



OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Update on the Impacts & Implications of COVID-19 for the Kentucky Board of Education

Toni Konz Tatman, Interim Director of Communications
May 7, 2020

Monthly Update

- In response to the COVID-19 crisis, our focus at the Kentucky Department of Education has been three-fold – **Educate, Feed** and **Support**.
- We are **committed** to providing guidance and solutions that focus on educating and feeding our children and providing support to our districts.
- KDE Leadership meets three times a week to provide continued support; we also continue to hold weekly webcasts for superintendents on COVID-19 topics and information. These have been very well-received.
- **March 2020 feeding numbers** (includes breakfasts, lunches, suppers):
 - *Note: Districts have until the 15th of each month to provide an update on meals they served the previous month.*
 - *4,656,897 meals served to more than 230,000 children.*
 - *230,000 children is our average daily participation.*



Timeline/Guidance

- Since our last update to KBE, we facilitated another call between our school superintendents/districts and the governor on April 20, in which he recommended the cancelation of in-person classes for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.
 - KDE issued the [COVID-19 Education Continuation Plan](#) on April 20, 2020, to maximize instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic while using non-traditional instruction (NTI) to reach 1,062 hours of instruction in all Kentucky school districts prior to May 29, 2020.
 - All school districts will have reached their 1,062 hours of instruction through NTI by May 29. Fayette and Jefferson counties will be the last two districts to finish.
- A series of waivers will remove barriers to educator preparation, certification and evaluation created by the COVID-19 emergency.



Timeline/Guidance

- A series of waivers will remove barriers to educator preparation, certification and evaluation created by the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Prospective educators will not be required to take and pass a Praxis test – either the Core Academic Skills for Educators tests or a Graduate Record Examinations test – for conditional admittance to an educator preparation program if they have met all other admission requirements. Most of those tests have been postponed by the provider, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), although some at-home testing options are becoming available.
 - Some of the required 70 days of student-teaching have been waived.
 - A waiver will allow university supervisors of student teachers to conduct observations remotely and the requirement of four observations also has been waived.
- Districts were given flexibility to make changes to their certified evaluation processes, procedures and timelines that affect all certified personnel for the 2019-2020 school year by [Senate Bill 177](#).



Timeline/Guidance

- KDE issued guidance to districts on schools on Class of 2020 graduations alternatives and end of year procedures on April 30.
- The guidance was released after consulting and collaborating with the Kentucky Department for Public Health and the governor's office to ensure the options we shared with districts and questions we were asking them to consider will keep students, families and communities safe during the COVID-19 crisis.
- The documents – [COVID-19 Emergency Guidelines for End-of-School Procedures](#) and [COVID-19 Emergency Guidelines for Graduation Ceremonies and Related Year-End Activities](#) – provide options and offer questions districts should consider when making decisions about what kind of alternative graduation ceremony to have and letting students back into buildings to retrieve belongings and return school property.



CARES Act Funding Guidance

- The CARES Act, which was signed into law March 27, allocates \$30.75 billion in emergency education funding to states.
 - Kentucky will receive about \$223 million – an amount equal to about 4% of Kentucky’s annual education budget – for K-12 education from two sources:
 - \$193.2 million from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, which is intended to provide local education agencies with emergency relief funds to address the impact of COVID-19 on elementary and secondary schools.
 - \$30 million of Kentucky’s \$43.8 million share of the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, which is designed to enable the nation’s governors to decide how best to meet their states’ K-12 and higher education needs.
- KDE staff is currently working on guidance documents for our districts on both the GEER Fund and ESSER Fund. We expect to issue the GEER Fund guidance later this week or early next week. The ESSER guidance will follow about a week later.

Guidance for start of 2020-2021 year

- KDE is asking districts to be flexible as they consider their plans for the start of the next school year due to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - We have advised districts to plan for multiple scenarios that might occur before and after the start of the 2020-21 year:
 - An early start, perhaps as early as late July;
 - A traditional start; and
 - A late start, perhaps after Labor Day.
 - We have advised superintendents they might want to consider asking their local boards of education to approve multiple calendars to allow for the different scenarios.
- The resumption of in-person classes might come with a number of changes that will have to be made in the interest of the safety and health of students and staff members.
 - KDE's guidance documents will address these changes and will focus on what is best for Kentucky's students.
 - We currently are preparing these guidance documents; which are expected to be released no later than May 11.

Communications Update: Continuing To Get Our Message Out

- Since we last updated KBE, the KDE Communications Office has continued to support schools, districts and students in a number of ways:
 - We hosted four more Special Superintendents' Webcasts, all on topics related to COVID-19. Each webcast offers Q & A, broadcasted publicly.
 - We published **22 news stories** on [Kentucky Teacher](#) related to the COVID-19 crisis, including a feature story on how [teachers from the Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf personally delivered NTI materials](#) to families across the state during the week of April 20, 2020.
 - It was another record-breaking month for *Kentucky Teacher*. We had almost 160,000 total page views on KT for April. And in just the first four months of 2020, **we have had more than 408,000 total page views – which is more views than we had for ALL of 2019.** (For all of 2019, we had 381,000 total page views.)



Getting Our Message Out: Social Media

We have used KDE's social media channels to live tweet virtual meetings and regularly communicate updates about the COVID-19 crisis.

- As expected, our metrics on Facebook and Twitter went down slightly in April because we saw substantial growth in March. The April numbers are still significantly higher than any previous month. The public was most interested in alternate schedules for 2020-2021, graduation guidance and Commissioner Brown's letters to families.
- We put a call out to all superintendents to submit up to 10 photos of their graduating class of 2020 for a few projects we are working on. **We have received more than 2,000 photos from over 200 schools!**
- These social media graphics featuring our Class of 2020 have been very popular:

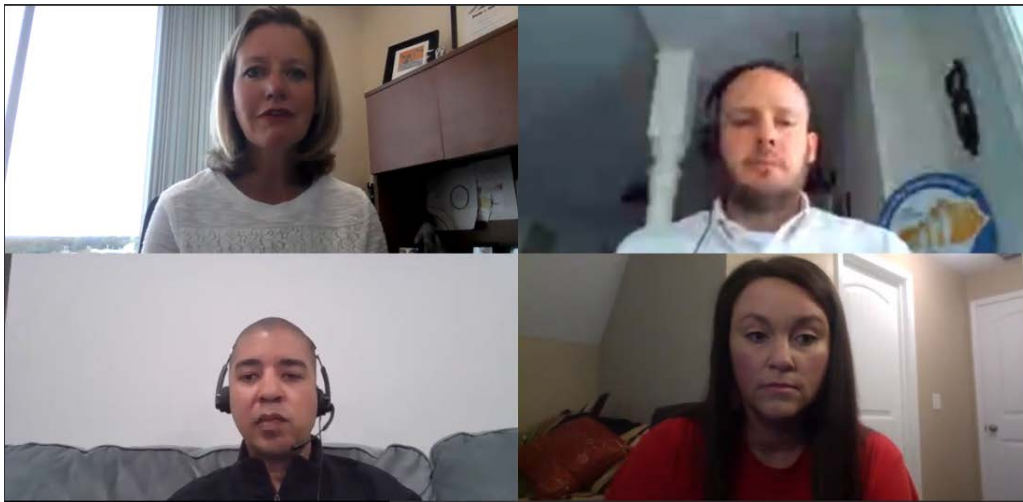


#TeamKentucky

- Throughout this time, KDE Communications Office talks/emails/texts daily with Gov. Beshear and Lt. Gov. Coleman's office to provide updates on what is going on in our districts during this crisis.
- We send pictures and videos of our schools that are showcasing our mission of Educate, Feed and Support, as well as exhibit the true spirit of #TeamKentucky.
- Working with our OET, we shared more of Gov. Beshear's videos from his press conferences in which there are messages for children or families on KDE's YouTube channel

Getting Our Message Out: Commissioner's Student Advisory Council

- KDE Communications hosted two more virtual meetings (April 14 and May 5) of the [Commissioner's Student Advisory Council](#) to get additional insight into how school building closures and the COVID-19 crisis is impacting students.



Getting Our Message Out: Media & Press Releases

- Since April 8, 2020, the KDE Communications Office has:
 - Responded to more than 20 requests from local and national reporters and media outlets
 - Coordinated/conducted interviews with KDE staff with local and national media outlets regarding school closures, NTI, federal waivers and many other topics related to the crisis
 - Produced and sent out 29 press releases (14 related to COVID-19)
 - We are also working with the Lt. Governor's Office and a few special guests on a special video tribute to the Class of 2020 that will tentatively air the week before Memorial Day. We are very excited about this project.

Getting Our Message Out: Re-Launching KDE's COVID-19 Page

- We wanted to virtually align all of the resources KDE is providing in one place.
- Our COVID-19 launch page is divided into our three areas of focus during this time – Educate, Feed and Support. Each area provides a separate page with a wealth of information, whether it is a link to a webcast, guidance, waiver, news release or FAQs.
- We will continue to update the COVID-19 page as long as it is needed.

The screenshot displays the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) COVID-19 Updates and Information for P-12 Education page. The page is organized into three main sections: Educate, Feed, and Support, each with a corresponding icon and a list of resources.

Left Sidebar:

- Kentucky Department of Education logo: "Our Children, Our Commonwealth, Education"
- Navigation menu:
 - About KDE
 - News Releases & Activities
 - KDE's COVID-19 Resources**
 - Are You New to Kentucky?
 - About Schools and Districts
 - Online Directory
 - Kentucky Education Facts
- Follow @KYDEPTOFED
- COVID-19 Answers to FAQ's for Kentucky's Public School Families

Main Content Area:

COVID-19 Updates and Information for P-12 Education
Published: 4/8/2020 9:28 AM

EDUCATE

- TEACHING COVID-19 RESOURCES
- LEARNING COVID-19 RESOURCES

FEED

- FEEDING SITES
- CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

SUPPORT

- FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
- NEWS AND GUIDANCE
- PARTNERING AGENCY GUIDANCE

FAQ

Right Sidebar:

- KDE commitment statement: "The KDE is committed to educating and feeding our children and providing support to our schools and districts. We will get through this together. We are #TeamKentucky."
- COVID-19 NEWS FROM KDE
- News items:
 - Kentucky schools could receive more than \$200M in federal COVID-19 relief funds - April 7, 2020
 - KDE releases guidance documents for districts dealing with COVID-19 closures - April 7, 2020
 - KDE highlights USDA meals for children during COVID-19 school closure - April 7, 2020
 - Public comment sought on Kentucky waivers for flexibility on K-12 education funding - April 7, 2020
 - Principals offer feedback to KY's Education Continuation Task Force on graduation requirements - April 6, 2020
 - Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 3 letter to families - April 3, 2020
 - Waiver suspends requirements for civics test, early graduation exams - April 3, 2020
 - Public comment sought on Kentucky's federal testing waiver - April 3, 2020
 - Gov. Beshear recommends school closure period be extended through Mar. 1 - April 2, 2020
 - KDE helps schools through challenges of providing special education during NIT days - April 1, 2020
- MORE COVID-19 NEWS FROM KDE

FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMISSIONER

KEVIN C. BROWN



An Update for Kentucky's
Families about the COVID-19
Crisis and Our Schools

MAY 1, 2020



Letters to Kentucky Public School Families from the Commissioner

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's May 1 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 24 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 17 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 10 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 3 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's March 27 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's March 20 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's March 13 letter to families](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's March 8 letter to superintendents](#)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's Feb. 28 letter to superintendents](#)



[KDE Office of Teaching and Learning hosts webcast on preparation for 2020-2021 year](#) (May 6, 2020)

[KDE will prioritize students' academic, mental health needs when schools reopen](#) (May 6, 2020)

[KDE asks districts to be flexible when planning for start of 2020-2021 school year](#) (May 5, 2020)

[Lt. Gov Jacqueline Coleman offers words of encouragement to KDE Student Advisory Council](#) (May 5, 2020)

[CARES Act funding, student re-entry for next school year discussed by task force](#) (May 4, 2020)

[KDE releases COVID-19 guidance on graduation alternatives, end-of-year procedures](#) (April 29, 2020)

[KDE urges districts to consult with local health officials when planning graduation alternative](#) (April 28, 2020)

[STUDENT VOICE: Adapting and learning, but anxiously awaiting a return to a new normal](#) (April 27, 2020)

[KDE's Teachers Webcast provides a voice for Kentucky educators during NTI](#) (April 27, 2020)

[KDE encourages 'good faith effort' in working with exceptional children during NTI](#) (April 27, 2020)

[KSB, KSD staff personally deliver NTI materials to students](#) (April 26, 2020)

KDE Communications on COVID-19 (page 2)

[Districts will have flexibility in spending federal COVID-19 emergency relief funds](#) (April 23, 2020)

[STUDENT VOICE: And then suddenly ... everything changed due to COVID-19](#) (April 23, 2020)

[COLUMN: We are all feeling a range of emotions at this time](#) (April 23, 2020)

[Kentucky principals address alternate schedule possibilities for 2020-2021](#) (April 22, 2020)

[Graduation options discussed by KDE's Education Continuation Task Force](#) (April 21, 2020)

[Interim commissioner commends Kentucky teachers' work during NTI days](#) (Apr 21, 2020)

[Gov. Beshear recommends suspension of in-person classes continue through end of school year](#) (April 20, 2020)

[Waivers will remove barriers to Kentucky educator preparation, certification amid COVID-19 crisis](#) (April 14, 2020)

[Kentucky high school seniors willing to wait for in-person graduation ceremony](#) (April 14, 2020)

[KBE voices its support for educators, families during COVID-19 emergency](#) (April 9, 2020)

[GoTeachKY launches virtual teacher mentorship program for COVID-19 support](#) (April 9, 2020)

[KDE launches new COVID-19 webpage](#) (April 8, 2020)

[Kentucky schools could receive more than \\$200M in federal COVID-19 relief funds](#) (April 7, 2020)

[KDE releases guidance documents for districts dealing with COVID-19 closures](#) (April 7, 2020)

KDE Communications on COVID-19 (page 3)

[KDE highlights USDA meals for children during COVID-19 school closure](#) (April 7, 2020)

[Public comment sought on Kentucky waivers for flexibility on K-12 education funding](#) (April 7, 2020)

[Principals offer feedback to KY's Education Continuation Task Force on graduation requirements](#) (April 6, 2020)

[Interim Commissioner Kevin C. Brown's April 3 letter to families](#) (April 3, 2020)

WEBCAST: [KDE, KHEAA address impact of non-traditional instruction on KEES awards](#) (April 3, 2020)

[Waiver suspends requirements for civics test, early graduation exams](#) (April 3, 2020)

[Public comment sought on Kentucky's federal testing waiver](#) (April 3, 2020)

[Gov. Beshear recommends school closure period be extended through May 1](#) (April 2, 2020)

[KDE helps schools through challenges of providing special education during NTI days](#) (April 1, 2020)

[KY's Education Continuation Task Force discusses graduation options for seniors](#) (March 31, 2020)

[The show goes on in McCracken County, seniors honor teacher on closing night](#) (March 31, 2020)

[Kentucky commissioner lauds superintendents' efforts amid COVID-19 crisis](#) (March 26, 2020)

[Beginning March 30, KET devotes daytime schedule to at-home learning](#) (March 26, 2020)

KDE Communications on COVID-19 (Page 4)

[Kentucky students share how COVID-19 closures impact their lives](#) (March 25, 2020)

[KDE cancels K-PREP testing for 2019-2020 school year](#) (March 24, 2020)

[Education Continuation Task Force holds first virtual meeting](#) – March 23, 2020

[Kentucky to apply for testing waiver from U.S. Department of Education](#) (March 20, 2020)

[Gov. Beshear recommends school closure period be extended until April 20](#) (March 20, 2020)

[KBE grants waiver allowing all 172 districts to utilize Non-Traditional Instruction amid COVID-19 crisis](#) (March 18, 2020)

[How Harrison County handled being the first KY school district impacted by COVID-19](#) (March 17, 2020)

[New KDE task force will aid districts during COVID-19 closure period](#) (March 16, 2020)

[USDA grants waiver to allow Kentucky schools flexibility to serve students off-site meals](#) (March 14, 2020)

[Gov. Beshear recommends schools close to limit spread of COVID-19](#) (March 12, 2020)

[Kentucky Teacher: Special coronavirus edition](#) (March 12, 2020)

[Non-Regulatory Guidance Regarding the Implementation of the Non-Traditional Instruction Program \(NTI\) for Students with Individual Education Programs \(IEPs\) During Novel Coronavirus Pandemic](#) (March 13, 2020)

[Districts may apply for NTI waiver in case of emergency closures](#) (March 11, 2020)

KDE Communications on COVID-19 (Page 3)

[Gov. Beshear asks superintendents to be prepared for school closures](#) (March 11, 2020)

[How Harrison County handled being the first KY school district impacted by COVID-19](#) (March 17, 2020)

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[Gov. Beshear asks superintendents to be prepared for school closures](#) (March 11, 2020)



Links to Special Superintendents' Webcasts

[Special Superintendents' Webcast on COVID-19](#) (May 5, 2020)

[Special Superintendents Webcast on COVID-19 \(Q & A Session\)](#) (April 28, 2020)

[Special Superintendents Webcast on COVID-19 \(Q & A Session\)](#) (April 23, 2020)

[Special Superintendents Webcast on COVID-19 \(Q & A Session\)](#) (April 14, 2020)

[Special Superintendents' Webcast on COVID-19 – Budget and Finance Q & A](#) (April 7, 2020)

[Special Superintendents' Webcast on COVID-19 – KHEAA, KEES](#) (April 3, 2020)

[Special Superintendents' Webcast on COVID-19 – Special Education Q & A](#) (March 31, 2020)




[Special Superintendents' Webcast on COVID-19 \(Q & A Session\)](#) (March 23, 2020)

[Special Superintendents' Webcast](#) (March 13, 2020)

[Superintendents' Webcast about COVID-19](#) (March 9, 2020)

Questions?

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EDUCATE	FEED	SUPPORT

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