

NKCES Report – January 2025

Our mission at NKCES: We connect, grow, and serve our community of educators.

BEECHWOOD INDEPENDENT

Executive Director Update:

BELLEVUE INDEPENDENT

NKCES Executive Committee Meeting, January 6: Each month the executive committee meets to review the agenda and provide input. The committee also discussed upcoming events and regional items. Due to snow, this meeting was moved to a virtual event.

BOONE COUNTY

BRACKEN COUNTY

CAMPBELL COUNTY

CARROLL COUNTY

COVINGTON INDEPENDENT

DAYTON INDEPENDENT

ERLANGER-ELSMERE INDEPENDENT

NKCES Board Meeting, January 8: The NKCES January Board meeting highlighted significant updates and initiatives aimed at enhancing educational outcomes in the region. A key feature of the meeting was the "Commissioner Spotlight," through which Commissioner, Dr. Robbie Fletcher, shared insights on an overview of the new assessment and accountability system. The session was well-received, fostering lively discussions among board members about strategies to improve student engagement and achievement.

FLEMING COUNTY

FORT THOMAS INDEPENDENT

Finance Meeting, January 9: Each month, Dr. Razor meets with the finance director, Mrs. Angie Perkins, to keep abreast of finances and plan for future expenses. This month's focus was on the salary schedule for 2025. We also met about long-term goals and the sustainability plan for NKCES.

GRANT COUNTY

GREENUP COUNTY

KENTON COUNTY

LEWIS COUNTY

LUDLOW INDEPENDENT

MASON COUNTY

NEWPORT INDEPENDENT

NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

OWEN COUNTY

PENDLETON COUNTY

SOUTHGATE INDEPENDENT

WALTON-VERONA INDEPENDENT

WILLIAMSTOWN INDEPENDENT

Winter RE-treat, January 13-15: The NKCES Winter RE-treat brought together superintendents from the region to foster collaboration and build meaningful relationships. This gathering provided a unique opportunity for educational leaders to engage in thoughtful discussions, share experiences, and strategize on innovative practices that enhance student learning. The NKCES Winter RE-treat not only facilitated collaboration among superintendents but also included an enlightening visit to the STEAM Academy. This hands-on experience allowed superintendents to spend time exploring the facility and participating in a Q&A led by Fayette County leaders.

By prioritizing connection and growth, the retreat aimed to strengthen partnerships and create a supportive network that empowers districts to thrive. Together, superintendents explored challenges and opportunities, reinforcing a collective commitment to excellence in education.

ElevateNKY, January 17: The subcommittee met to review data and potential next steps for the ElevateNKY work for the region. The committee is planning to create a timeline for sharing the information in the spring.

NKCES Synergy Team Meeting, January 21: Each month the NKCES leadership team meets to discuss pertinent topics. The NKCES leadership team recently engaged in a transformative book study centered around "The Art of Possibility" by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander. This insightful exploration has inspired team members to embrace innovative thinking and foster a culture of creativity within the organization. In addition to fostering creativity and leadership development, the NKCES leadership team is committed to enhancing organizational growth through a strategic

focus on social media and branding, aiming to strengthen its online presence and effectively communicate its vision and initiatives to a broader audience.

Meeting with Dr. Cady Short-Thompson, January 22: Dr. Cady Short-Thompson requested a meeting to discuss ElevateNKY and keep her apprised of the next steps. This meeting provided a strong avenue for continued communication to support regional efforts.

Meeting with Dr. Randy Poe, January 22: Dr. Randy Poe requested a meeting to discuss the possibility of NKYEC merging with NKCES. As appropriate, details will be shared if this discussion moves forward.

Superintendent Webcast, January 23: Dr. Amy Razor joined a virtual call to discuss the potential of Munetrix to highlight key regional data. This is an exploration conversation to learn the benefits of this tool for NKCES to highlight regional data.

Professional Learning Consortium, January 24: Dr. Amy Razor joined the PL Consortium meeting to keep informed of current work being done around the region and to share in the book study with this group of leaders. She also shared board highlights to keep this group informed of the work of the NKCES Board.

Marzano High-Reliability Schools Summit, January 28-31: The NKCES leadership team, along with 60 district leaders, attended the Marzano High-Reliability Schools Summit from January 28-31 in San Antonio. This event served as a pivotal opportunity for educational leaders to engage in professional development and explore evidence-based strategies for enhancing school performance. By collaborating with peers and experts in the field, the participants aimed to strengthen their leadership skills and learn more about high-reliability frameworks that promote student success and effective learning environments across their districts.

Facilities:

Building Update: As our organization grows, we find it more challenging to host larger groups at NKCES as space is limited. The parking lot is an area of concern and we are seeking bids to resolve this issue. As part of the Arts In Mind project, an outdoor arts and professional learning center is being installed to meet the needs of learners. The center will be outside between the modulars and the Synergy Room exterior wall. Work has been ongoing, weather permitting, on the stage and surrounding outdoor space. We are working with Wessel Landscaping to finalize the project.

Professional Learning (PL) Update:

January Professional Learning: NKCES supported 89 professional learning opportunities focused on academics, culture and climate, leadership, and special education during January, serving 1,556 educators.

Professional Learning (PL) Consortium: The 24.25 NKCES PL Consortium continued in January with a collaborative meeting. Topics included NKCES IDEA/SERTAC Update, [NKCES Learning and Empowerment Update](#), and planning for the monthly district share-outs. The meeting ended with a member-led PLC discussion.

Title I & Title II Meeting: The 24.25 NKCES Title I/Title II Consortium continued in January with a collaborative meeting. Topics included [Declaration of Participation](#) (due in GMAP Dec. 15), and [Anticipated outreach](#) (for Title I Declarations). Title I Webinar date change to Monday, January 27 @

10 am, Non Regulatory guidance document update ([Parent and Family Engagement under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act](#)) Title I Private, Non Public, Home School Declaration - Proposed dates (February 3, 2025 – Data pull from Diocese, [Diocesan Confidentiality Agreement](#), March 3, 2025 – Mail to Non-public Schools, March 17, 2025 – Due date for documentation returned to districts, Deadline is for paperwork submission to KDE unknown GMAP). Policy, Procedure & Process Review & Organization, [MC Schools Title 1 Policies & Procedures Handbook](#), Format - Individual district collection or regional tool - draft [spreadsheet](#), and Schedule for discussion. The meeting ended with a member-led PLC discussion.

District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) Meeting: The 24.25 NKCES DAC Consortium continued in January with a collaborative meeting. Topics included K Screen, February DAC Trainings ([In Person Online](#)), ACT, AKSA, Regional Town Halls (NKCES – February 12th from 5:00 – 7:00 – register [HERE](#) – NOT implementation details. Input-gathering sessions), and ACCESS (Window January 6th - February 14th). The meeting ended with a member-led PLC discussion.

Professional Learning Networks (PLNs): PLNs provide opportunities for educators to grow professionally in collaborative environments focused on collective learning. [2024.25 NKCES PLN Dates](#).

NKCES is honored to offer a variety of professional learning opportunities. All of them can be found in our [Professional Learning Catalog](#).

Special Education Update:

The NKCES team successfully facilitated Day 1 of the Chronic Absenteeism Cohort. Day 1 brought together representatives from eight districts to collaborate on strategies to address chronic absenteeism. The day was filled with rich conversations and meaningful connections, as educators and leaders shared insights, challenges, and solutions to improve student attendance.

Key highlights included:

- Deep Discussions: Participants engaged in dialogue about the root causes of absenteeism and the systemic barriers impacting attendance.
- Collaborative Problem-Solving: District teams exchanged best practices and innovative strategies to improve student engagement and attendance outcomes.
- Strategic Planning: The cohort began outlining action steps tailored to their district's needs, focusing on data-driven decision-making and targeted interventions.

The energy in the room reflected a shared commitment to tackling chronic absenteeism with intentionality and collaboration. The SERTAC team provided guidance and resources to support districts in their next steps, ensuring continued momentum beyond this first session. Day 2 will build on these conversations, strengthening our collective approach to improving attendance across NKCES.

Amanda Bell presented at the 26th DADD International Conference, showcasing innovative Social Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies for students with significant disabilities. Her session highlighted research-based practices to enhance emotional regulation, engagement, and school participation.

Following her presentation, Amanda attended the ATAI Conference to deepen her expertise in assistive technology, ensuring students in our region have access to the latest tools and supports for enhanced

learning and independence. Her involvement at both events reinforces NKCES's commitment to high-quality, inclusive education and cutting-edge practices.

Emily Borchers Leads Statewide Behavior Task Group. Emily Borchers, a key member of our SERTAC team, is leading Kentucky's State Behavior Task Group, working to develop critical resources and support systems for special education teachers statewide. Her leadership focuses on equipping educators with evidence-based strategies to address challenging behaviors, promote positive learning environments, and enhance student success. Through this work, Emily is strengthening statewide collaboration and ensuring that special education teachers have the tools, training, and resources needed to support students effectively. Her efforts continue to elevate NKCES's role in advancing best practices in behavior support across Kentucky.

Regional Interdisciplinary Transition Team (RITT) Expands Efforts to Strengthen Post-High School Supports. Jacki Alexander and Emily Borchers led the second and third meetings of the Regional Interdisciplinary Transition Team (RITT), a collaborative effort aimed at enhancing post-high school supports for students and families in Northern Kentucky. This team brings together key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated, strategic approach to transition planning for students with disabilities. As part of this work, the team launched a regional survey to gather input from educators, families, and community partners on how to better support students with disabilities after graduation. The results will guide the development of targeted resources, services, and training opportunities to ensure students have the skills and support needed for success in employment, independent living, and postsecondary education. Through strategic planning and shared expertise, RITT continues to build stronger, more connected pathways to empower students as they navigate life beyond high school.

Kim Snowball Supports Districts in Identifying High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIR). Kim Snowball, a dedicated member of our SERTAC team, is collaborating with Learning and Empowerment to support districts in the selection and implementation of High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIR). Her work ensures that educators have access to evidence-based materials that align with state standards and best practices, ultimately improving student outcomes. Through direct district support, training, and resource evaluation, Kim is helping schools navigate the HQIR selection process, ensuring that instructional materials are rigorous, effective, and equitable. Her expertise is empowering educators to make informed decisions that enhance teaching and learning across the region.

Learning and Empowerment Team:

Northern Kentucky Institute for Arts Education (NKIAE):

In January, 30 schools from 15 districts committed to Cohort 4 of the Arts In Mind program. Each of these schools will complete a needs assessment and write a Comprehensive Arts Plan to be implemented in the 2025-26 school year. Mr. Joe Bertucci hosted two regional PLN meetings. 25 teachers joined our Arts-Based Teaching PLN on January 14, and 38 teachers joined our Visual & Performing Arts PLN on January 16. Mr. Bertucci also led a professional learning cohort in the Erlanger-Elsmere School District. Mr. Bertucci collaborated with partners from The Carnegie and Pones to develop the fourth season of our *Arts Express* video series, supporting elementary dance and theatre instruction. In addition, he partnered with Alissa Paasch from The Carnegie and Kim Thomson from Boone County Schools to develop a presentation to be shared at The Kennedy Center's 2025 National Community Partnerships Convening, February 4 - 6, in Washington, D.C.

Northern Kentucky Institute for Strategic Prevention (NKISP):

The NKISP team has actively engaged in various regional meetings and initiatives to support school districts and community partners in promoting student health and safety. They attended the NKISP Institute Meeting, where the KY Cabinet presented coalition support for HB 142 implementation.

Additionally, they participated in district collaboration for Better Health and Safety Meeting and the HEY! Cincinnati Schools Working Group Meeting to strengthen regional efforts in youth mental health. The NKISP team attended the NKY ASAP Treatment Collaborative meeting, where the NKY Health Department presented a new initiative for the safe disposal of confiscated vapes. The NKISP Steering Committee and Campbell County Drug Free Alliance (CCDFA) Coalition met virtually for new information and updates.

School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) and Trauma Informed Services in Schools (TISS):

The Northern Kentucky Institute for Empowerment (NKIE) includes the School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) and Trauma-Informed School Supports (TISS) grant work within the NKCES member districts. This month's work for the SBMH & TISS grants has been focused on federal grant reporting along with meeting with districts to assist with intentional decision making for implementation of the SBMH & TISS grants and funds. January Steering Committee Meeting provided the NKCES SBMH and TISS teams the opportunity to share with steering committee members a quarterly update on their behind the scenes focus work. The SBMH and TISS teams designed and developed the January Sprout Boxes around a 'Wellness Reset' providing 175 personalized boxes across 19 districts.

Starting on Jan 1, 2025 the main leadership points of contact for these two grants became:

- TISS - Michelle Klein
- SBMH - Emily Giles

Feel free to contact either Michelle and Emily with any questions or support you need.

Learning Acceleration:

The Learning Acceleration team collaborated with members from other NKCES teams to design session 2 and 3 of High Quality Instructional Resources training with administrators and the content-specific High Quality Instructional Resources cohort incorporating Conditions for Success. In addition, a PL opportunity was provided for inquiry-based instruction in the area of social studies where 5 districts were represented. January kicked off the start to the Adolescent Literacy camp with a day one on tier 1 instruction.

Grant Consortium Update:

Grants available

- ☐ **2-28 AED 2025** \$2,000 each for Automatic External Defibrillators.
- ☐ **3-6 Numeracy Counts** \$70,000 for HQIR mathematics curriculum and training.
- ☐ **3-7 Connecting Kids to Coverage** \$3,000,000 over 5 years. Will help connect families to Medicaid and CHIP and may help with medicaid issues such as billing.
- ☐ **3-10 UAIP 2025** \$100,000 to \$250,000 over 2 years for urban agriculture or innovative farm production
- ☐ **3-18 Strategic Prevention Framework** \$250,000 to \$600,000; amount depends on population served for prevention of substance use and capacity building.
- ☐ **3-27 STOP School Violence** \$1,000,000 over 3 years for violence prevention, may include staff such as school social workers, mental health supports, training for SORs and more [\(THIS GRANT HAS BEEN PAUSED BY THE FUNDER.\)](#)
- ☐ **4-3 Renew America's Schools** Three phases to improve energy use at schools. Phase 1: \$300,000; Phase 2: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000; Phase 3: \$7,000,000 to \$14,000,000.
- ☐ **4-14 Rural Communities Opioid Response Program -- Pathways** \$400,000 X 3 years to build youth-based response to opioids and other substance misuse/mental health issues including pathways for youth to mental health careers.

From last meeting:

- [AMS Young Scholars](#) \$5,000 to \$15,000 for high school summer mathematics programs and

scholarships. Due Jan. 22.

- [Snapdragon Book Foundation](#) \$3,600 to \$10,000 for school library books, magazines, etc. Due February 2, 2025.

Grants Pending

- [Reading Diagnostic and Intervention Fund](#) Kenton County (2 awards), Grant County (3 awards), and Fleming County (1 award) were announced.
- [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)
- [Comprehensive Literacy](#)
- Education Innovation Research (the proposal to provide mentors for new teachers) was not awarded.

Regional School Programs (RSP) Update:

- RSP is working on amending our 24-25 calendar due to the weather days that occurred.
- RSP staff offered and delivered food to families on 1/10/25 during the weather closure.
- RSP has drafted the 25-26 calendar and shared it with the Advisory Board
- KCC coach is bringing in career presenters for our secondary students.