

**Commissioner Terry Holliday's Report
for the
Oct. 6-7, 2014 Kentucky Board of Education Meeting**

2013-14 Assessment Results – On October 3, we will publicly release the results of the Unbridled Learning assessments. The results showed that we are making progress and this reflects much hard work on the part of schools and districts.

Highlights of the results include:

- Overall student performance showed improvement from 2013 with the percentage of proficient and distinguished students increasing in most subjects at every grade level; students in groups that have historically had achievement gaps also are performing at higher levels across multiple content areas and grade levels.
- At the elementary level, the strongest gains were in reading, mathematics, science and writing on-demand. At the middle school level, the percentage of students performing at the Proficient/Distinguished levels increased in all content areas – including an almost five point gain in mathematics – except language mechanics. High schools also made gains in mathematics, science and social studies.
- The college/career readiness rate jumped to 62.3 percent – up from 54.1 percent last year and 47.2 percent in 2012.
- The four-year graduation rate is up as well – from 86.1 percent in 2012-13 to 87.4 percent in the 2013-14 school year.
- The state exceeded its 2014 accountability goal of 65.3 with an overall score of 68.7 out of 100.
- A total of 641 schools and 95 districts are performing at the highest levels – classified as either proficient or distinguished, while 860 schools and 79 districts met the requirements to be considered progressing.
- High school juniors taking the ACT exam in the spring of 2014 recorded the highest scores since all juniors started taking the test in 2008, as mandated by KRS 158.6453. Additionally, the percentage of students meeting Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education ACT benchmarks continues to increase.

We need to celebrate this progress and take time to thank those who made it possible. Yet, we still have much work to do to ensure that all students are college and career ready.

For the detailed assessment data, go to the school report card once it reopens on Oct. 3 at <http://applications.education.ky.gov/SRC/>.

Kentucky Youth Bullying Prevention Task Force – In August, Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Audrey Tayse Haynes and I sent Governor Steve Beshear a letter outlining the impacts of bullying on young Kentuckians and urged him to create a task force. The letter can be found at the following link:

<http://education.ky.gov/comm/news/Documents/2014%209%2010%20Bullying%20Letter.pdf>.

In response to the alarming trends relative to the frequency of bullying, Governor Beshear announced the creation of the Kentucky Youth Bullying Prevention Task Force – a 22-member

panel, including students – which will study bullying in schools and recommend practices and policies to help foster safer, harassment-free school environments.

The Youth Bullying Prevention Task Force will analyze existing laws and policies; interview school professionals, bullying victims and other experts; and collect training and resource materials. The group will submit its findings, including recommendations for policy initiatives and school practices, in a report to the Governor by Nov. 15, 2015.

The kick-off meeting of the task force is scheduled for October 22. I will keep you apprised of the work of the group as it unfolds.