Lighting the Path: Three Districts Use Roadmap Experience to Move Portraits into Practice

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THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

DISTRICT SERVICES

OVERVIEW

Louisa County Public Schools (Va.), Troy City School District (Ohio), and Ephrata Area School District (Pa.) each used the Roadmap service to move beyond vision-setting toward scalable, staff-led action. Each district's journey involved immersive stakeholder engagement, defined essential life skills, and steps to embed future-ready learning though professional learning, leadership development, innovation, and student voice.

THE CHALLENGE

- Louisa County had a clear Portrait of a Graduate (their Profile of a Graduate) framed by the "5 C's" (communication, collaboration, creativity, citizenship, critical thinking), but needed to shift from aspirational to implementation, ensuring classrooms and teaching practice reflected those life skills.

- Troy City needed to align its mission, values, and core Portrait of a Graduate (their Portrait of a Trojan) with planning, instruction, and learning experiences, so that the vision actually influences what students do and how they learn.

- Ephrata already had a strong Portrait (their Life-Ready Graduate) and deeper learning practices in place. Instead, they needed to deepen and scale those practices, especially around student voice, innovative learning designs, and teacher agency.

WHAT WE DID

- Each district worked with leadership teams and practitioners to map key priorities and actionable strategies.

- Louisa County formed an "Ignite Team," invested in professional learning, to spread the implementation of the 5 C's over time, and created platforms for teachers to share innovations across the district.

- Troy City had their Portrait process disrupted by the pandemic. Through the Future-Ready Roadmap, they were able to revive the initiative to work with their teachers to embrace their influence on student learning and the value of collective efficacy in this initiative.

- Ephrata focused on cultivating student voice and choice (e.g. design challenges, student input on learning spaces), aligning deeper learning with Portrait competencies, and enabling teacher teams to experiment, collaborate, and refine new practices.

KEY IMPACTS

- Louisa County's teachers increasingly design lessons around the 5 C's; collaboration examples are shared broadly; and the Ignite team supports scaling ideas.

- In Ephrata, students are not just recipients, rather they help design learning spaces, choose projects, and take part in decision-making. These shifts increase engagement and relevance.

- Troy City's Portrait of a Tiger has become more tightly woven into their planning and everyday experiences.

- The Roadmap work has galvanized innovation as teachers try new learning designs, leaders support innovation, and celebrations of what works become more commonplace.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Having a stable core team (like Louisa County's Ignite Team) aids consistency over time.

- Phasing implementation (starting with one life skill; piloting ideas) helps avoid overwhelming teachers.

- Structures for sharing (peer observation, showcases, idea exchanges) help scale what works.

- Student voice in real decision-making boosts ownership and makes the work more authentic and sustainable.

Call to Action

Vision without action remains aspirational. If a district already has a Portrait of a Graduate, the Roadmap service helps convert that vision into real change. Want help crafting a Roadmap that turns your vision into lived practice across the system?

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