

Kentucky Board of Education
October 6, 2015
Report from the Secretary
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

1. On August 10, Governor Beshear announced that a nearly \$1 billion federal unemployment insurance loan has been repaid. The UI Trust Fund became insolvent in 2009 because claims for UI benefits outpaced Kentucky's ability to pay them. The Governor created the UI Taskforce comprised of individuals from government, employers, labor and business organizations to tackle this problem. Structural changes to the UI system along with an improving economy allowed the loan to be repaid two years ahead of schedule. The early payoff means that employers will save \$165 million in federal UI taxes or about \$105 per employee. It demonstrates that Kentucky's economic health has greatly improved since the depths of the great recession and that the UI trust fund is on the road to long-term stability.
2. Governor Beshear reconstituted the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and created the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board effective with the rollout of new federal workforce legislation that went into effect July 1st. This 42 member board had its first meeting on August 20th. It is comprised of 51% business representatives, 20% representatives of the workforce stakeholders, education representatives, and various state agencies. It will serve as advisor to the Governor on strategies and program development for workforce program and policy matters.
3. A roundtable discussion with human resources representatives from Kentucky businesses was held on August 13 by the Department of Workforce Investment. Keynote comments were made by Lt. Governor Luallen with discussion focused on the long-term unemployed and how to reduce the thousands of individuals in Kentucky who face various roadblocks to gainful employment. The goal is to brainstorm solutions to these roadblocks and utilize this information in the development of services and policy issues. As a result of this roundtable, a statewide virtual career fair will be held on October 14. The objective is to match those long term unemployed and in need of jobs with employers in need of employees.
4. The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) has been awarded a four-year grant for more than \$6.7 million to expand access to timely, high-quality education and workforce data. Funds will allow Kentucky to continue to build upon and improve access to the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS), a statewide repository of education data from early childhood through postsecondary and into training and employment. The project will use KLDS to assess students' college and career readiness

and track educational and workforce outcomes. In addition, it will improve the ability of state and local partners to conduct high-quality research and program evaluations.

5. On October 19th, the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet along with the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the 2015 Kentucky Workforce Summit: Solutions for Economic Competitiveness, in Lexington. It is an exciting opportunity to bring public and private sector leaders together to discuss what is happening in Kentucky and where we need to go in the future to continue to strengthen education, workforce and the economy in the commonwealth. You'll find some information on this summit by going to ky.chamber.com/events/workforce. You'll see some familiar names listed as speakers or moderators such as Dr. Kate Akers from KCEWS, Laura Arnold from Office of Career and Tech Ed, Dr. Aaron Thompson from CPE, our own Mary Gwen Wheeler representing 55,000 degrees, and many others.
6. The Kentucky Career Center Opportunity Youth Summit will be held Nov. 10 in Louisville. This is a great conference that strives to keep youth engaged in school and on the pathway to being college and career ready. You can learn more about WIOA, career preparation and employer engagement as well as networking with other state leaders who want to make sure that Kentucky is better prepared for the future with a highly skilled workforce. You may obtain additional info at facebook.com/opportunityyouthsummit.