The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day two of its regular meeting on March 27, 2025. The KBE met both virtually and in-person at the Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort KY. Members of the public were permitted to attend the meeting in person although encouraged to view the meeting on the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Media Portal. The board conducted the following business:

I. Call to Order

Chair Sharon Robinson welcomed all board members and guests to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. ET.

II. Roll Call

Chair Robinson asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: Holly Bloodworth, Harold McKinney, Juston Pate, Julie Pile, Randy Poe, Sharon Porter Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Diane Woods, Lu Young, Lawrence McCrobie, Preston Graham, and Secretary Jamie Link.

III. Good News

A. **McCreary County school counselor becomes second in Kentucky to be nationally certified** (Lee Todd)
B. **Latonia Elementary administrative assistant Kim Frank earns 2024-2025 KESSP Award** (Lu Young)
C. **GoTeachKY Ambassador Maddie Morgan promotes teaching profession with MSUTeach students** (Diane Woods)
D. **Four winners from KACTE Entrepreneurship Event named** (Juston Pate)
E. **Kentucky Educators Rising Conference draws record number of aspiring educators** (Holly Bloodworth)

IV. Board Member Sharing

Chair Robinson said that the next item on the agenda is board sharing. It is an opportunity for board members to raise issues, pose questions, share concerns, and suggest topics to include on future board meeting agendas. Julie Pile reported on the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child subcommittee meeting, highlighting Fayette County's efforts in mental health, physical health, and movement in schools, as well as changes in the administration of over-the-counter medications. Holly Bloodworth suggested that new board members visit the Kentucky School for the Deaf and Kentucky School for the Blind to better understand their responsibilities and the unique needs of these schools. Lu Young highlighted the mental health awareness efforts in Campbell County, Fort Thomas,

Southgate, and Boone County, applauding their work in addressing social-emotional skills and mental health issues among students.

V. Report from the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education

President Aaron Thompson was unable to attend, however, a written copy of his report was provided to board members in advance of the meeting.

VI. Report from the Secretary of the Education and Labor Cabinet

Secretary Jamie Link attended in-person to give his report. Link provided an update on the legislative session, highlighting the cabinet's reorganization, the creation of a division of workforce talent, and the importance of collaboration with federal partners. He also discussed the expansion of the Statewide Workforce and Talent Team initiative, which aims to address career pathways and employer needs through collaboration with economic developers, workforce developers, the Chamber of Commerce, and the education system.

VII. Report from the Commissioner of Education

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher began by discussing the vision for Kentucky United We Learn, which focuses on transforming the educational experience for every student in the Commonwealth through inclusion, empathy, reciprocity, and co-creation. He then shared the success of the All In for Ag Week, which highlighted the importance of agricultural education and the various aspects of agriculture, including technology, science, and business. Commissioner Fletcher shared updates from the Area Technology Centers (ATCs), the Kentucky School for the Blind, and the Kentucky School for the Deaf.

VIII. Action/Discussion Item

A. Amendment to 702 KAR 7:065, Designation of Agent to Manage Middle and High School Interscholastic Athletics- Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) Commissioner Julian Tackett, KHSAA General Counsel Chad Collins, and KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen

KHSAA Commissioner Julian Tackett, KHSAA General Counsel Chad Collins, and KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen presented the proposed amendment. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the amendment to 702 KAR 7:065, Designation of Agent to Manage Middle and High School Interscholastic Athletics. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

IX. Review Items

A. Legislative Update

Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher and KDE Director of Government Relations Brian Perry presented the update. Fletcher and Perry highlighted key bills that were signed, vetoed, or awaiting action, and discussed the implications of these bills for the education system.

B. 2026-2028 Biennial Budget Request Presentation

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Karen Wirth provided the presentation. Wirth began by explaining some of the mandatory processes for ABRs (Additional Budget Requests).

Next, Associate Commissioner Kelly Foster presented additional budget requests from the KDE Office of Continuous Improvement and Support. Foster outlined the office's requests, which included funds for the Kentucky Education Recovery Fund and school based mental health professionals.

Associate Commissioner Gretta Hylton presented additional budget requests from the KDE Office of Special Education and Early Learning. Hylton outlined the office’s requests, which included funds for universal preschool, early childhood regional training centers, gifted and talented education, Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) and Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) operating, and funds to support step and rank increases for certified staff.

Finally, Associate Commissioner Beth Hargis presented additional budget requests from the KDE Office of Career and Technical Education. Hargis outlined the office’s requests which included funds for JROTC consultants, career and technical student organizations, salary schedule and step/rank, and funding to include Area Technology Centers (ATCs) in the supplemental funding allocations.

Wirth then outlined next steps for board members related to the budget review process. KBE members will be asked to review and rank their budgetary priorities in advance of the June meeting. At the June KBE meeting, OFO staff will seek board input concerning final prioritization of ABRs. The recommended budget will be presented for the KBE’s approval and then submitted to the Governor’s office on October 1, Wirth said.

C. Milken Educator Award Presentation

KDE Program Consultant Allie Green facilitated the presentation and introduced 2024 Kentucky Milken Educator Jenna Stewart. The Milken Educator Awards recognizes outstanding K-12 educators for their quality of teaching, professional leadership, engagement with families and the community, and potential for greater contributions to students, schools, and communities in the future. A school ceremony was held at the beginning of December honoring the recipient, Jenna Stewart of Longbranch Elementary School in Boone County. The award includes an unrestricted $25,000 cash prize and the opportunity for an all expenses paid national networking forum. Stewart was presented with her commemorative obelisk and spoke about her passion for education.

D. Presentation of the 2025 Robinson Award for Diversity and Equity in Public Education

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher, Ed.D., and KBE Chair Sharon Robinson, Ph.D., facilitated the award presentation. Each year, the KBE grants this award to a Kentuckian or a Kentucky organization demonstrating extraordinary efforts and contributions in the area of educational diversity and equity. The winners of the award were announced to be Dr. Marty Pollio, superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, and Michael Griffin, principal of Browning Springs Middle School (Hopkins County Schools). Commissioner Fletcher offered his congratulations to the recipients and thanked them for their commitment to the students of Kentucky. Superintendent Pollio addressed the board about the honor to receive the award, and the work that has been done in Jefferson County to close achievement gaps and reduce inequality.

X. Adjournment

Chair Robinson thanked everyone for their time and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 P.M. E.T.