



Measuring Up! Discussion Guide

Students

Measuring Up! is a project conducted by a collaborative youth-led team with the purpose of uncovering the opinions and feelings that Kentucky students have about their current systems of measurement, assessment, and accountability. Throughout this study, our team conducted two roundtables and seven supplementary interviews across a diverse range of students to gain a better understanding of the Kentucky student experience. We spoke to students ranging from fifth grade through graduated seniors and asked them about their personal experiences with Kentucky's measurement, assessment, and accountability systems. Our team discovered that students yearn to receive instruction on concepts that would carry them throughout the rest of their lives, want to have more options that fit alternative post-secondary paths, and long to have consistency in their accountability to ensure a more equitable education experience. Above all, every student that participated in our study wanted their voice to be heard and valued. For this exercise, read the quotes, reflect on your experiences in school, and respond to the discussion prompts.

Student Quotes

"The school you go to and the quality of education, and the better teachers you have and all those kinds of circumstances that you have no control over, definitely benefit some people more than others."

- African American female high school senior from Fayette County

"I definitely don't think the difficultness of that test was for our grade level. I understood some of it, but I think they need to work on that matching the grade levels because we're not all on the same level. Then maybe putting out review sheets or something before the test so we can get on the same level, but that's all."

-Biracial female high school junior

"I don't think that grades [are too] accurate, just because it really depends on the teacher a lot of times... how they teach, or how hard they make the course, and also a lot of times, a teacher's sympathy"

-White female high school junior from Frankfort Independent

Student Quotes

"Well normally, I guess my parents and teachers and everything always expect me to do good. So I try to try my hardest to work up to that, I guess."

-White female 7th grader from Morgan County

"I really think there needs to be more one-on-one between student and teacher when it comes to the content...I before every single test,"

-Black female college freshman from Jefferson County

"But I also think there's almost a culture of resentment too, because I know I went in-person, starting back March 1st, and it was really hard for me to be in-person, taking exams on pencil and paper and going to school every single day while some of my friends were at home and they were getting better grades than me"

-White male high school sophomore from Corbin Independent

Discussion Questions

- Does the current grading system in your school work for you? Why or why not?
- What changes would you make to your grading system(s)?
- How do expectations from your classmates, parents, teachers, or school impact your motivation to get better grades or perform better on tests?
- What do we want students to be able to know and do to succeed in the modern world?
- What changes would you make to the process of standardized testing?
- Do your peers have similar experiences to you with standardized testing and grading? Why or why not?