



Kentucky Department of  
**EDUCATION**

# KENTUCKY BOARD OF EDUCATION

---

**Lu Young**

Supreme Court District 5  
Chair

**Sharon Porter Robinson**

Supreme Court District 4  
Vice Chair

**JoAnn Adams**

Supreme Court District 6

**Claire Batt**

At Large

**Holly Bloodworth**

Supreme Court District 1

**Jamie Bowling**

Supreme Court District 3

**Alvis Johnson**

At Large

**Patrice McCrary**

Supreme Court District 2

**Randy Poe**

At Large

**Lee Todd**

At Large

**Vacant**

Supreme Court District 7

**Ex-Officio Members****Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman**

Secretary, Education and  
Workforce Development Cabinet

**Aaron Thompson**

President, Council on  
Postsecondary Education

**Allison Slone**

Active Kentucky Teacher

**Solyana Mesfin**

Student Representative

October 5, 2021

Dr. Jason E. Glass, Commissioner  
Kentucky Department of Education  
300 Sower Blvd., 5th Floor  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Jason:

Pursuant to the statutory mandate, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) has completed your annual evaluation. The evaluation was verbally shared with you on October 5, 2021, at the regular KBE meeting in Frankfort. This letter serves as the official written record of that discussion.

During your first year as Kentucky's education commissioner, you faced not only the typical challenges associated with a transition to an executive leadership role, but also a global pandemic that affected all aspects of the public school system in our state. Your leadership during this unprecedented time has been highly effective and much appreciated.

The KBE conducted this formal evaluation utilizing the CCSSO Chief Evaluation Tool framework and the self-reflection you provided on your performance within the five CCSSO focal areas, associated competencies and the KBE established annual goals. The Board appreciates and concurs with your rich self-reflection and insight.

Using the CCSSO focal areas and associated definitions, the Board provided the following feedback:

**Technical Leadership-** *develops the sound management techniques needed for the agency to operate efficiently and effectively*

The board members praised your effective management of the KDE, particularly your management of the pandemic response and associated federal funds. As one board member shared: "Given the pressures of COVID-19, I think he has done a remarkable job of managing the routine effectively, building a team for new endeavors and creating multiple paths of much needed cooperative relationships."

**Human Leadership-** *guides the expectations and development of quality employees*

This was identified as an area of strength. As one member highlighted, “[Jason] Intentionally maintained staff thus showing confidence in their strength. Added key personnel in strategic areas and did so with very strong individuals with national recognition.” Another board member shared, “He listens; he asks staff to contribute to solutions and take responsibility for executing plans with integrity. I note that staff do not offer many excuses. They identify barriers and tell us how those barriers will be addressed.”

**Educational Leadership-** *establishes high academic expectations for educators and students*

During the past year, you have initiated discussions and actions around a reimagined public education in Kentucky with a vision to ensure that all students can successfully progress through our public school system and succeed in future pursuits. Your role in establishing the Commonwealth Education Continuum, in partnership with Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) President Thompson and Lt. Governor Coleman, has allowed you to establish strong relationships with our community college and career/technical system, as well as with private higher education institutions. Additionally, your statewide virtual Listening Tour engaged education stakeholders including students, parents and fellow educators to help inform the Department’s strategic vision.

As you noted in your self-reflection, you focused much of your time and attention this past year on education research on the effective ways to continue learning remotely or in-person throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Your review of emerging practices for safe in-person learning strategies in the United States and abroad and around content recovery due to disrupted learning helped to guide the KDE’s policies and supports around academic instruction during the pandemic.

**Cultural Leadership-** *fosters an environment of teamwork and trust throughout the education system*

The Board commended your leadership in this area and indicated that you have developed a foundation of trust. Additionally, you have embraced teamwork by establishing meaningful cooperative relationships with the CPE, the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, Career and Technical Education and other education stakeholder groups.

The Board also celebrated your strong communication processes across KDE which include monthly “brown bag lunches,” which allow for engagement with KDE staff members in an informal setting, and weekly internal newsletters. They also celebrated your active participation in advisory committees and your willingness to listen to all participants.

**Symbolic Leadership-** *provides a vision and models the behavior and commitment required to achieve it*

The Board believes you are an excellent ambassador for Kentucky schools. Your experience as a superintendent allows you to empathize with our district leaders and support them. Your presentations before legislative committees have been impressive. You are also able to interact with the media in a dignified yet personable manner that always best represents Kentucky's students.

As one board member stated, "Jason produced rich and substantive responses to address the vision of the Board regarding accountability and assessment, the crisis of COVID-19, and advances toward a more equitable and anti-racist community. The Equity Dashboard, the Coalition for Advancing Education, and the Commonwealth Education Continuum are examples."

In addition to the observations provided for each CCSSO focal category, several themes emerged from the board members' feedback.

### **Leading Through the Pandemic**

You have navigated Kentucky schools and the KDE through the pandemic with a wise and steady hand. The KDE team has produced countless guidance documents and have met regularly with superintendents, agency partners, policymakers and other stakeholders in an effort to support schools through the unprecedented challenges we have all faced. You have been unflappable and determined to engage local leaders to create meaningful and authentic learning experiences for all students. You consistently remind us that your goal through the crisis has been not only fully restoring the educational system in Kentucky but creating something better in the process.

### **Managing the Transition with Thoughtful and Active Listening**

The Board acknowledged the thoughtful and strategic steps you took to ensure a smooth and effective transition into your role. "When Jason stepped into his office during a pandemic, he valued KDE staff's institutional knowledge and took full advantage of systems in place to collect information from and disseminate information to stakeholders. Consequently, his arrival did not create a sense of upheaval, but rather one strategically focused on solving problems and safe re-entry into a new school year."

### **Strong, Effective Advocacy and Voice**

Your commitment to listening to and elevating the voices of Kentucky teachers and students is unwavering and appreciated. One board member shared, "[Jason's] demeanor is such that he is able to express opposing views and opinions without having a major "blow up" as often happens with leaders who want to be the center of attention rather than wanting to achieve a workable solution." With the Board's strong focus on equity, it is critical that the Commissioner be an effective advocate for equitable access to high quality education for all students. You have excelled in this aspect of your role.

It is evident to the Board that you place a high value on students and keep their best interests at the forefront of all decision. As one member shared, “Commissioner Glass has made the soundest decisions possible considering the extraordinary circumstances this past year. He seems to prioritize the interests of students in all his decisions.”

### **Bold Vision and High Expectations**

The Board has been very impressed with your high expectations for not only yourself but also the Department. As one board member shared, “From the moment I read Dr. Glass’s application I felt his expectations would be set high and he would accept nothing less than the best from those around him. I also felt and have witnessed that he is willing to go above and beyond to get the job done as well. He models what that looks like in his own behaviors, ideas, and actions.”

Another member stated, “. . . [Jason] has promoted public education and at the same time helped set expectations for a new vision for education and learning in KY’s public schools and university-level teacher preparation. He encouraged Board members to participate in professional learning opportunities and implemented diversity/equity training in KDE. And again, despite the substantial extra hurdles presented by the pandemic, Jason continues to look to the future, working towards creating a new vision for education, learning, and assessment in KY.”

### **Progress Toward Annual Goals**

During the October 2020 KBE regular meeting, the Board identified five performance goals for you to prioritize during your first year in the position. Overall, the Board felt you have taken great strides toward accomplishing those goals and was impressed with your progress.

In particular, the Board is especially pleased with your dedication to expanding KDE’s supports and resources aligned with the KBE’s resolution on anti-racism and equity. Your actions and content, including your engagement with all advisory groups, have made these efforts central to the work of every office at the Department. Your hiring of Dr. Woods-Tucker as the KDE’s first Chief Equity Officer and more recently, the promotion of Dr. Damien Sweeney to the role of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, highlights this commitment.

While our discussion accentuated the many positives of your performance, we did identify one area for growth which aligns with one of your own self-assessment recommendations.

### **Communication with Board Members**

The majority of board members expressed satisfaction with the quality and quantity of communication with the Board and some respondents expressed a desire for more communication. In your self-reflection, you indicated an

interest in expanding your one-on-one communication with board members. To that end, we recommend the following performance goal in addition to a continued and expanded focus on the previously identified priorities which were captured in your 2021-2022 goals approved during our October 2021 regular meeting:

*Continue to build on positive working relationships with members of the KBE through a series of conversations with the individual board members designed to gauge the effectiveness of board member communications strategies and needed changes.*

In summary, the Board strongly supports your continued tenure as Commissioner and thanks you for your outstanding leadership.

Sincerely,



Lu Young, Ed.D.

Chair, Kentucky Board of Education