

Commissioner of Education's Report
June 8, 2016
Kentucky Board of Education Meeting

Program Review Task Force. The Program Review Task Force was established in November 2015 in order to address challenges and concerns brought forward by schools and districts. Membership includes teachers, school leaders and district leaders. After an initial meeting to prioritize the work of the group in December 2015, an online meeting occurred in January to verify the future work and to form work groups.

This past April 2016, the Program Review Task Force met in Frankfort to continue rethinking changes to streamline the Program Review process. Highlights included hearing work groups' proposals on how to consider making changes to the accountability system and rubrics. Additionally, the subgroups shared their future plans to begin work to simplify the rubrics that define levels of quality for each program, and identify and describe school and district processes for effectively implementing a review.

Final recommendations from the task force will come forward to the board soon.

Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) and Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) Reports. As discussed at the April Kentucky Board of Education meeting, I am providing summaries of the extensive reviews of the schools by Kentucky Department of Education staff. The findings of the reports are divided into two broad categories: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) compliance and effective teaching and learning practices. The report summaries are included as attachments. I will be glad to respond to questions at the June meeting regarding these reviews.

Accountability Steering Committee Convened for First Meeting. On June 2, I convened the first meeting of the Accountability Steering Committee as part of the process in developing Kentucky's new accountability system. This is a 30 plus member committee that will review the recommendations from five work groups before I bring my final recommendations for the system to the Kentucky Board of Education. The five work groups are college and career readiness, achievement, opportunity, school improvement and educational innovations.

The first meeting was an organizational session and several guiding principles were agreed on as follows:

- The system should be focused on the welfare of all students and promote good decision making for their benefit.
- The system should promote a holistic and quality education for all students.
- The system should reflect the Kentucky Department of Education's guiding principles of equity, achievement and integrity.
- The system should be simple and easy to understand.
- Data should be reported in a dashboard that better illustrates school/district progress or deficits than a single number

Current members of the Accountability Steering Committee include (in alphabetical order):

- Jimmy Adams, executive director Education Professional Standards Board
- Tatiana Adams, director of gifted services, Marshall Co. Schools
- Dave Adkisson, president and CEO, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- Mike Armstrong, executive director Kentucky School Boards Association
- Jay Brewer, superintendent, Dayton Ind.
- Emmanuel Caulk, superintendent, Fayette Co.
- Skip Clevenger, director of English learner programs, Warren County
- Annie Conner, special education liaison, Pulaski Co. High School
- Cherie Dimar, president, Kentucky Parent Teacher Association
- Sam Evans, dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Western Kentucky University
- Bill Farmer, president and CEO, United Way of the Bluegrass
- Rob Fletcher, superintendent, Lawrence Co.
- Cathy Gibbs, principal, Knight Middle School, Jefferson Co.
- Derrick Graham, chair, House Education Committee
- Tiffany Gruen, teacher, John G. Carlisle Elementary School, Covington Ind.
- Donna Hargens, superintendent, Jefferson Co.
- Ronda Harmon, executive director, Kentucky Association of School Councils
- Donna House, paralegal, Kentucky Association of Professional Educators
- Carolyn Witt Jones, executive director, Partnership for Successful Schools
- Bob King, president, Council on Postsecondary Education
- Ann Larson, vice dean, College of Education and Human Development, University of Louisville
- Wendy Madden-Rutherford, principal, Letcher Co. Elementary School
- Jami Martinez-Reynolds, instructional specialist, Bluegrass Middle School, Hardin Co.
- Leon Mooneyhan, iLead Academy
- Mary John O'Hair, dean, College of Education, University of Kentucky Department of Education
- Brigitte Bloom Ramsey, executive director, Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- Alan Reed, superintendent, Adair Co.
- Sadiqa Reynolds, president and CEO, Louisville Urban League
- Josh Santana, founding partner, Santana and Fay, LLC, Lexington
- Tim Schlosser, principal, Franklin-Simpson High School, Simpson Co.
- Tom Shelton, executive director, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents
- Chris Thomas, agriculture teacher, Larue Co. High School
- Jackie Thompson, former choral director, Perry Co.; curriculum specialist, Knox Co.
- Additional Kentucky General Assembly representative (TBD)
- Stephanie Winkler, president, Kentucky Education Association
- Rachael Yarborough, superintendent, Webster Co.
- Wayne Young, executive director, Kentucky Association of School Administrators

Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Move to 300 Sower Blvd. Construction is being finalized and furniture installation is underway at the new office building at 300 Sower Blvd that will be the future home of KDE. The building will be referred to as “The 300 Building.” The construction began in March of 2015 and is on track to meet an aggressive timeline for fit and finish during June/July (fit = facilities, finish = furnished, clean, and inhabitable). The building itself is designed to meet LEED Certification – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

This new facility will greatly enhance the working environment of KDE as a whole. Every member of the department will have access to natural light (everyone has a window seat!), clean water, many opportunities for open collaboration, high density Wi-Fi, and options for both indoor and outdoor walking to support personal health. We are working cooperatively with the other tenants (Energy and Environment Cabinet and Education and Workforce Development Cabinet) to ensure a solid working relationship for the long term. The building in its entirety is 371,000 Sf, capable of seating over 1400 employees from multiple organizations. The order in which the floors will be finalized positions KDE to take occupancy in the September timeframe. The new home for KDE will be on the 5th and half of the 4th floors (shared primarily with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet).

Our new State Board Room will be located on the 5th Floor (100% KDE occupied). We will have protocols in place for the general public as well as for board members with regard to parking, ease of access through security, and advance awareness of the facilities. It is our goal to hold the August Board meeting in Capital Plaza Tower and the October Board Meeting in the new facility. We are working to ensure that this transition is as seamless as possible, not only as an acknowledgement to our daily work but so that the KDE can continue its mission of supporting the students, schools and districts of the Commonwealth.