The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day one of its regular meeting on February 4, 2026. The KBE met virtually via Microsoft Teams due to weather conditions. Members of the public were 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 1:00 P.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 Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Lu Young, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, and Secretary Jamie Link. Harper Blake and President Aaron Thompson were absent. KDE Director of Education Policy GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Ph.D., stated a quorum was present.

III. Public Comment Session

Chair Robinson stated that due to the transition to a completely virtual meeting due to weather conditions, written comments were accepted via email by the deadline included in the meeting advisory. Chair Robinson acknowledged that one comment was received after the indicated deadline and shared with the KBE members by email.

IV. Internal Board Business (Action/Discussion)

A. Summary Minutes for the December 3, 2025 KBE Regular Meeting Day 1; December 3, 2025 KBE United We Learn Committee Meeting; December 3, 2025 KBE State Schools Committee Meeting; December 4, 2025 KBE Regular Meeting Day 2; January 7, 2026 KBE Virtual Regular Meeting; and January 28, 2026 KBE Awards Committee Meeting

The minutes of the December 3, 2025 KBE Regular Meeting Day 1; December 3, 2025 KBE United We Learn Committee Meeting; December 3, 2025 KBE State Schools Committee Meeting; December 4, 2025 KBE Regular Meeting Day 2; January 7, 2026 KBE Virtual Regular Meeting; and January 28, 2026 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

Steve Trimble and seconded by Lu Young. The motion passed with a roll call vote, 9-0 (Bloodworth- yes, McKinney- yes, Pate- yes, Pile- yes, Poe- yes, Robinson- yes, Todd- yes, Trimble- yes, Young- yes).

B. Recipient of the 2026 Robinson Award for Diversity and Equity in Public Education

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 Wednesday, January 28 and determined that candidates 3 and 5 best met the criteria of the award. Chair Pile moved to approve candidates 3 and 5 as the recipients and asked the chair for the board's approval to recognize the recipients at the board's April regular meeting. The motion did not require a second as it came from the committee. The motion passed with a roll call vote, 9-0 (Bloodworth- yes, McKinney- yes, Pate- yes, Pile- yes, Poe- yes, Robinson- yes, Todd- yes, Trimble- yes, Young- yes).

V. Consent Agenda

Note: Chair Robinson said that "KDE staff identified items in the consent agenda as those that are non-controversial and routine in nature." She said that the consent agenda items were distributed to members in advance of the meeting for review and asked if any member wished to move an item from the consent agenda. Chair Robinson said, however, if an item is moved, the chair may decide to take up the matter immediately or move it to a discussion item later in the agenda. None of the items were moved, and Chair Robinson asked the board to entertain a motion to approve all items in the consent agenda. The motion was made by Harold McKinney and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed with a roll call vote, 9-0 (Bloodworth- yes, McKinney- yes, Pate- yes, Pile- yes, Poe- yes, Robinson- yes, Todd- yes, Trimble- yes, Young- yes).

A. Hearing Officer's Report- KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd G. Allen

B. Litigation Report - KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd G. Allen

C. Approval of the Amendment to 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum requirement for high school graduation- KDE Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Ph.D., KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli and KDE Policy Advisor Sarah Medley

D. **Approval of the Statement of Consideration for 704 KAR 3:410, Preschool education program-** KDE Associate Commissioner Gretta Hylton, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Melody Cooper

E. **Approval of the Appointment of Rhonda Bodner to the Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board-** KDE Associate Commissioner Gretta Hylton, Ed.D. and KDE Division Director Shannon Sparkman

F. **Approval of the 2025-2026 Tax Rates Levied-** KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Chay Ritter

G. **Approval of Waiver Requests 2026-WV-001, 2026-WV-002, 2026-WV-003, 2026-WV-004, 2026-WV-005, 2026-WV-006, 2026-WV-007, 2026-WV-008, 2026-WV-009, 2026-WV-010, 2026-WV-011, 2026-WV-012, 2026-WV-013, 2026-WV-014, 2026-WV-015, 2026-WV-016, 2026-WV-017, 2026-WV-018, 2026-WV-019, 2026-WV-020, 2026-WV-023, 2026-WV-025, 2026-WV-026, 2026-WV-027, 2026-WV-028, 2026-WV-029, 2026-WV-030, 2026-WV-031, 2026-WV-032, 2026-WV-033, 2026-WV-034, 2026-WV-041, 2026-WV-043, 2026-WV-047, 2026-WV-049, 2026-WV-050, 2026-WV-051, 2026-WV-052, 2026-WV-053, 2026-WV-054, 2026-WV-056, 2026-WV-057, 2026-WV-058, 2026-WV-059, 2026-WV-060, Jefferson County Schools-** KDE Associate Commissioner Gretta Hylton, Ed.D., KDE Division Director Carol Ann Morrison, and KDE Policy Advisor Melody Cooper

H. **Denial of Waiver Request 2026-WV-048, Covington Independent Schools -** KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd G. Allen

VI. Good News

Board members shared information updates about the following topics:

A. **Taylor County's Sydney Newton honored with $25,000 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award** (Presented by Randy Poe)

B. **2025 Alternative Education Programs of Distinction Are Named** (Presented by Juston Pate)

C. **Three Kentucky educators honored as part of 2025 Kentucky Exemplary Educators Program** (Presented by Holly Bloodworth**)**

D. **Patrick Graboviy and Ethan Morgan named 2026 U.S. Senate Youth delegates** (Presented by Steve Trimble)

E. **KYCEC, KDE name Jessica Youart the 2025 Special Education Teacher of the Year** (Presented by Lee Todd)

VII. Board Member Sharing

Chair Sharon 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 began by sharing a report from the KBE Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Subcommittee. She highlighted the SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) Teacher of the Year recognition, the creation of a member directory, expansion of the subcommittee, and the Living Well program for Kentucky employees. Pile also discussed her visit to Adair County where she was able to watch senior student defenses of learning. Lu Young said she was able to attend the winter convening of the Kentucky United We Learn Council. Juston Pate provided an update on the High School Transformation Work Group, saying that the next meeting will take place on February 26. Alfonso De Torres Núñez raised questions about teacher input on special education caseload regulations. Chair Robinson and Dr. Jones agreed to provide further information to board members on this topic.

Next, Chair Robinson dismissed the members of the board to committees.

The United We Learn Committee met in the main Teams virtual meeting room. The State Schools Committee moved to an alternate Teams meeting room. Chair Robinson noted that agendas and committee information are accessible through the KBE portal.

VIII. United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee

A. We Lead Computer Science Report and KDE Update on Computer Science (CS)- We Lead Computer Science Chief Executive Officer Alicia Sells, KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli, and KDE CS Lead Sean Jackson

IX. State Schools Committee

A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Updates- KDE Associate Commissioner Beth Hargis, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Lauren Graves, Ph.D.

Return from KBE Committees to the main Teams meeting room.

Chair Robinson called the board to order.

X. Action/Discussion Items

A. Report on the United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee on Action/Discussion Items

United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee Chair Holly Bloodworth provided an update on the committee's meeting. Chair Bloodworth shared that the committee heard from We Lead Computer Science staff regarding their virtual computer academy which helps students to earn industry certifications, offers job shadowing, and mock interviews. We Lead CS, which began as an initiative to expand computer science access in rural Kentucky and was later established as a statewide virtual career academy by the General Assembly, with a mission to increase competitiveness, expand access, and prepare students for tech careers.

B. Report on the State Schools Committee on Action/Discussion Items

State Schools Committee Chair Randy Poe provided an update on the committee's meeting. Chair Poe shared that the committee heard updates regarding the ongoing analysis and recommendations for revising the Area Technology Center (ATC) salary schedule to address recruitment and retention challenges for occupation-based instructors and administrators, with input from a diverse work group and feedback from committee members.

XI. Review Items

A. Presentation of Strategic Dashboard- KDE Chief Performance Officer Karen Dodd and KDE Strategic Plan Manager Susan Strange

KDE Chief Performance Officer Karen Dodd and KDE Strategic Plan Manager Susan Strange presented on KDE's strategic dashboard. The goal of the dashboard is to keep KBE members, the commissioner, KDE staff, and all stakeholders informed of KDE's progress towards the department's goals, Dodd said. Board members provided feedback and suggestions on the implementation of the dashboard.

B. Update from 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year (KTOY)

Chair Robinson welcomed 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year Michelle Gross and KDE Program Consultant Allie Green. Gross introduced herself to board members and spoke about her experiences as an educator. Gross will spend a six-month sabbatical experience with KDE as a part of her year-long term as KTOY. Robinson congratulated Gross for being named a finalist in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) National Teacher of the Year competition. Gross said she will participate in

finalist interviews in March. Board members congratulated Gross for being named KTOY and wished her well in the national competition.

C. Legislative Update

KDE Director of Government Relations Dr. Brian Perry presented the legislative update to the board. Dr. Perry provided updates on the current legislative session, highlighting key bills and their potential impact on education. Dr. Perry addressed member questions regarding specific bills and discussed topics such as transportation funding, the accountability system, and financial transparency.

XII. 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 with a roll call vote, 9-0 (Bloodworth- yes, McKinney- yes, Pate- yes, Pile- yes, Poe- yes, Robinson- yes, Todd- yes, Trimble- yes, Young- yes). The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 P.M. E.T.

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held the State Schools Committee meeting on February 4, 2026. The committee met virtually via Microsoft Teams. Members of the public were 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 Randy Poe welcomed the committee members and guests to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 1:47 P.M. E.T.

II. Roll Call

Chair Poe asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: Randy Poe, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, Harold McKinney, Sharon Robinson, Steve Trimble, and Secretary Jamie Link.

III. Review Item

A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Updates - KDE Associate Commissioner Beth Hargis, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Lauren Graves, Ph.D.

KDE Associate Commissioner Beth Hargis, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisory Lauren Graves, Ph.D., presented the updates. The presenters discussed the ongoing analysis and recommendations for revising the Area Technology Center (ATC) salary schedule to address recruitment and retention challenges for occupation-based instructors and administrators, with input from a diverse work group and feedback from committee members. Committee members discussed the need to adapt salary structures to current labor market conditions, emphasizing the importance of supporting teachers' economic needs and the necessity of legislative action and funding for proposed changes.

IV. Adjournment

Chair Poe thanked everyone for the updates and requested a motion to adjourn the committee. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Harold McKinney. The motion passed with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 P.M. E.T.

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held the United We Learn/Teaching and Learning Committee meeting on February 4, 2026. The committee met virtually via Microsoft Teams. Members of the public were 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 Holly Bloodworth welcomed the committee members and guests to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 1:48 P.M. E.T.

II. Roll Call

Chair Holly Bloodworth asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: Holly Bloodworth, Lu Young, Juston Pate, Julie Pile, and Lee Todd. Harper Blake was absent.

III. Review Item

A. We Lead Computer Science Report and KDE Update on Computer Science (CS)

We Lead Computer Science Chief Executive Officer Alicia Sells, KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli, and KDE CS Lead Sean Jackson presented the update on We Lead CS efforts for 2024-2025. Sells described the origins of We Lead CS, which began as an initiative to expand computer science access in rural Kentucky and was later established as a statewide virtual career academy by the General Assembly, with a mission to increase competitiveness, expand access, and prepare students for tech careers. According to Sells, We Lead CS emphasizes work-based learning, including industry certifications, virtual job shadowing, mock interviews, and employer feedback on student projects. The program collaborates with an employer advisory board and local Chambers of Commerce to align curriculum with workforce needs. Sells and Jackson responded to board member questions regarding teacher employment, post-secondary outcomes, support for ELL students, and We Lead CS program capacity.

IV. Adjournment

Chair Bloodworth requested a motion to adjourn the committee. The motion was made by Lee Todd and seconded by Julie Pile. The motion passed with a roll call vote, 5-0 (Bloodworth- yes, Pate-yes, Pile- yes, Todd-yes, Young-yes). The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 P.M. E.T.