

Readiness: Portrait of a Graduate

Empowering Graduates: How Baltimore City Public Schools & Worthington Schools Defined a Future-Ready Vision

OVERVIEW

Baltimore City Public Schools in Maryland and Worthington Schools in Ohio partnered with our AASA District Services team to create a Portrait of a Graduate and a Portrait of a Learner, respectively. Through broad community engagement, both districts established shared, unifying visions that elevate student voice, provide a framework for measuring what matters, and define essential life skills for long-term success.

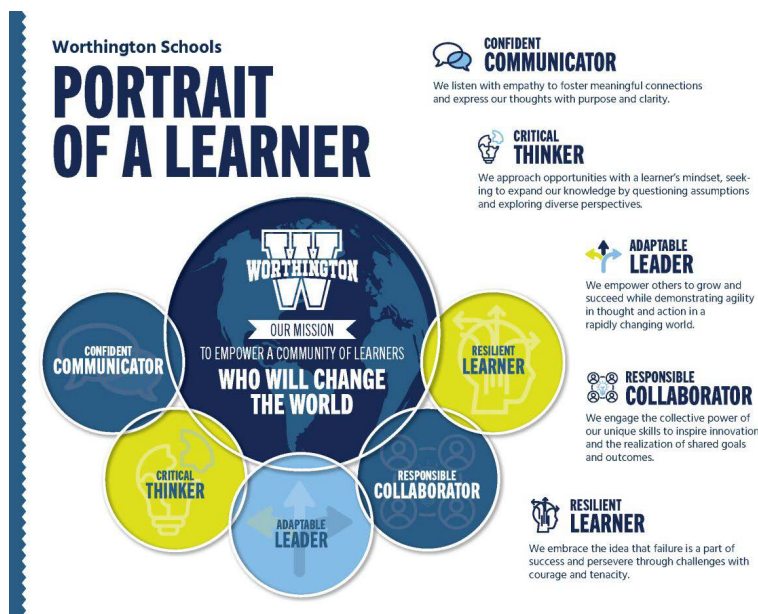


THE CHALLENGE

- **Baltimore City:** With 75,000 students across 162 schools, the district lacked a unified vision to articulate life skills beyond academic rigor, leaving post-secondary preparation fragmented.
- **Worthington:** Serving 10,700 students, the district needed a PreK–12 progression that clarified outcomes across all grade levels, ensuring consistency and shared expectations for future-readiness.

WHAT WE DID

- Convened broad community design teams with educators, students, families, business leaders, and local partners.
- Facilitated co-creation sessions to identify life skills that reflect community aspirations.
- Prepared leadership teams to engage authentically with stakeholders.
- Delivered professional branding and visual tools to launch the Portraits effectively.



KEY IMPACTS

- Baltimore City's now has a common language that informs curriculum, assessment, and community partnerships.
- Students shaped Baltimore City's life skills, strengthening authenticity and buy-in.
- Worthington's PreK–12 progression maps life skill development across grades, guiding instruction and family expectations.
- Launch events and visual rollouts built momentum—Baltimore City's unveiling at Montebello Elementary/Middle School and Worthington's State of the Schools presentation showcased broad support.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Broad community engagement ensures the Portrait reflects authentic, shared community aspirations.
- Limiting the life skills to a clear, manageable set creates stronger alignment.
- Communication strategies—visuals, events, consistent messaging—are essential to sustain momentum.



Call to Action

For districts, a Portrait of a Graduate or Learner is not an extra—it's a foundation for preparing children with the life skills that matter most. AASA District Services supports this work through facilitation, design, and long-term implementation strategies.