



## Executive Director's Report – January 2016

**5 year Vision:** *NKCES will be a trusted partner with local school districts and the learning community to research and apply innovative 21st Century practices by leveraging resources, developing strategic alliances and inspiring powerful leadership while providing exemplary customized services to districts, communities and our students.*

Beechwood  
Independent

Bellevue  
Independent

Bracken County

Covington  
Independent

Dayton  
Independent

Erlanger-Elsmere  
Independent

Ft. Thomas  
Independent

Gateway  
Community &  
Technical College

Kenton County

Ludlow  
Independent

Newport  
Independent

Northern Kentucky  
University

Pendleton  
Independent

Silver Grove  
Independent

Southgate  
Independent

Walton-Verona  
Independent

Williamstown  
Independent

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**Audit:** As I mentioned at our last meeting, the audit has been difficult to close without Mr. Hall's availability. However, with much work on the team's part over the holiday break, we were able to close the audit on December 31<sup>st</sup>. I have requested that the auditor come to our special meeting in February to share the results.

**NKCES WEBPAGE:** We would love for districts to consider placing a link to our website on your district site for easy access.

**Regional School Meeting:** RSP meeting was held to discuss goals for next year on December 15<sup>th</sup>. **We appreciated all of the superintendents who were able to attend this meeting.** The regional school committee discussed goals for the future of the program and requested the committee help by brainstorming possibilities as a plan is made for the 2016-17 school year. A summary of the meeting is included in Mr. Compton's report.

**Update on Facility:** Houston Brothers Inc. came to NKCES on December 18<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> to cover the parapet wall where the masonry was removed on the north and west elevations. This covering will secure the premises temporarily for the winter months.

### Board Meetings

We have worked with KSBA to open our board meeting agenda to the public. This will provide access to presentations, attachments and other key information discussed at the board meetings. We have also worked with KSBA to provide access to our board policies and procedures on-line so that they are also accessible. We feel that these improvements will provide better services to our NKCES members.

**Representing Region:** I am spending time working on the internal structure of NKCES and also introducing myself/our work at regional meetings such:

- ✓ CINSAM: Meeting to Plan NGSS Academy
- ✓ Children's Home of NKY: Conference call with Rick Wurth about RSP
- ✓ Action Team 3: Educator Excellence
- ✓ Meeting with Auditor; Consultation with Tom Shelton on accounting procedures

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- ✓ Grant Consortium Meeting
- ✓ Met with NKAGE Leadership
- ✓ Met with KDE Instructional Specialists, Hallie Booth, Chris Couch, Kelly Stidham, along with Dr. Weaver NKU Facilitator for ISLN
- ✓ Working with key stakeholders to gather needs/ideas for support during meetings

## Mindfulness in the New Year

There is a great mindfulness in education movement underway. With growing distractions and the need to engage students in learning, mindfulness provides a key for educators. Not only does it create a stronger awareness but the benefits to brain development are many.



*“The picture we have is that mindfulness practice increases one’s ability to recruit higher order, pre-frontal cortex regions in order to down-regulate lower-order brain activity,” she says. In other words, our more primal responses to stress seem to be superseded by more thoughtful ones. MRI scans show that after an eight-week course of mindfulness practice, the brain’s “fight or flight” center, the amygdala, appears to shrink. This primal region of the brain, associated with fear and emotion, is involved in the initiation of the body’s response to stress. As the amygdala shrinks, the pre-frontal cortex – associated with **higher order brain functions such as awareness, concentration and decision-making – becomes thicker.***

*The “functional connectivity” between these regions – i.e. how often they are activated together – also changes. The connection between the amygdala and the rest of the brain gets weaker, while the connections between areas associated with attention and concentration get stronger. –Tom Ireland*  
 Read more: *What does mindfulness meditation do to your brain?*

Resources: <http://danielrechtschaffen.com/mindful-classroom/>

*NKCES has Mindfulness Resources you can review to see how this strategy can strengthen student learning. Of course, let’s not forget what these strategies can do for educators who are caught in a fast-paced world ....check out [whil.com](http://whil.com) or [headspace.com](http://headspace.com) for an easy to use mindfulness tool!*

**NGSS ACADEMY:** I am working with CINSAM and other local science experts to host an Academy for administrators that will review basics of the new standards and provide helpful tools/information for successful implementation.

## NKAGE AND NKCES PARTNERING FOR REGIONAL IMPACT: DREAMFEST

The regional kick-off meeting was a huge success with 100% representation from our NKY districts. The conversation about future endeavors and potential leadership for key positions highlighted and progress was made. The next meeting will be held at NKCES on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12:30pm..

The Northern Kentucky Association for Gifted Education, NKAGE, is planning Dreamfest, a day for our students who are identified as gifted and talented in math, science or the visual and performing arts. It is truly a day that many of the region’s students look forward to each year! This year, Dreamfest will be held on the campus of Northern Kentucky University on Thursday, March 10, 2016. We would like them to have a hands-on, active experience in a topic that interests them while it employs and

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encourages their talent. If you have anyone interested in presenting a session at the event, please contact Melinda Greenwood @ [Melinda.greenwood@fortthomas.kyschools.us](mailto:Melinda.greenwood@fortthomas.kyschools.us) by January 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **NKCES P.O.P. Tours** (problem of practice tours)

During our ISLN meetings, instructional leaders shared the **problem of practice** (i.e. What keeps you up at night?) that they struggle with in their district. At a follow-up meeting, the group also had conversation around what is working in specific areas in response to the questions. NKCES has compiled these problems of practices and possible solutions into a livebinder for your review. We will also begin scheduling visits to some of the schools that shared strategies to the problem of practice.

#### [P.O.P. and Successful Strategies Compilation](#)

*What are the strategies and next steps that are being implemented to build continuous improvement for PLC work for our schools?*

Our first visit will be on January 20<sup>th</sup> at Glenn O' Swing to see PLCs in action. If you are interested in this visit, please contact Michele Augsback ASAP as space will be limited. Sharing practices such as this, we can become stronger as a region( #NKY~TheBestPlaceToLearn).

### **PROGRAM REVIEW TASK FORCE: FIRST MEETING IN FRANKFORT**

Commissioner Pruitt has named a task force of educators including superintendents, principals and teachers to study Program Reviews and consider solutions to address challenges related to the Program Review process. The group also includes representatives from educator partner groups. See news release announcing the group [here](#).

Northern Kentucky is represented on this task force by Mr. Jay Brewer, Ms. Karen Byrd, Mr. Ron Chi and Ms. Amy Razor. The first meeting was held in December and the dialogue was very transparent and full of possibility. The commissioner set the stage for solutions vs. problems and the taskforce went to work sharing possibilities and created a strong awareness for the work ahead.

### **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT NKCES**

In an effort to provide collaboration between educators to impact student instruction, NKCES is adding new groups to the list of available PLCs for our region. These groups will be self-guided as the groups set their own agenda and share ideas, resources and collaborate to enhance instruction.

New PLC Meetings Scheduled for this semester include: World Language, Gifted and Talented, Professional Learning, Counselors, Arts and Humanities, Physical Education

We have been asked to begin the following groups and so we will extend a meeting time to see if there is any interest: New Teachers, Title One Coordinators, Principals and Psychologists

*Looking forward to growing our opportunities to collaborate professionally!*

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**NASCAR and NASA Partnership:** Dr. Detwiler and I had a conference call with NASA and they are working to create professional learning events for our region. The culminating event for teachers and students who participate will be a ticket to Speedway (\$150.00value). Here are the tentative dates 4-6pm ET:

**A) Aerodynamics and Bernoulli's Principles – Marilé Colón Robles**

January 14<sup>th</sup> – Elementary Teachers  
January 19<sup>th</sup> – Middle School Teachers  
January 26<sup>th</sup> – High School Teachers

**B) Point of Balance Calculations – Rosemary Smith presenter**

February 2<sup>nd</sup> – Elementary  
February 9<sup>th</sup> – Middle School  
February 16<sup>th</sup> – High School

**C) Physical Fitness of drivers/astronauts – Marilé Colón Robles presenter**

March 8<sup>th</sup> – Elementary  
March 15<sup>th</sup> – Middle School  
March 22<sup>nd</sup> – High School

**D) Engineering Design Challenges – Rosemary Smith presenter**

April 5<sup>th</sup> – Elementary  
April 19<sup>th</sup> – Middle School  
April 26<sup>th</sup> – High School

