes while on a life-long quest for knowledge and skills.



COMMUNICATION

A North Dakotan...

- Listens to understand before communicating to be understood.
- Articulates thoughts and ideas effectively in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Uses communications for a range of purposes and audiences (e.g. to self-advocate, build positive relationships, resolve conflict, achieve shared goals,) to give and receive feedback.



COLLABORATION

A North Dakotan...

- Assumes shared responsibility to utilize strengths to build collective commitment and action.
- Contributes to group effectiveness in pursuit of a shared vision.
- Possesses a team mentality that elicits diverse perspectives and contributions.



ADAPTABILITY

A North Dakotan...

- Responds productively and positively to feedback, praise, setbacks, and criticism.
- Understands, negotiates, and balances diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions.
- Analyzes conditions to create a plan utilizing self-awareness and self-management to overcome them.



LEARNER'S MINDSET

A North Dakotan...

- Embraces a commitment to lifelong learning while approaching their pursuits with passion.
- Possesses the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn.

NORTH
DAKOTA'S
PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



**CRITICAL
THINKING**



COMMUNICATION



EMPATHY



COLLABORATION



**LEARNER'S
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PERSEVERANCE

**NORTH
DAKOTA'S**
PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



SUMMARY REPORT FOR:

Portrait of a Graduate

PRESENTED TO:

The State of North Dakota

October 2020

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Battelle
for Kids

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

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The State of North Dakota- Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable

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 attributes students develop by the time they graduate often inform the opportunities available to them after high school.

The State of North Dakota engaged in the Portrait development process to discuss with community members the attributes North Dakota 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-oriens how learning is organized and reported, based on a manageable set of prioritized attributes that best prepare students for success after high school. Consequently, the “target” becomes clearer for how North Dakota’s communities want 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.

North Dakota and its stakeholders wish to develop in students a set of key attributes 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 high school within The State of North Dakota. 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

The State of North Dakota assembled a Portrait Design Team, a diverse team of community members from around the state that represent the various stakeholder groups. The Portrait Design Team identified the attributes for its Portrait through a rigorous process, including research, concept design and development. Through this process, many stakeholders had opportunities to interact in the community conversation on North Dakota’s Portrait of a Graduate. Per communications from the leadership team to their Portrait Design Team, this

group's charge was to "develop a collective vision that articulates our state'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:

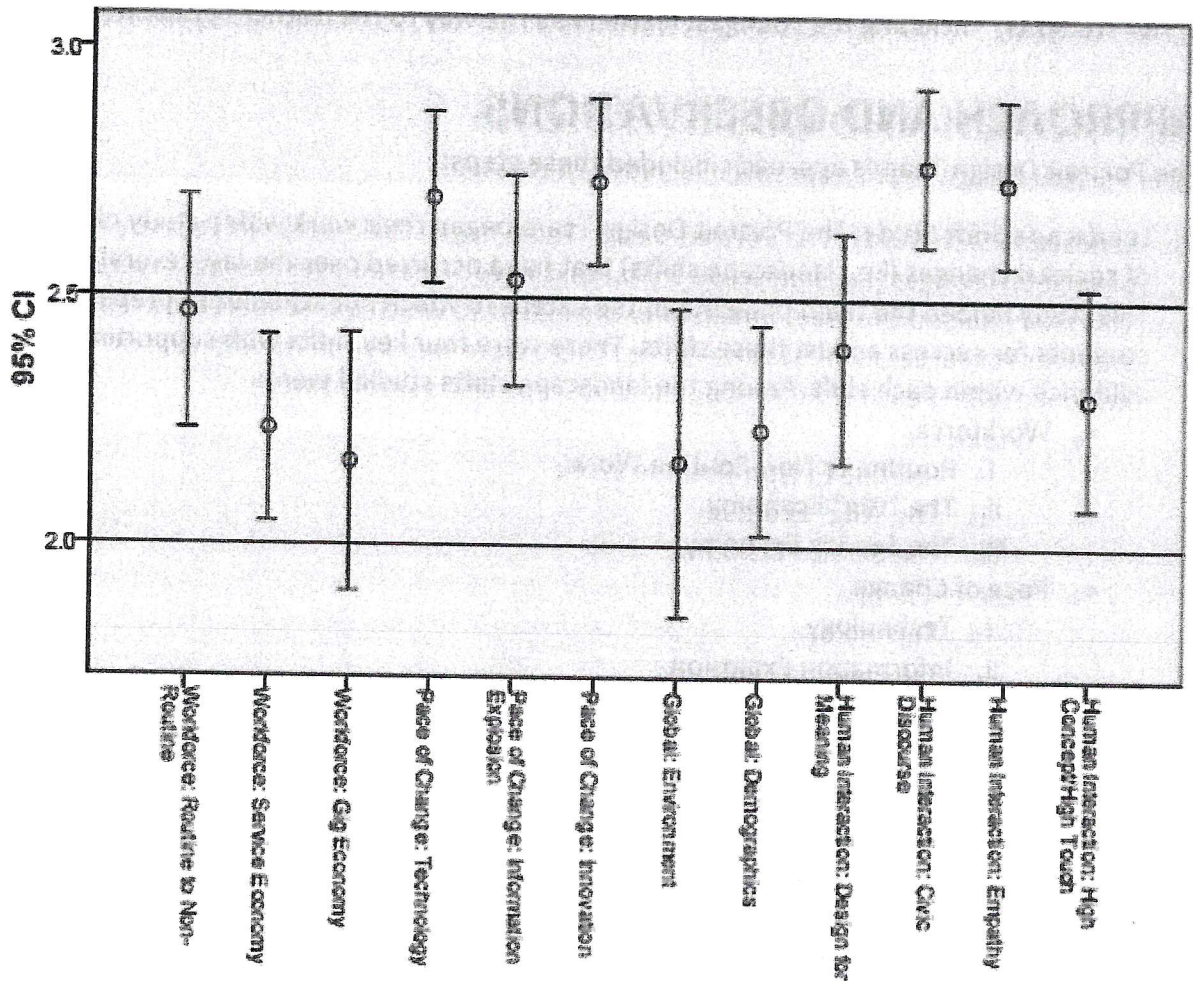
1. **Landscape Shift Study:** The Portrait Design Team began their work with a study of a variety of societal changes (i.e., landscape shifts) that have occurred over the last several decades. This study helped the team understand the extent to which our schools are preparing students for success amidst these shifts. There were four key shifts with supporting 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 The State of North Dakota and the communities they serve. 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:

- Critical—3
- Important—2
- Interesting, but not compelling—1

All supporting data is listed below.



Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum
Human Interaction: Civic Discourse	32	2	3
Pace of Change: Innovation	36	2	3
Human Interaction: Empathy	32	2	3
Pace of Change: Technology	37	2	3
Pace of Change: Information Explosion	36	1	3
Workforce: Routine to Non-Routine	38	1	3
Human Interaction: Design for Meaning	32	1	3
Human Interaction: High Concept/High Touch	30	1	3
Workforce: Service Economy	37	1	3
Workforce: Gig Economy	37	1	3
Global: Demographics	33	1	3
Global: Environment	33	1	3
Valid N (listwise)	30		

In Meeting Poll

Workforce: Routine to Non-Routine		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	5%	Number of Responses: 38
Important	45%	
Critical	50%	

Workforce: Service Economy		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	5%	Number of Responses: 37
Important	65%	
Critical	30%	

Workforce: Gig Economy		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	13%	Number of Responses: 37
Important	49%	
Critical	38%	

Pace of Change: Technology		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	0%	Number of Responses: 37
Important	30%	
Critical	70%	

Pace of Change: Information Explosion		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	3%	Number of Responses: 36
Important	44%	
Critical	53%	

Pace of Change: Innovation		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	0%	Number of Responses: 36
Important	25%	
Critical	75%	

Global: Environment		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	24%	Number of Responses: 33
Important	36%	
Critical	40%	

Global Demographics		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	6%	Number of Responses: 33
Important	67%	
Critical	27%	

Human Interaction: Design For Meaning		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	6%	Number of Responses: 32
Important	47%	
Critical	47%	

Human Interaction: Civic Discourse		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	0%	Number of Responses: 32
Important	25%	
Critical	75%	

Human Interaction: Empathy		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	0%	Number of Responses: 32
Important	28%	
Critical	72%	

Human Interaction: High Concept/High Touch		Single Answer Poll
Interesting, but not compelling	7%	Number of Responses: 30
Important	57%	
Critical	36%	

2. **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. The data from the exercise helped identify thoughts and comments that trend and resonate strongly with the whole group. There were 36 participants who submitted thoughts.

Hopes, Dreams, and Aspirations
<i>“That they'll be exposed to new ideas and pushed to think differently than they otherwise would. That their teachers guide them through the questioning process in and with a group of their peers. That their curiosity has been nurtured and becomes part of who they are.”</i>
<i>“Students experience a relevant education that prepares them with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, whether military, college or career. That our students find purposeful and live lives with meaning. That they'll want to stay in North Dakota for their lives and careers!”</i>
<i>“Provide opportunities to keep students in North Dakota after they graduate.”</i>
<i>“Graduate ready to start their next journey (work, further education, other).”</i>
<i>“Hope - to see a future and a path to a meaningful life.”</i>
<i>“My hope is for students to have rigorous course work that is personalized to their passions and interests and is not "one size fits all.”</i>
<i>“My hope is for every learner to be able to own their learning. We must work with them to help develop the skills where they can advocate for oneself. They need to be provided opportunities to authentically experience the world outside the walls of the building. It is time for us to ask our learners what they need and find a way to get it for them.”</i>

<i>"I hope students are prepared through their K-12 educational experience to be in a position to make an educated decision for their "next steps" as it relates to their post-secondary options (education/training, military, workforce) that align with their skills, interests, and abilities."</i>
<i>"I hope learners find their self-worth, acknowledge it, and live it. I hope that they know being a North Dakotan carries worth and that they reflect on what values they cherish. I hope that learners aspire to be decent human beings with a growth mindset."</i>
<i>"I hope that all students have the ability to understand the many career options that lay ahead of them and they are equipped with the skill set to be successful. I also, hope that they come out of school with a passion for learning throughout their life."</i>
<i>"To be confident and empathetic and want to learn their whole lives."</i>
<i>"To be ready to enter the workforce upon graduation in a field of study they find interesting, fulfilling and have passion for which will promote their independence and success in life."</i>
<i>"North Dakota students will have a personalized graduation option to allow flexibility in their learning and preferred future."</i>
<i>"My hope for North Dakota students is that whatever career they pursue in life they do so with passion and rigor."</i>
<i>"Learn how to learn, learn to LOVE learning, understand that to be successful they must be learners for the rest of their lives."</i>

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 attributes that could be included in North Dakota's Portrait. Then, each team member submitted individual selections of the top seven attributes he or she prioritized based on the landscape shifts study. The group then reviewed and discussed the aggregate results of team members' submissions. The top twelve attributes—from most frequently submitted to least—were as follows:

Attribute	Individual %
Communication	70
Critical Thinking	70
Empathy	57
Adaptability	55
Collaboration	45
Learners Mindset	37
Conflict Resolution	32
Perseverance	32
Problem Solving	32
Leadership	27
Self-Goal Directed	27
Confidence	25

4. **Small Group Consensus to Prioritize Attributes:** The Portrait Design Team then worked in small groups to develop a set of prioritized attributes 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:

Attribute	Group Selection
Communication	9
Critical Thinking	7
Collaboration	7
Empathy	6
Adaptability	6
Learners Mindset	4
Perseverance	4

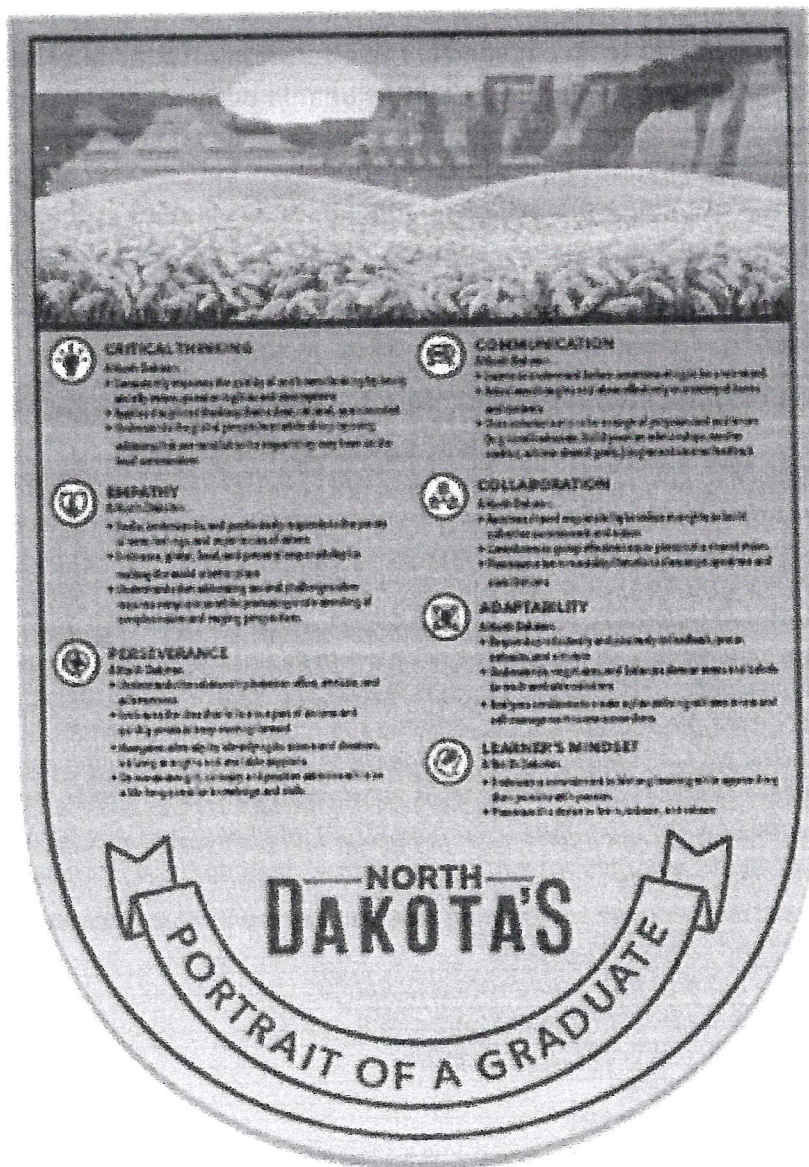
5. **Further Refinement of Attributes:** After the pros and cons of attribute set options were shared, a sharper list of attributes was devised and discussed with the Portrait Design Team. Then, the leadership team tailored and fine-tuned the definitions for each attribute. Through this process, they worked to embed language that describes the attributes that resonate with North Dakota's broader community.

- **Adaptability**
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Responds productively and positively to feedback, praise, setbacks, and criticism.
 - Understands, negotiates, and balances diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions.
 - Analyzes conditions to create a plan utilizing self-awareness and self-management to overcome them.
- **Collaboration**
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Assumes shared responsibility to utilize strengths to build collective commitment and action.
 - Contributes to group effectiveness in pursuit of a shared vision.
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- **Communication**
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Listens to understand before communicating to be understood.
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- **Critical Thinking**
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 - Understands the global perspectives while also proposing solutions that are mindful to the impact they may have on the local communities.
- **Empathy**
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Seeks, understands, and productively responds to the points of view, feelings, and experiences of others.
 - Embraces, global, local, and personal responsibility for making the world a better place.

- Understands that addressing societal challenges often requires compromise while promoting understanding of complex issues and varying perspectives.
- Learner's Mindset
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Embraces a commitment to lifelong learning while approaching their pursuits with passion.
 - Possesses the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn.
- Perseverance
 - A North Dakotan...
 - Understands the relationship between effort, attitude, and achievement.
 - Embraces the idea that failure is a part of success and quickly pivots to keep moving forward.
 - Navigates adversity by identifying its source and duration, utilizing strengths and available supports.
 - Demonstrates grit, curiosity and positive attitudes while on a life-long quest for knowledge and skills.

6. Portrait Visual Design:

Sample Portraits from across the country were shared with the North Dakota Portrait Design Team to help spark thinking about the State of North Dakota Portrait of a Graduate, and the visual story it tells. The Portrait Design Team was asked for input to inform the creative inspiration for the State of North Dakota Portrait of a Graduate. Many creative ideas were provided, including badlands and wheat fields. The project leadership team considered all of the creative inspiration and helped provide creative direction to showcase the strong iconography of the state. The final Portrait of a Graduate design was inspired by state-wide context, and continues to communicate a consistent, compelling story from the State of North Dakota.



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

The following emerged during the development and vetting processes of The State of North Dakota Portrait:

- The project leadership team assembled a strong, dynamic, and committed team of statewide stakeholders. 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 superintendents and other leaders, were mindful throughout the process of the needs of the students and various communities. Clearly, this team was uniquely committed to envisioning a brighter future for North Dakota students in addition to the needs for a continued relevant and rigorous curriculum.
- As the portrait design team engaged in the discussions around how the world has changed over the last generation, it almost unanimously found “civic discourse” to be a critical consideration.
- Given the unique circumstances around this virtual gathering of stakeholders from around the state, the project leadership team determined that the last meeting should be leveraged to generate ideas for the cultivation of the portrait attributes both in and outside the traditional classroom setting. The results of the brainstorming session are listed below.

What kind of experiences could we create to cultivate our state portrait both in and outside of schools across North Dakota?
<i>“Active learning including field trips, extended experiences outside of the school like internships and job shadows, authentic opportunities in community, and project and problem-based learning. Include in-school leadership opportunities to develop/practice communication and conflict resolution skills. Maximize common occurrences in school such as a conflict on the playground being an opportunity to empower students to develop empathy, communication, etc. rather than the adult solving or resolving the issue. The learning targets for all of these activities need to be taught, modeled, and measured (e.g. rubrics built in Oakes). We need to be open to learning happening outside of school and with other experts. For example, a great deal of learning can happen in co-curricular, extra-curricular, and club-based activities; we can intentionally leverage these activities for learning experiences. Through all of this, we believe student voice and agency is very important. For example, they can submit a proposal to describe how they can meet a learning target and being part of a team or club could help them meet these targets, and then submitting evidence of meeting these learning targets. Another example is having students engage in community events like crowd sourcing challenges to solve real problems with peers and community experts.”</i>
<i>“All students have the opportunity for internships (equity).”</i>
<i>“Career awareness for opportunities beyond our state.”</i>
<i>“Opportunities to demonstrate civic responsibility.”</i>
<i>“Service-learning opportunities.”</i>
<i>“Self-directed learning opportunities.”</i>
<i>“Opportunities to solve real problems in the community.”</i>
<i>“Student led based learning experiences.”</i>

"Internships, Capstone experiences."

"Working more with students to get them into more of a hands-on environment in which they have a voice. (Ex. Offering more internships, planning their own field trips from start to finish. Letting them spend time in areas they love and might want to pursue.) Allowing more classroom time to give more real-life experiences and giving students more ownership in planning those things. Having students present to authentic audiences as well."

"I'd love to see more of the schools that are implementing these models highlighted well in social media. Innovation Playlist is an example."

"Parents / mentors can also facilitate -- not just the responsibility of a school district."

Activating The State of North Dakota's 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 state has embraced the Portrait of a Graduate, the project leadership team should intend to build the work into the statewide professional development plan in a manner consistent with the state educational strategic plan.

With a Portrait, The State of North Dakota 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 attributes with the state 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 attributes are currently being elevated in classrooms and throughout the state.
 - 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 North Dakota employee.
 - Consider onboarding and professional learning opportunities for employees around the State of North Dakota's Portrait of a Graduate.
 - Consider using PCBL units to foster thinking associated with attributes.
- **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 attributes. 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 attributes and understand the process used.
 - Develop outcomes for the attributes 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 state portrait looks like in practice.
 - Create scope and sequence for scaffolding attributes.
- **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 attributes.
 - Ensure all students have access to and intentional engagement in learning outcomes.

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Please find on the supplemental materials the summary report from Meeting Pulse.