

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

1. HB 234 (Reach for the Stars Bill) was passed by the legislature and signed into law by the Governor. The bill's original language made mandatory that the proposed quality ranking system apply to all early care and education providers. Amendments were passed excluding private providers. Child-care providers with programs for which children attend no more than 15 hours per week have limited licensure requirements. Those for which children attend no more than 10 hours per week are exempt from all child-care licensure requirements and administrative regulations. Approximately 75% of early care and education providers will participate in the rating system. This includes publicly funded and those private providers who choose to participate.
2. The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics is developing a grant application with help from the Kentucky Department of Education for a new Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Program. The federal grant will be up to \$7.0 million over four years. The application is due June 10, 2015.
3. Kentucky Work Ready Communities will be conducting a Best Practices Summit on April 29, 2015 from 9:30 to 3:00 at the KCTCS System Office in Versailles. The purpose of the summit is to allow counties to share their best practices with one another in order to strengthen counties pursuit in becoming "Work Ready." Currently, there are 17 Certified Work Ready counties, 34 Certified Work Ready in Progress, 28 that have submitted letters of intent, 30 at the Formative Stage, and only 11 counties still yet to engage. Our goal is to have all 120 Kentucky counties at some level of Work Ready by the end of the Beshear Administration.
4. In January 2012, residents of Campbell and Kenton Counties filed suit against their public libraries claiming that the libraries had used the incorrect statute for setting the libraries property tax rates since 1979. The plaintiffs argued that library specific legislation passed in 1964 took precedence over HB44 adopted in 1979 to limit tax rates of special taxing districts. Additional lawsuits were filed against the libraries in Boone, Montgomery, and Anderson Counties with 99 of Kentucky's 119 library systems potentially being affected. Estimates from the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet indicated rolling back library tax rates to 1979 levels would reduce public library income by more than 50% in 70 counties with reduced services and even closures of libraries in many counties. In 2013 the Campbell County Circuit Court and the Kenton County Circuit Court ruled against the libraries. Those rulings were appealed to the Kentucky Court of Appeals. On March 20, 2015, the Kentucky Court of Appeals reversed the lower court rulings and harmonized the conflicting state statutes, allowing the public library districts to set tax rates using the process outlined in KRS 132. The plaintiffs have the option of appealing this decision to the Kentucky Supreme Court.