

Commissioner of Education's Report
October 6, 2015 KBE Meeting
by
Interim Commissioner Kevin Brown

2014-15 Assessment Results Released. On Thursday, October 1, KDE publicly released the latest round of assessment results (2014-15). As is customary, we sent the data to the press early under embargo to allow them to ask questions and talk with school districts before the data was made public.

The good news is that the college/career readiness rate jumped to 66.8 – up from 62.5 percent last year and 54.1 percent in 2013. Also, the four-year graduation rate is up as well to 87.9 percent – from 87.5 percent in the 2013-14 school year. We need to celebrate this excellent progress and thank administrators, teachers, students, parents and community members for the hard work at the local level that made this possible.

The percent of students scoring at the proficient and distinguished levels has increased in nearly every subject and at every grade level from 2012, the first year of the K-PREP assessments. However, scores remained relatively flat in the past year, and students in groups that have historically had achievement gaps continue to lag behind their peers across multiple content areas and grade levels. The novice reduction work that is underway is very timely to address the gap problem.

Another piece of good news is that ten of the state's 36 lowest-performing schools, known as Priority Schools, made enough improvement over the past three years to exit Priority status. Those schools are:

- Bryan Station High School, Fayette County
- Greenup County High School, Greenup County
- Waggener High School, Jefferson County
- Knox Central High School, Knox County
- Lawrence County High School, Lawrence County
- Lee County High School, Lee County
- Lincoln County High School, Lincoln County
- Newport High School, Newport Independent
- Perry County Central High School, Perry County
- Trimble County High School, Trimble County

The board will receive a thorough briefing on the assessment results by Associate Commissioner Rhonda Sims at the October 6 meeting. Additionally, the press release on the results can be found [here](#) and the briefing packet can be located [here](#).

Kentucky State Team Attends CCSSO Career Readiness Initiative Meeting. A state team from Kentucky attended a convening related to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Career Readiness Initiative in Austin, Texas on September 30 – October 1. On the team is Interim Commissioner of Education Kevin Brown, KDE Policy Advisor Leslie Slaughter, Deputy Commissioner Beth Brinly of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet,

Director of P-20 College and Career Readiness April Wood of the Council on Postsecondary Education and Betsy Dexter representing the business community.

Kentucky is among a group of 17 states that committed to develop and execute a detailed plan to implement recommendations made in [Opportunities and Options: Making Career Preparation Work for Students](#), a report by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Career Readiness Task Force, led by then Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. CCSSO launched the task force last year to address concerns that career education is often perceived as an outdated model that tolerates low expectations and is misaligned with the evolving needs of the current labor market.

Kentucky All STARS, New Quality Rating System. In cooperation with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, KDE disseminated information and videos about the new Kentucky All STARS Rating System to all superintendents, local board chairs and KDE leadership. It is a five star system and is designed to support Kentucky's youngest learners. You can view the message and videos at the following link:

<http://myemail.constantcontact.com/Kentucky-All-STARS---New-Quality-Rating-System.html?soid=1109591059758&aid=ngjecnyMW8A>.

School Readiness Summit. KDE will be disseminating information to school districts inviting them to apply to participate in the 2015 School Readiness Summit sponsored by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. 25-30 teams will be selected through the application process. The purpose of the summit is to help school districts, early learning providers and community organizations throughout the state make the vital connections and collaborations necessary for student success from birth through grade 3.

The summit will be held on November 18 in Frankfort at the Convention Center and the hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. ET. Most expenses will be covered using National Governor's Association grant funds.

The deadline for districts to apply is October 23. The application can be found at: <http://kidsnow.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>. Questions can be directed to Jennifer Miller at jennifer.miller@ky.gov.