

## President's Report for KBE Meeting

June 2024

- To help ensure students can successfully submit a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), GEAR UP Kentucky (GUK) is partnering with the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) throughout the month of June to provide FAFSA completion and financial aid assistance. The statewide campaign, which will provide both a virtual event and one-on-one assistance, is aimed at reducing the confusion associated with the new form and increasing student completion rates, which are currently at a five-year low. Each Wednesday, beginning June 5, GEAR UP Kentucky is joining KHEAA in its statewide Kentucky FAFSA Office Hours. In-person FAFSA and financial aid help will be offered from 2-4 p.m. local time at more than 70 locations statewide; all students and parents/guardians are welcome to drop in for assistance.
- A new CPE report, [Undergraduate Student Debt Levels in Kentucky](#), shows more students are completing an undergraduate credential debt free. The report examines trends affecting undergraduate students attending a KCTCS college or public university. Based on the analysis, the proportion of students graduating with loan debt fell nearly 15 percentage points over the last five years, from 58.1% in 2017-18 to 43.2% in 2022-23. This decline was even more pronounced over the decade, falling 20.8 percentage points since 2011-12.
- CPE recently announced a [partnership with Ithaka S+R](#) (a non-profit higher education research organization) to improve adult learner re-enrollment and break down financial barriers to adult student success. CPE and Ithaka S+R hope to better understand administrative practices in Kentucky that hamper the ability of students to continue their education if they have stopped out due to family obligations, financial concerns, or other issues. The effort is part of a national realignment of processes around administrative holds and past due balances. In conjunction with this effort, Dr. Thompson is planning several community forums in the later summer and early fall. The work will conclude with a statewide summit sometime this fall.
- In April, the CPE board approved administrative regulation changes, as directed by SB191, that affect the operations of the performance funding model and its 2024-25 funding allocation. Moving forward, incentive funding earned by institutions for awarding credentials to underrepresented minority students will instead be earned by

graduating underrepresented students. The Performance Funding Work Group will reconvene to finalize a working definition of the term.

- The Student Success Collaborative is hosting a number of convenings over the next several weeks including an admissions redesign meeting on May 8, journey mapping on May 13, and sessions on trauma resilience and mental health strategies later this month. Visit CPE's website for more information.