

A Roadmap to Success Using Student Voice to Inform the Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle

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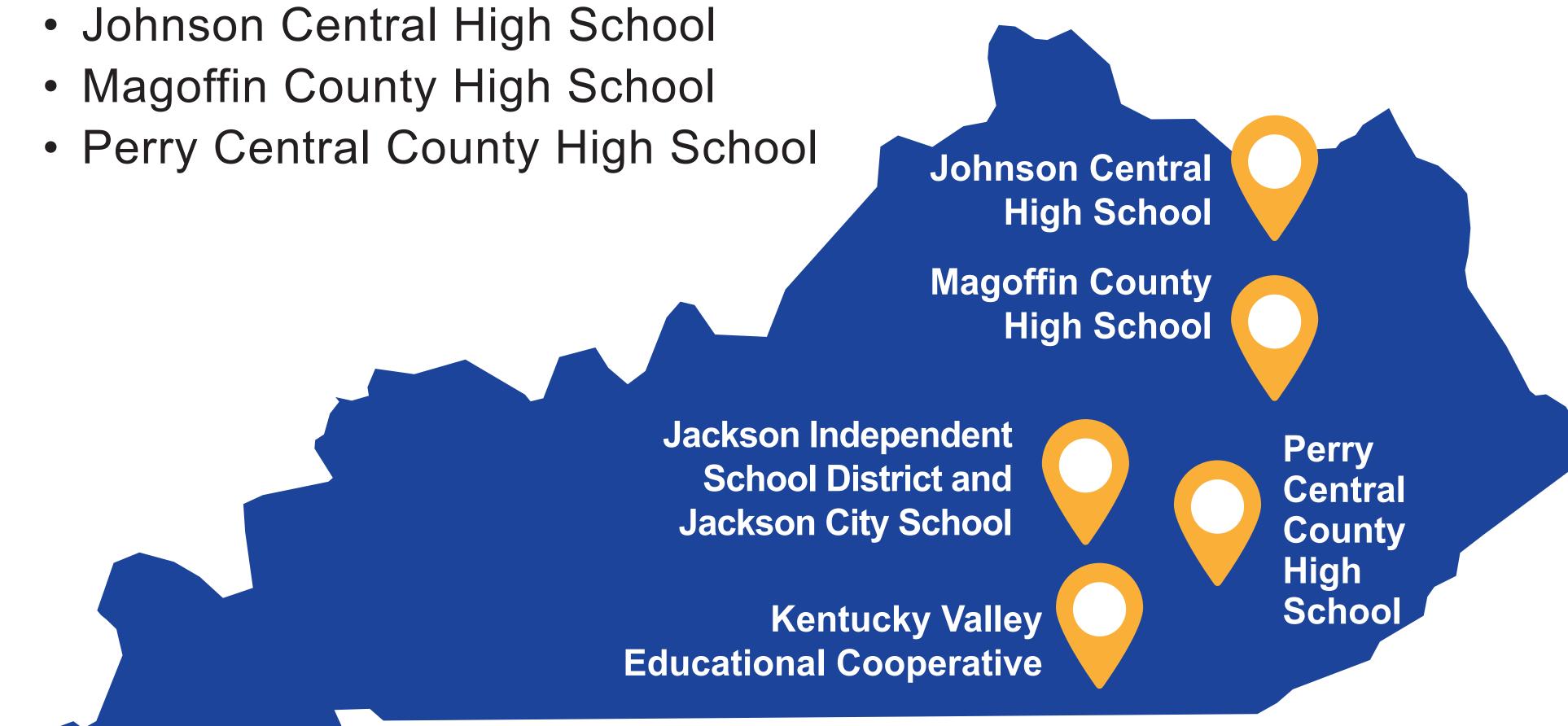
Improving Postsecondary **Transitions Partnership**

Through the Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia (REL AP) Improving Postsecondary Transitions partnership, school leaders from four rural districts in eastern Kentucky addressed high-leverage problems of practice using evidence-based practices that support students' transition to postsecondary education and careers.

The Partners

REL Appalachia collaborated with:

- Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative
- Jackson Independent School District and Jackson City School



Project Goal

The four rural districts were part of the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative's Activating Catalytic Transformation (ACT) grant, which provided funding for schools to use a continuous improvement process to improve student outcomes. First, RELAP staff coached schools to set the foundation for improvement by using data to identify a problem of practice, leveraging student voice to identify the root cause of the problem, and selecting an evidence-based practice that would address student needs. Then, RELAP helped schools implement a focused continuous improvement cycle to allow for thoughtful educator reflection and learning.

The Road to College and Career-Ready Graduates - A Spotlight on Magoffin High School in Salyersville, Kentucky

Waypoint 1 – What is our problem of practice?

- School leaders and RELAP staff reviewed accountability measures, such as rates of chronic absenteeism, as well as other types of student data, such as the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals, hold after school jobs, need credit recovery, and are wellprepared for postsecondary transitions.
- School leaders and RELAP staff identified chronic absenteeism (86 percent average daily attendance) as a top concern, noting that students cannot prepare for college and careers if they are not in school.

Clearing the Road for Rural District Leaders -Lessons Learned

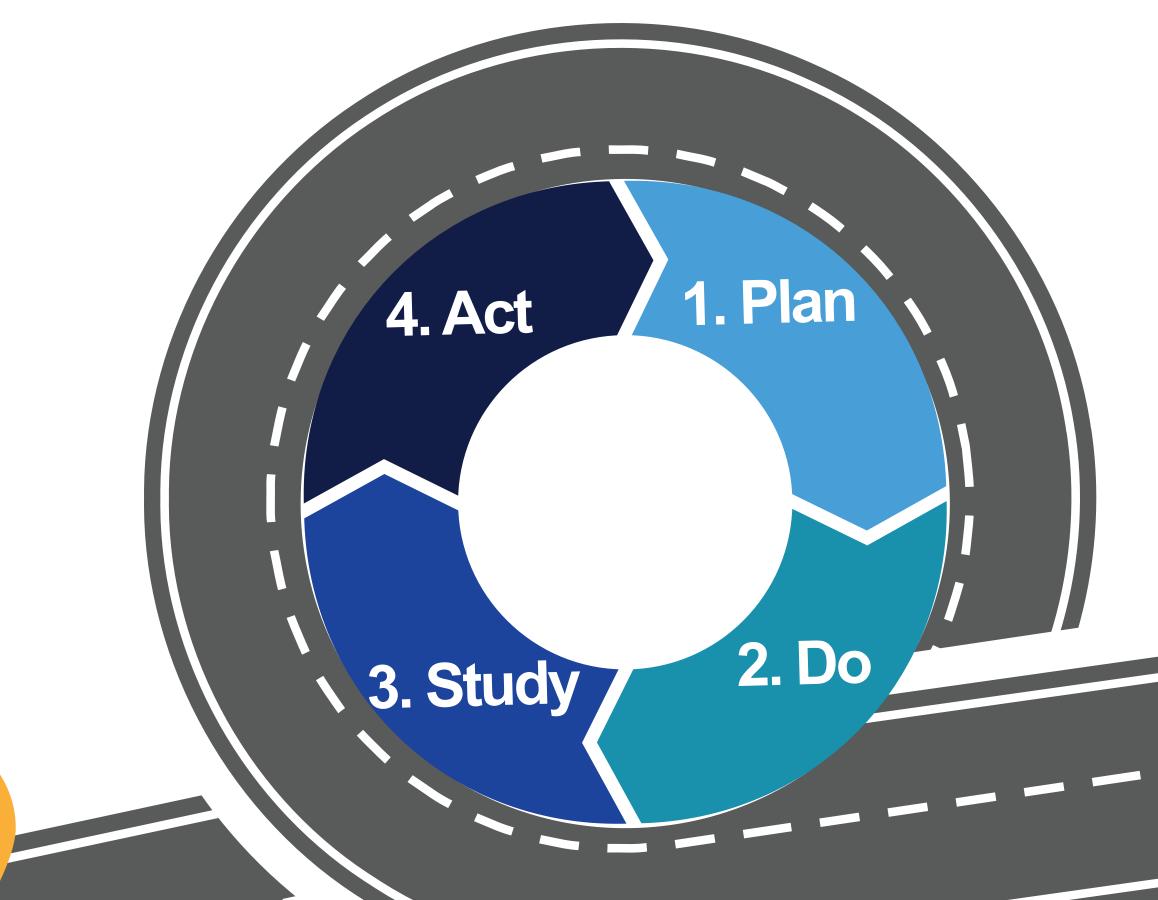
Look for and leverage existing partnerships that can support continuous improvement efforts in rural areas. This provides opportunities to network, share, and learn about problems of practice across your region.

Waypoint 2 – What is the root cause of our problem of practice?

- Although school leaders reviewed student data to identify a problem of practice, they recognized that they were missing student voice to explain the root cause of why students were not coming to school. With support from REL AP staff, school leaders conducted empathy interviews— an improvement science approach to understand how users experience a system— with 16 students to capture student voice.
- The empathy interviews revealed two themes highlighting what students value about attending school: 1) Connecting academic content to their lives outside of school, and 2) Connecting with trusted adults to receive social-emotional learning supports.
- School leaders determined that the root cause of their problem of practice was a lack of student engagement and connection to academic learning.

Clearing the Road for Rural District Leaders -Lessons Learned

Student voice is critical to provide context and meaning to data. Reflect on student voice with empathy and understanding to identify the root cause of your problem of practice.

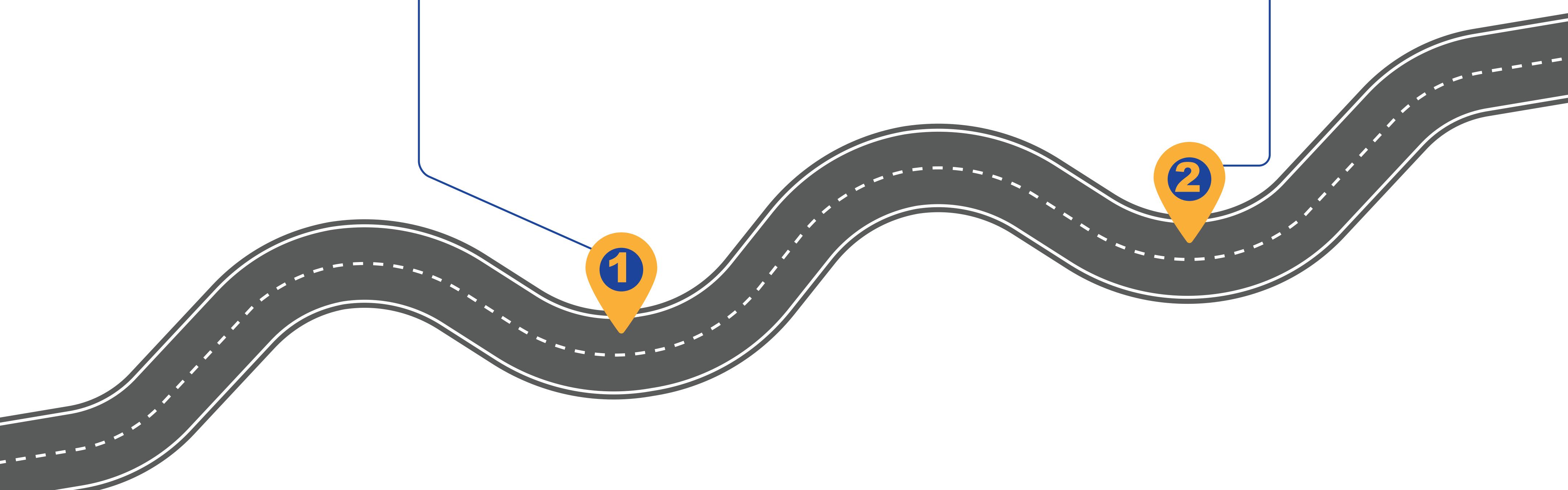


Waypoint 3 – Which evidence-based practice can help us address the root cause of our problem?

- Based on student input, school leaders selected formative assessment as an evidence-based practice to test in their grade 10 geometry classes. They chose formative assessment as a way for both students and teachers to engage with each other, reflect, and adapt their teaching and learning.
- Once they selected the evidence-based practice, they started the Plan, Do, Study, Act continuous improvement cycle.

Clearing the Road for Rural District Leaders -Lessons Learned

Start focused and small. Rather than implementing multiple strategies and practices, use a continuous improvement cycle on one evidence-based practice. Learn, grow, and expand with each cycle.



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