Kentucky Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
Vision Statement

We, the members of the Kentucky Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, believe that all students can learn and achieve at high levels. Furthermore, we believe that all schools with middle grades should be academically excellent, developmentally responsive, socially equitable, and organizationally supportive.

Academically excellent schools with middle grades
- Expect all students to meet high academic standards;
- Provide curricula, instruction, and assessment that are aligned with rigorous standards;
- Emphasize deep understanding of important concepts, development of essential skills, connections across disciplines, and application of content to real-world problems;
- Challenge and engage students using a variety of instructional approaches to meet the needs of a diverse population;
- Measure student performance using multiple forms of assessment, including authentic assessments making clear to students the quality of work expected;
- Support student academic success through flexible scheduling, a positive school climate, and opportunities for additional academic assistance; and
- Encourage adults in the school to plan, select, and engage in professional development that is aligned with rigorous academic standards, deepens their knowledge of content, improves their instructional practice, and enhances collaboration to improve student achievement.

Developmentally responsive schools with middle grades
- Create small learning communities that foster stable, close, mutually respectful relationships between students and adults and that support each student's intellectual, ethical, social, and physical development;
- Foster curiosity, exploration, creativity, and social development through a variety of instructional strategies and a curriculum that is relevant to the personal interests of young adolescents;
- Encourage faculty to customize and personalize instruction, varying types of student assignments and the time necessary to complete those assignments;
- Provide opportunities for student voice and participation in decision-making;
- Involve families and communities in meaningful ways to support student learning and growth;
- Provide students with opportunities for active citizenship and service; and
- Offer age-appropriate co-curricular activities.

Socially Equitable schools with middle grades
- Have high expectations for all students and are committed to helping each student achieve at high levels;
- Create a college-going culture that raises aspirations and opens options for all students;
- Offer equal access to all students in all school classes and activities and eliminate tracking and ability grouping;
- Hear, acknowledge, and respect each child’s voice;
- Provide rigorous curricula taught by expertly prepared educators committed to teaching young adolescents;
- Appreciate students’ diverse histories, languages, cultures, races, genders, and abilities.

Organizationally supportive schools with middle grades
- Maintain sustained leadership and a shared vision that drives every facet of school change;
- Develop a community of learning and continuous improvement by devoting school resources to support intensive, high quality, ongoing professional development;
- Take responsibility for school and student success rather than blaming others for shortcomings;
- Cultivate networks among the school, families, and community members that support student success; and
- Work with colleges and universities to recruit, prepare, and mentor novice and experienced teachers.