Life Ready Graduate Program Prepares Students for an Ever-Changing World
Our mission is to provide all students a secure learning environment and exemplary academic programs that inspire all students to reach their full potential.
The higher targets evident in the Life Ready Graduate profile have been collectively identified with input from the larger school community and verified through extensive research completed by AASA® The School Superintendents Association, EdLeader21, and others. Aiming for higher targets does not mean the required state standards are ignored, but it represents the important foundational elements of all learners’ education. To truly provide learners with an education that sets them on a path to reach their full potential in life, we must also focus on the skills and dispositions that lead to a successful future.
The key to making a transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.

- Sir Ken Robinson
“If we are to better the future, we must first disturb the present.”

- Catherine Booth, Co-founder of the Salvation Army
WHY AIM HIGHER?
MORE EVIDENCE OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD
THE "TRADITIONAL MODEL" OF EDUCATION was designed for another time based on what society knew, thought it needed, and could actually deliver. 

*It was the best society could do given these limitations.*
Changes in what we know, what we need now and in the future, along with what we can actually do, have made the “traditional model” no longer the best we can do.
WE NOW KNOW

students are more engaged when they have input into decisions about what they learn, how they learn it, and the ways in which they demonstrate learning.

- Choice and ownership of learning spike engagement and accelerate learning.
- As students progress through our system, the positive impact of giving them more autonomy over their learning has a compounding effect.
- The social-emotional impact of giving more control and choice to students is an added benefit that is becoming more and more important for our students.
WE NOW NEED

students ready to become members of society who have mastered content different than what we are required to test and the ability to apply it in a variety of ways - including the 4Cs.

• A very effective way for students to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge they have learned is through projects and authentic challenges

• Projects are often more effective when they are open-walled, contain significant rigor, include student-choice and relevance, and involve knowledge application through LRG skills.
WE NOW HAVE

the ability to provide digital tools that allow students to engage with a significant amount of content independently and personally in relevant and authentic ways.

• To effectively work with students, planning their learning projects, both parties need to understand the required learning targets and competencies for the unit and course.

• Using technology in situations where content can be delivered as or nearly as well at by the teacher provides more opportunity to strengthen connections and relationships with students.
### Figure 1: Employers rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Quality</th>
<th>Weighted Average Rating*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to work in a team structure</td>
<td>4.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to make decisions and solve problems</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to obtain and process information</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to analyze quantitative data</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical knowledge related to the job</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency with computer software programs</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to create and/or edit written reports</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to sell or influence others</td>
<td>3.54</td>
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*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important*
Establishing the Need

Important Employee Skills

- Logical thinking/problem solving;
- Verbal communication;
- Basic math skills;
- Reading comprehension and
- Computer skills.
ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE
Content Mastery & Financial Literacy
Healthy Living, Wellness, & Self-Awareness
Civics, Leadership, & Service
Digital Literacy & Technological Proficiency

APPLY THE SKILLS
Communication & Empathy
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
Creativity & Innovation
Collaboration & Teamwork

DEMONSTRATE THE DISPOSITIONS
Honesty, Integrity, & Responsibility
Adaptability & Flexibility
Continual Learning & A Growth Mindset
Resilience & Grit
KNOWLEDGE
The theoretical or practical understanding of someone or something

CONTENT MASTERY & FINANCIAL LITERACY
A core foundational knowledge in multiple subject areas as well as an understanding of the financial system are critical to make informed decisions.

HEALTHY LIVING, WELLNESS, & SELF-AWARENESS
A healthy lifestyle provides balance in one's life that improves physical, social, and emotional well-being.

CIVICS, LEADERSHIP, & SERVICE
Local, national, and global understanding and respect for cultural and societal diversity are critical to being a global citizen.

DIGITAL LITERACY & TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY
The ability to adapt, connect, and thrive in an ever-changing society are vital components of success in a digitally-competitive global environment.
SKILLS

The capacities and strategies that enable learners to apply knowledge to novel situations, engage in higher order thinking, problem solve, collaborate, communicate effectively, and plan for the future

COMMUNICATION & EMPATHY
Communication is a foundational skill for all learning. It is vital to be able to share thoughts, questions, and ideas in appropriate ways to a variety of audiences for a specific purpose.

CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING
It is important to evaluate, reflect, and justify all possible avenues towards making an informed decision. Good decision making is critical for independence.

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION
Preparing students for current and future challenges requires adaptability and flexibility that is learned through creative and innovative practices. It is important to imagine, visualize, and brainstorm new possibilities.

COLLABORATION & TEAMWORK
Solving complex problems requires the sharing of ideas from a variety of perspectives and experiences. People work together to cultivate a sense of community and improve the quality of outcomes.
DISPOSITIONS
The behaviors and ways of being that contribute to a learner fulfilling his or her full potential (character traits)

HONESTY, INTEGRITY, & RESPONSIBILITY
In order to be a trusted and valuable member of society, graduates must possess a consistency among their words, actions, and the facts of any situation. Owning one's actions and the results that they produce is a valued characteristic in all areas of adult life.

ADAPTABILITY
An ability to recognize and react to challenges and changing circumstances will lead to higher levels of success in reaching one's goals in all areas of life.

CONTINUAL LEARNING & A GROWTH MINDSET
Possessing an understanding that learning is both iterative and continues long after formal schooling is complete will enable graduates to grow throughout life.

RESILIENCE & GRIT
Understanding that there are things beyond one's control, develops plans for success, and recovers from temporary setbacks along any path forward.
21st CENTURY TARGETS
Embedded in each grade-band
ACADEMICS – Maintain an unweighted GPA of 2.8 or higher.

ATTENDANCE – Maintain a 98% attendance rate.

DISCIPLINE – Nothing that results in suspension

COURSES - Online CIVICS and FINANCIAL LITERACY OR, in-school GOVERNMENT and PERSONAL FINANCE

EXTRACURRICULAR – Combine any two options:
  - One season of an extracurricular activity/year
  - Volunteer more than 20 hours/year
  - Be employed for more than 40 hours/year

LIFE READY GRADUATE CAREER PORTFOLIO – Counselors will assist with tracking student portfolio career items and more.
CIVICS – EHS teachers track progress through Schoology courses. Teachers have access to a document that shows the progress of their homeroom/advisory students.

FINANCIAL LITERACY – an EHS teacher tracks and works with students to encourage them to finish the coursework. This teacher is also be responsible for approving completion of the Civics course before signing off on the completion certificate that earns them a $50 checking account deposit at Ephrata National Bank.

COUNSELORS also help track students and provide quarterly updates.
Q: Which class will be the first to be offered the Life Ready Graduate Certificate opportunity?

A: The Class of 2019

Q: What is the timeline for seniors to be considered for the LRG Certificate?

A: Three days prior to graduation: Senior grades, discipline, and attendance
   April 15 of senior year: Extracurricular documentation signed by coach, supervisor, etc.
   January of senior year: Completion of Civics and Financial Literacy

Q: What if a student defers taking online Civics to take Government his/her junior year?

A: This works! A student may take Government in place of online Civics and take Personal Finance in place of online Financial Literacy. We will just need to know so we can “unlock” Financial Literacy.
**Q:** How do students document their extracurricular activities?

**A:** Students will create a one-page “here is what I did” document with the signature of a coach, advisor, or supervisor.

**Q:** Why is this just for the junior and senior years?

**A:** This is to allow for and encourage resiliency and an opportunity for growth.

**Q:** Does Economics cover Personal Finance?

**A:** No, it does not cover the same practical content.

**Q:** What if something happens to a student in his/her senior year that affects completion?

**A:** For all special circumstances, there is an appeal process where students can advocate for themselves.
INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS

SCHOOL BOARD

EPHRATA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

EPHRATA, PA

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LIFE READY GRADUATE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the board of education of the Ephraim area school district believes that effective public schools are essential to prepare future generations to be productive members of society, to develop personal and professional skills, to be involved in community and civic organizations, and to provide opportunities for the students of our community to reach their full potential;

WHEREAS, the board of education acknowledges that high stakes tests on a narrow set of criteria are not the best set of predictors for success in life and that the one-size-fits-all educational system of the present is no longer the best we can do;

WHEREAS, the board of education recognizes that preparing students to have a positive impact on an ever-changing world requires them to have knowledge, skills, and dispositions that extend beyond the requirements of standardized assessments; and

WHEREAS, the board of education hereby endorses the work of the District Administration to establish a life-ready graduate profile that represents the important foundational elements of all learner education and provides learners with an education that sets them on a path to reach their full potential in life, regardless of the direction they take after graduation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the board of education hereby extends its full support to the above-stated goal life-ready graduate profile by providing the means and pathways for district students to reach their fullest potential.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Ephraim Area School Board for November 29, 2017 and that a copy be presented to Dr. Brian Troop and all staff members of the Ephraim Area School District.

Timothy W. Beaver, President
Ephraim Area School Board

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

EPHRATA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rt 26, Ephraim, PA 17522

April 1, 2018

Mr. Brian Troop, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Ephraim Area School District
Rt 61, Ephraim, PA 17522

Dear Dr. Troop,

It was good to hear from you again and learn more about “The Life Ready Graduate” program developed by Ephraim Area School District as a means for student success after graduation that is both research-based and endorsed by the community.

I reviewed “The Life Ready Graduate” program and conveyed you and your team for such a program which is aligned to the efforts in Pennsylvania’s ESSA Consolidated State Plan. The program promotes equitable access to a well-rounded, rigorous, and personalized education that supports career readiness skills that will help students succeed in the workplace and community.

I am very proud to announce that our community and school district have developed “The Life Ready Graduate” certification program providing students the foundational means and pathways to reach their fullest potential.

Thank you for your commitment to career and “Life” readiness preparation for Pennsylvania students. I wish you continued success in “The Life Ready Graduate” certification program and look forward to updates on the program when implemented.

Sincerely,

Matthew S. Stans
Assistant Superintendent

LOCAL BUSINESSES

LIFE READY GRADUATE
ENDORSE CERTIFICATE

PRESENTED TO

Company Name

“Life Ready provides learners with an education that sets them on a path to reach their full potential in life, we must also focus on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that lead to a successful future.”

- Dr. Brian Troop, District Superintendent

XYZ Company values the knowledge, skills, and dispositions as outlined in the Ephraim Area School District Life Ready Graduate profile and has agreed to recognize completion of the Life Ready Graduate Certificate requirements beyond standard graduation requirements, when hiring employees.

Mr. Timothy Eager
Ephraim Area School District Board President

Dr. Brian Troop
Ephraim Area School District Superintendent

Sponsors:

Ephraim National Bank

Laser Lab

WellSpan Ephraim Community Hospital

Paul B. Zimmerman, Inc.
“The program promotes equitable access to a well-rounded, rigorous, and personalized education that will help students in the workplace and community.”

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO CAREER AND ‘LIFE’ READINESS FOR STUDENTS.”
21st CENTURY TARGETS
An Engaged Community
BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

LIFE READY GRADUATE
ENDORSER CERTIFICATE
PRESENTED TO
Company Name

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Timothy W. Stayer
Ephrata Area School
District Board President

Dr. Brian Troop
Ephrata Area School
District Superintendent

Mr. Timothy Stayer
Ephrata Area School
District Board President

Dr. Brian Troop
Ephrata Area School
District Superintendent

Ephrata National Bank
LaserLab Managed Print & IT Solutions
WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital

Paul B. Zimmerman, Inc. family of companies
Listening and Learning at Board Meetings
- Staff Presentations
- Administrative Updates

Reading & Researching
- NSBA and PSBA Conferences
- PSBA Workshops

Tracking Key Initiatives
WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Ephrata Area School District believes that effective public schools are essential to prepare future generations to be productive members of society, to develop an educated work force to fuel business, to support safe and healthy communities, and to provide opportunities for the students of our community to reach their full potential, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education acknowledges that high stakes tests on a narrow set of criteria are not the best set of predictors for success in life and that the one-size-fits-all educational system of the industrial era is no longer the best we can do, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education recognizes that preparing students to have a positive impact on an ever-changing world requires them to have knowledge, skills, and dispositions that extend beyond the requirements of standardized assessments, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education hereby endorses the work of the District Administration to establish a Life Ready Graduate profile that represents the important foundational elements of all learners’ education and provides learners with an education that sets them on a path to reach their full potential in life, regardless of the direction they head after graduation, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education does hereby extend their full support in the implementation of the Life Ready Graduate program in providing the means and pathways for District students to reach their fullest potential.

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Ephrata Area School Board for November 20, 2017 and that a copy be presented to Dr. Brian Troop and all staff members of the Ephrata Area School District.

Timothy W. Slayter, President
Ephrata Area School Board
EASD FRAMEWORK

- 21st Century Targets (LRG Profile)
- Digital Tools
- Instructional Techniques
EASD INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

LIFE READY TARGETS

STUDENT CENTERED ENVIRONMENT

PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

MODERN LEARNING TOOLS
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<td>Learners have choice and there are multiple ways in which learning happens based on the learners and the content/skills.</td>
<td>Learning goals require learners to reach continually higher levels of performance.</td>
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP

INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS

TRANSPARENCY

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK & STUDENT OWNERSHIP

STUDENT OWNERSHIP
Instructional Shifts

• Transparency
• Evidence of Learning
• Feedback
• Student Ownership
Transparency

- What are we learning?
- Why does it matter?
- How does it all fit together?
Evidence of Learning

- Variety of assessment/data options
- Students show what they have learned
  - *(not just activity completion)*
- Show students’ level of understanding
  - *(foundational vs. complex)*
Feedback

- Ongoing information is collected
- Adjustments are made to close gaps
- Teacher / Peer / Self
Student Ownership

• Self-reflection
• Pace + Pathway
• Voice + Choice
• Is knowledge applied through skills (4Cs)?

• Is it open-walled, and does it extend beyond the classroom?

• Is there significant rigor/effort?

• Is there student choice?

• Is there learning through a project (not learning then a project)?
CORNERSTONE DESIGN ELEMENTS

• Designed to prioritize LRG Knowledge, Skills & Dispositions
• Focused on a central problem or question
• Sustained inquiry over time with high rigor
• Authentic context; involves real-world tasks and impact
• Integration of relevant community partner/sponsor
• Student voice and choice on important elements
• Comprehensive reflection and feedback throughout the project
• Public presentation to people beyond the classroom
CORNERSTONE BENEFITS

• Community connection benefits to students
• Student connection benefits to community
• Designed by colleagues
• Variety of experiences for ALL students K-11
• Teaching through a comprehensively-designed multi-disciplinary Cornerstone

• Collateral Relevance
The Work Ahead

• Continued implementation of the EASD Instructional Model.
• Adopt a coherent set of Cornerstone projects for grades.
• Develop and implement a series of Cornerstones that meet a set of established criteria.
• Increase relevance and authenticity while strengthening relationships with and appreciation of key aspects and organizations within our community.
• Continue to monitor progress and support reflection at natural gateways (K-4, 5-8, 9-12) in alignment to the LRG profile.