



ACTION TEAM ANNUAL SUMMARY 2015-16

Northern Kentucky is working collectively to develop and implement effective, innovative strategies that will ensure all youth are ready for college, career and life. The six volunteer Action Teams of the Council facilitate the strategic alignment of educational initiatives and programs that help accomplish regional education goals. Through these teams, education, business and community leaders are working together on measurable strategies that address needs along the pipeline from birth to career.

Current Action Team Strategies

Action Team 1: Reducing Barriers to Student Learning

Regional Goal: NKY will ensure successful transition for every child and student along the continuum from birth through career

*Co-Chairs: Leshia Lyman, United Way Greater Cincinnati/NKY
Dr. Shelli Wilson, Campbell County School District*

Kindergarten Readiness Subcommittee: Success by 6 Lead Agency

- Pre-K Works, local collaborative, led advocacy efforts in partnership with many local and state organizations to increase access to quality early childhood experiences for children in Kentucky. 187 three and four-year olds were served through Erlanger-Elsmere's Pre-K Works demonstration site (surpassing goal of 160).
- *Me and My School*; a 6 week summer program for children entering Kindergarten will expand to 9 new schools this summer (21 schools total in 9 districts). Additionally, Success by 6 is partnering with Boone County Schools to provide a *Me and My School* family transition kit to 1,483 incoming kindergarten students.
- 6 NKY school districts attended the statewide Readiness Summit hosted by the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood in November 2015.
- Born Learning Communities Pilot developed for a pathway to the school-based program by reducing barriers and meeting families in natural communities; pilot will begin in City Heights this summer.
- Born Learning Academies will expand across the state in the 2016-17 school year to include 70 new Academies. Applications were sent to all Family Youth Resource Coordinators.
- Born Learning Parent Leader Pilot implemented in Covington to train parents to work with their neighbors through a door-to-door model.

Attendance Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Mary Burch, Erlanger- Elsmere Independent School District and Monica Remmy

- Advocated for a statewide definition of chronic absenteeism
- Partnered with 9 identified elementary schools to promote the importance of attendance through targeted messaging
- Convened partner schools to discuss local efforts in reducing chronic absenteeism, with a focus on success stories from Miles Elementary (Erlanger-Elsmere), Collins Elementary (Boone County) and the Kenton County School District.
- Partner schools provided school-level data on chronic absenteeism for students (grades K-3). A comparison of data from the first half of the year 2014-15 and again in 2015-16 shows a decrease in the chronic absenteeism rate for the partner schools from 7.11% (2014-15) to 5% (2015-16). Data for the end of the school year is currently being collected.

Summer Learning Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Tammy Weidinger, Brighton Center and Heather Dragan, Dayton Independent School District

- Compiled and created the 2015-16 Northern Kentucky Summer Learning Resource Guide.
- Convened schools and partner organizations for a presentation and facilitated discussion on summer learning at Thomas More College in October 2015 to identify needs for increasing quality summer learning experiences in region.
- Determined a need for better alignment between public libraries and local schools for summer learning programming, and facilitated a discussion between 4 public libraries, 6 school districts and 3 partner organizations.

Social-Emotional Wellness Subcommittee Co-chairs: Dr. Brett Zyromski, NKU, Connie Pohlgeers and Dr. Shelli Wilson, Campbell County School District

- Convened school districts that previously participated in NKY Enhanced Gallup Student Poll to discuss implementing a new tool for the measurement of hope, engagement and well-being.
- Partnered with Dr. Richard Gilman (Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center) to develop a nationally-normed measure for the assessment of the social-emotional wellness of Northern Kentucky students. Hope, Engagement and Well-being constructs will be measured for students in grades 3-12. Contract created and 4 identified school districts will deploy the poll in the early fall of 2016.

Action Team 2: College and Career Readiness

Regional Goal: Academic rigor and relevance of the curricula in NKY P-20 schools will meet student educational career goals and employment needs in the community.

Co-Chairs: Dr. Karen Cheser, Boone County School District

Dr. Christy Petroze, Thomas More College

- Increased the number of FIRST LEGO League teams to 48 NKY teams who participated in the 2015-16 NKY regional robotics tournament, further strengthening the STEAM talent pipeline.
- Created and distributed a STEAM asset map survey for Northern Kentucky schools, non-profit organizations and businesses for data collection on youth programs/activities related to STEAM. Individualized follow-up with organizations, schools and businesses for participation in the survey will continue this summer.
- Developed a strategic business engagement plan for the Kentucky Unbridled Careers platform to increase student career exploration and internships, as well as business

engagement in schools; began outreach to businesses for engagement in platform. Targeted outreach will continue this summer to engage businesses with the platform.

- Held the third annual EdCamp NKY in March 2016 at Beechwood High School; over 300 educators participated.
- Held *Most Likely to Succeed* screening event, in partnership with Boone County Schools, at Ryle High School in March 2016.
- Promoted the KY FAME program with colleagues to encourage high school student enrollment in the program before the December 2015 deadline.
- Continued discussions on how to better promote early college/dual credit programs at local high schools, including holding a regional gathering in the fall to introduce early college/dual credit opportunities and financial resources to students and their families.

Action Team 3: Educator Excellence

Regional Goal: Educators in NKY meet or exceed national standards for educator excellence.

Co-Chairs: Dr. Kathy Burkhardt, Erlanger-Elsmere Independent School District

Dr. Jen Stansbury Koenig, Northern Kentucky University

- Key leaders met to consider how to align Action Team 3 activities with the Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services and the NKU Center for Education Excellence. Leaders will meet again this summer to continue alignment conversation.
- Met to discuss current initiatives related to the Center for Education Excellence, as well as to determine how to best encourage participation in professional learning communities and established networks.

Action Team 4: Education Accessibility and Lifelong Learning

Regional Education Goal: NKY has system and outreach programs to make educational opportunities available, accessible and affordable to every community member, no matter what age.

Co-Chairs: Dr. Vicki Berling, Northern Kentucky University

David Schroeder, Kenton County Public Library

- Hosted Dr. Marty Burns in October 2015 to present "Path out of Poverty" in partnership with Boone County School District.
- Used feedback from presentation to gain new action team members, One to One coaches and future poverty simulation participants.
- Developed poverty action kit to engage businesses and community members in taking action to reduce poverty in Northern Kentucky; action kit includes key statistics that identify the impact of poverty on the region, as well as resources and volunteer opportunities. Determined techniques for marketing and distributing the poverty action kit.
- Identified partners who will continue providing poverty simulations to engage community members and increase awareness of the impact of poverty.
- Met with Dayton Superintendent to discuss strategies for addressing barriers to post-secondary educational attainment through a potential pilot asset mapping process; discussed timeline of process and key leaders to engage in process.

Action Team 5: Business Involvement and Service Learning

Regional Goal: NKY is recognized for culture of contribution, through service learning in schools and full engagement of business community in schools.

*Co-Chairs: Dr. Ray Hebert, Thomas More College
Dr. Jean Loftus, Loftus Surgery*

- Revised *Be the Catalyst* business engagement toolkit overview for use with area businesses.
- Began a Work Ready Toolkit to replace Work Ethic Diploma for 2016-17 school year; engaged high school students for feedback on developing soft skills through the Work Ready Toolkit. Once developed, toolkit will be provided to all NKY schools to help increase work ethic and soft skills for all NKY students.
- Developed *Be the Catalyst* video for promotion of *Be the Catalyst* business engagement toolkit, with a focus on why business engagement in education benefits local businesses.
- Held four business engagement tours (Arnett Elementary, Bellevue High School, Thornwilde Elementary, Erpenbeck Elementary). Data is currently being collected on business engagement initiated by each tour. Identified potential additional tours for Fall 2016.
- Selected 2016 Business Engagement of the Year award winner for the NKY Excellence in Education Celebration dinner.

Action Team 6: Advocacy

Regional Goal: All education institutions in NKY have the financial resources and program alignment necessary to support the needs of the region.

*Co-Chairs: Dr. Anthony Strong, Pendleton County School District
Mike Hammons, Children, Inc.*

- Developed the 2016 NKEAT Legislative Agenda Summary
- Formed smaller legislative advocacy groups to increase communications with elected officials.
- Hosted presentations on school choice and pension reform.
- Held the first NKEAT Legislative Cocktail Reception sponsored by Central Bank.
- Met regularly during 2016 Kentucky State Legislative Assembly session to discuss legislative activity with regard to priority issues (pension funding, education funding, preschool access, Senate Bill 1, charter schools, school vouchers, KEES funding for dual credit and other education-related issues).
- Key NKEAT leaders spoke at NKY Legislative Caucus meeting to advocate on behalf of students and educators.



The Northern KY Education Council is an agency partner of UWGC. NKY is a Ready by 21 Community.