The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day one of its regular meeting on August 6, 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. She said that the August regular meeting has been identified as the board's retreat, and as outlined in the KBE Policy Manual, the agenda includes review of the board's goals and objectives, identifying major issues likely to face the board in the coming year and establishing priorities for board action. The meeting was called to order at 12:30 P.M. ET.

II. Swearing In of Board Member

Erin Gaines from the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Legal Services issued the oath of office. Alfonso De Torres Núñez was newly appointed to the Board of Education as the non-voting teacher member.The board also welcomed new non-voting student member Harper Blake, who did not take the oath of office as she is not of the age of majority.

III. 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 Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Diane Woods, Lu Young, Harper Blake, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, and Secretary Jamie Link. President Aaron Thompson was absent.

IV. Public Comment Session

Chair Robinson stated that the Public Comment Segment is limited to 10 speakers at a maximum of 3 minutes each. No one submitted items via the KBE email inbox, however one individual, Ashley Munson, attended in-person to comment.

V. Internal Board Business (Action/Discussion)

A. Summary Minutes for the June 4, 2025, KBE Regular Meeting Day 1; June 4, 2025, KBE State Schools Committee Meeting; June 4, 2025, KBE United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting; June 5, 2025 KBE, Regular Meeting Day 2; and August 4, 2025, KBE Awards Committee Meeting

The minutes of the June 4, 2025, KBE Regular Meeting Day 1; June 4, 2025, KBE State Schools Committee Meeting; June 4, 2025, KBE United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting; June 5, 2025, KBE Regular Meeting Day 2; and August 4, 2025, KBE Awards Committee Meeting were distributed to members in advance. Chair Robinson asked for any corrections to any of the minutes. There were no corrections. Chair Robinson asked for a motion to approve all of the meeting minutes. The motion was made by Juston Pate and seconded by Julie Pile. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

B. Nomination and Election of Kentucky Board of Education Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Robinson said that Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 156.029 requires that the KBE elect a chairperson at the first regular meeting of each fiscal year. Chair Robinson requested nominations for the Chair. Randy Poe nominated Sharon Robinson, which was seconded by Steve Trimble. There were no other nominations.

With only one nomination, Chair Robinson asked for a motion to approve the slate and elect Sharon Robinson as Chair. The motion was made by Diane Woods and seconded by Lee Todd. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Chair Robinson then opened nominations for the Vice Chair. Diane Woods nominated Lu Young, which was seconded by Juston Pate. There were no other nominations.

With only one nomination, Chair Robinson asked for a motion to approve the slate and elect Lu Young as Vice Chair. The motion was made by Diane Woods and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

C. KBE Member Travel Requests for Approval

Chair Robinson said that per the KBE Policy Manual, “All out of state travel for which reimbursement is sought shall be approved in advance by the board and by the Finance Cabinet through KDE.” Chair Robinson said that the National Association of State Boards of Education’s (NASBE) Annual Conference will be held in Austin, Texas in October. Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve up to five out of state travel requests for members to attend the NASBE conference. The motion was made by Steve Trimble

and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

D. KBE Regular Meeting Calendar

Chair Robinson said that a list of proposed meeting dates for 2026 was provided to board members in advance of the meeting. She said that the proposal includes additional meeting dates during odd-numbered months to hold virtual meetings, and that these would be scheduled virtually for two hours and are intended for the board to participate in learning sessions and discussion regarding the board's priorities. Following discussion, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the KBE Regular Meeting Calendar for 2026. The motion was made by Julie Pile and seconded by Lee Todd. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

E. Recipient of the 2025 Kelly Award for Business and Education Partnership

On behalf of the KBE Awards Committee, Chair Julie Pile presented the information related to the award description. Chair Pile shared that the committee met on Monday, August 4 and determined that candidate 8 best met the criteria of the award. Chair Pile moved to approve candidate 8 as the recipient and asked the chair for the board's approval to recognize the recipient at the board's October regular meeting. The motion did not require a second as it came from the committee. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

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

President Aaron Thompson was unable to attend but provided a written report that is available in the board's portal.

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

Secretary Jamie Link attended the meeting in-person to give his report. Link provided an update on the Education and Labor Cabinet's initiatives, including legislative proposals, budget preparations, and the Pre-K for All initiative. He also highlighted the Statewide Workforce and Talent Team (SWATT) initiative and the progress in workforce development and economic development collaboration.

VIII. Report from the Commissioner of Education

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher discussed the department's efforts to increase visibility, build relationships, and provide timely updates to district partners. He also highlighted the positive outcomes from the Kentucky

School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf summer programs and the notable results from the Area Technology Centers' Career and Technical Education programs for the 2023-2024 reporting year.

IX. Action/Discussion Items

A. Auditor of Public Accounts 2025 Special Report

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher, KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd G. Allen, KBE Chair Sharon Robinson, Ed.D., and KBE Vice Chair Lu Young, Ed.D., facilitated a discussion regarding the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) 2025 Special Report. Fletcher said KDE is actively reviewing the audit's recommendations to see what work is already being done, what issues have already been addressed and what more can be done. Fletcher said many of the audit's recommendations line up with current priorities for KDE, including potential legislative fixes to the district facilities funding process, career and technical education strategic planning, more funding for area technology centers and refined special education monitoring, with a focus on improved outcomes for students with disabilities. He also mentioned the hiring of four special assistants to the commissioner – all former district superintendents – assigned to regional education cooperatives as a step toward facilitating more conversation and collaboration between schools and KDE.

KDE received a preliminary report from the APA on June 6. Allen said the department had the chance to respond – noting several errors, omissions, and recommended edits within the audit – before the final audit was published July 1. Fletcher said KDE's response to the preliminary report was about 80 pages long. Board members discussed communicating with stakeholders regarding the department's response to the audit recommendations, particularly recommendations that would require substantial funding from the Kentucky General Assembly or some sort of legislative intervention. KBE member Randy Poe said he wants to make sure KDE's response is clear about the differences between what was recommended and what can be done.

B. KBE Goal Setting for 2025-2026

Chair Robinson said it was time to turn the discussion to KBE Goal Setting for 2025-2026. Robinson said that included in the KBE portal are the board's goals for 2024-2025, which align with the three big ideas in Kentucky's United We Learn Vision. Robinson invited member input on the goals.

Board members reviewed and discussed the 2024-2025 goals, considering the need for more specific metrics and targets. The board proposed adding a goal related to supporting the education workforce and agreed to revisit the goals with a focus on measurability and accountability. Robinson said the board would revisit its goal setting in its next meeting.

X. Review Items

A. Update on Federal Education Policy and Impacts

Chair Robinson welcomed Tara Thomas, Government Affairs Manager with AASA (the School Superintendents Association), for an update on Federal Education Policy and Impacts. Thomas highlighted the disruption caused by federal funding delays and the impact on smaller rural districts. She also provided an overview of the federal fiscal year 26 appropriations and budget process, highlighting the differences between the president's proposal and the U.S. Senate bipartisan proposal. She discussed the potential for a government shutdown and its impact on education funding. Thomas discussed HR1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, and its impact on K12 education. She highlighted the establishment of the first-ever National School Voucher program and the expansion of workforce and short-term Pell grants.

XI. Action/Discussion Items (Cont.)

C. Review of KBE Standing Committees

Chair Robinson said that all board members are expected to serve on committees. The United We Learn Standing Committee is charged with reviewing and advising the full board on all policy matters related to United We Learn and the KDE’s efforts to transform school experiences to ensure deep and authentic learning experiences for all students. The State Schools Standing Committee is charged with reviewing and advising the full board on all policy matters related to governance and operations of the Kentucky School for the Blind, Kentucky School for the Deaf, and the Area Technology Centers operated by the KDE. Chair Robinson asked the committee membership to continue as is, with the addition of the new teacher member, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, to the State Schools Committee and the new student member, Harper Blake, to the United We Learn Committee. She then recommended the appointment of Diane Woods and the reappointment of Julie Pile to the KBE’s Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Subcommittee. Chair Robinson thanked Julie Pile and Lu Young for their continued service on the KBE Awards Committee and said that Alfonso De Torres Núñez has also agreed to serve on the

committee. Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the appointments of KBE members to the committees. The motion was made by Harold McKinney and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

D. KDE 2026-2028 Biennial Budget

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross discussed the department's 2026-2028 biennial budget. The presenters said that the KBE is requested to take action to approve the ABR (additional budget request) prioritization for inclusion in KDE's 2026-2028 biennial budget request. A document listing the ABR prioritization as determined by the survey submitted to KBE members prior to the June KBE meeting was provided to board members in advance. Ross said that KDE will submit the budget request with ABR prioritization to the Office of State Budget Director for the Governor's consideration of inclusion in the 2026-2028 Executive Branch Budget Request. During the 2026 Legislative Session, the Kentucky General Assembly will enact a budget that will establish KDE funding for the next biennium. Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the additional budget request (ABR) prioritization for inclusion in KDE's 2026-2028 biennial budget request. The motion was made by Juston Pate and seconded by Steve Trimble. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

XII. Review Items (Cont.)

B. Legislative Priorities and Updates

Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher and KDE Director of Government Relations Dr. Brian Perry gave an overview of the legislative priorities and updates, including the work of the Kentucky United We Learn Council, universal preschool, HQIRS (High Quality Instructional Resources), and CTE (Career and Technical Education) funding. Perry emphasized the importance of collaboration with legislators and stakeholders.

C. Update from the 2025 Kentucky Superintendent of the Year

Chair Robinson welcomed Dr. Nick Carter, Superintendent of Breckinridge County Schools. She said that Dr. Carter was named the 2025 Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Carter shared his views on the importance of preschool, transition readiness, and the challenges faced by superintendents. He emphasized

the need for unity and advocacy in public education. Dr. Carter thanked the board for recognizing him.

XIII. 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 Harold McKinney. The motion passed with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 P.M. E.T.