

Kentucky Board of Education
February 2015
Report from the Secretary
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

- 1) With the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) being signed into law in July 2014, partial implementation is scheduled for July 1, 2015. The first step is evaluating Kentucky's current designated regions and areas that have been in existence since 1998 in regard to demographic shifts that may require adjustment of these regions and areas.

A statewide steering committee has been established including appropriate stakeholders who must evaluate and decide designation or re-designation of regions and areas. Once initial recommendations are made by this steering committee, a series of statewide listening sessions will be held to gather public comment. Feedback obtained will be considered in the development of recommendations to the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and will be subject to any appeals. Final recommendations to Governor Beshear will be provided with subsequent Executive Order to be issued by the Governor by the end of March, 2015.

- 2) The Department of Libraries and Archives received news of a bequest for \$1.5 million in the will of a former user of their program known as the "Talking Books" initiative. The Kentucky Talking Book Library (KTBL) provides free library service to people who cannot read traditional print because they have a visual, physical, or reading disability. Audio and Braille materials are sent to and from users by postage-free mail. Special equipment is provided by the library. KTBL has been in operation since 1968 and is part of a national network of libraries administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a branch of the Library of Congress.
- 3) Recently the West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board received a National Emergency Grant from the US Department of Labor in the amount of \$4,598,681 with \$2,170,658 initially released. The grant will provide reemployment and training to 875 individuals impacted by the closure of the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant located in McCracken County and workers impacted by layoffs at GE Aviation located in Madisonville.
- 4) A session was held and promoted by Fort Campbell in January to allow community comments regarding the impact on the community on the recently announcement loss of the 159th Brigade. Approximately 2,500 troops will be impacted. The Tennessee Governor and Kentucky Lt. Governor participated in the event as well as various community leaders.