

# NKCES Report – May 2025

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

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BEECHWOOD INDEPENDENT

BELLEVUE INDEPENDENT

BOONE COUNTY

BRACKEN COUNTY

CAMPBELL COUNTY

CARROLL COUNTY

COVINGTON INDEPENDENT

DAYTON INDEPENDENT

ERLANGER-ELSMERE INDEPENDENT

FLEMING COUNTY

FORT THOMAS INDEPENDENT

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

## Executive Director Update:

**NKCES Team Meeting, May 5:** The NKCES Team meeting is held monthly to foster collaboration and communication among team members. During these meetings, we discuss ongoing projects, share updates, and brainstorm solutions to challenges. The goal is to support each other in our mission to enhance education and provide exceptional services within our community.

**AI Visit with Adam Watson, Meeting, May 6:** We met with Adam Watson, Digital Creator for OVEC, to discuss AI and a possible partnership. We shared resources and best practices to highlight potential work for 2025-26.

**Together We Bloom Conference, May 7:** Community leaders, policymakers, and advocates gathered at the Shelbyville Conference and Welcome Center for the *Together We Bloom Summit*, hosted by Bloom Kentucky. This one-day event focused on cultivating positive childhood experiences through both policy and systems change across the Commonwealth, offering a unique platform to explore new strategies for fostering resilience and mitigating Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Kentucky's children. NKCES hosted several booths to highlight our work at this conference. The partnership created an opportunity for NKCES to highlight the opportunities in the NKY region.

**Education Cooperative Executive Director Meeting, May 9:** Dr. Amy Razor joined the other Executive Directors, along with members of KDE, to discuss current events taking place on the educational landscape in Kentucky as a whole, as well as to report highlights from each Cooperative's region.

**Finance Meeting, May 12:** Each month, Dr. Razor meets with the finance director, Mrs. Angie Perkins, to keep abreast of finances and plan for future expenses. The focus of this meeting was the sustainment plan through 2031 and future goals.

**Executive Committee Meeting, May 12:** The executive committee met to review the Board agenda and provide input. The focus was on the voting items for the meeting and preparing for the NKCES Superintendent Retreat.

**NKCES Board Meeting, May 14:** The NKCES May Board meeting highlighted Chaos to Confidence as the spotlight. Incoming President, RSP positions, and the 2025-26 Insurance Proposal were among the agenda items.

**Synergy Meeting, May 20:** The leadership team met for our initial meeting with Dr. Smith. The focus was on goals and expectations for a strong, innovative, and region-focused 2025-26.

**Munetrix Training, May 20:** The leadership team met with Munetrix to discuss possible applications for our region's data/reports. We are waiting for an update from Munetrix to discuss next steps.

**RSP Graduation, May 27:** The RSP Graduation celebrated the success of our students. I am excited to share that we had 11 graduates for the 2024-25 school year. We wish our students the best of luck in their future endeavors.

**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. We will begin the parking lot expansion project this summer, which will add 25 parking spaces.

As part of the Arts In Mind project, the long-awaited outdoor learning space is complete. We are working on the seating and landscaping for the space this summer. We can't wait to share this space with our members; the possibilities are endless!

**Professional Learning (PL) Update:**

**May Professional Learning:** NKCES supported 44 professional learning opportunities focused on academics, culture and climate, leadership, and special education during April, serving 1,076 educators.

**Professional Learning (PL) Consortium:** The 2024.25 NKCES PL Consortium ended in April and the dates have been set for the 2025.26 school year. These meetings are set to occur in-person from 10 am -12 pm on Aug 22, Sep 19, Oct 17, Nov 21, Jan 23, Feb 20, Mar 20, Apr 24.

**Title I & Title II Meeting:** The 2024.25 NKCES Title I/Title II Consortium ended in April and the dates have been set for the 2025.26 school year. These meetings are set to occur in person from 8 am - 930 am on Aug 22, Sep 19, Oct 17, Nov 21, Jan 23, Feb 20, Mar 20, Apr 24.

**District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) Meeting:** The 2024.25 NKCES DAC Consortium ended in April and the dates have been set for the 2025.26 school year. These meetings are set to occur virtually from 10 am -12 pm on Aug 5, Sep 16, Oct 14, Nov 18, Jan 13, Feb 17, Mar 17, Apr 14.

**Professional Learning Networks (PLNs):** PLNs provide opportunities for educators to grow professionally in collaborative environments focused on collective learning. Coming soon are our 2025.26 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 SERTAC Team has actively participated in *The New Art and Science of Teaching*** book study alongside the Learning and Empowerment Team. Grounded in the work of Robert Marzano, this collaboration is designed to strengthen the bridge between special education and general education by

developing shared instructional practices. The goal is to empower all educators—regardless of role—as instructional leaders focused on high-quality, inclusive teaching.

**Mrs. Annie Wheatcraft, a NKCES special education consultant, is leading a regional initiative in collaboration with the Kentucky Autism Training Center (KATC)** to enhance autism support across four schools in Northern Kentucky. Through this partnership, she is facilitating the implementation of evidence-based practices, providing professional development for educators, and fostering inclusive learning environments tailored to students on the autism spectrum. Her leadership is instrumental in strengthening school-wide systems and ensuring sustainable support for students with autism.

**Mrs. Emily Borchers** attended the 2025 LRP Special Education Law Conference and provided a legal update during the May Directors of Special Education (DoSE) meeting. Her presentation highlighted recent legal trends, case law, and policy updates impacting special education practices, helping districts stay informed and compliant.

**The NKCES SERTAC Team** has led multiple Corrective Action Plan (CAP) trainings to support districts in responding to formal complaints and improving compliance. In addition, the team has facilitated desk audit reviews, helping staff strengthen practices related to special education documentation, service delivery, and procedural safeguards. This proactive support ensures districts are building capacity and maintaining high standards of legal compliance.

**The NKCES SERTAC Team** held a team calibration meeting focused on advancing the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in special education. The team explored current needs, potential applications, and resources to support districts in leveraging AI effectively. In addition, they developed teacher resource kits to support next year's cadres, ensuring educators have practical tools aligned with best practices and evolving technologies.

### **Learning and Empowerment Team:**

#### **Northern Kentucky Institute for Arts Education (NKIAE):**

In May, Joe Bertucci led an arts advocacy session at the *Youth Mental Health Roundtable* and provided an update to the federal program officer on our *Assistance for Arts Education* grant. Through The Kennedy Center's *Partners in Education* program, Mr. Bertucci, Kim Thomson (Boone County Schools), and Alissa Paasch (The Carnegie) set goals for regional professional learning opportunities in the coming year. Mr. Bertucci continued communication and support for Cohorts 3 and 4 of our *Arts In Mind* program, and shared information about our regional *Visual & Performing Arts Summer Workshop*, scheduled for July 21, as well as our series of *Arts In Mind* workshops, scheduled for July 22-25.

#### **Northern Kentucky Institute for Strategic Prevention (NKISP):**

In May, the team advanced youth prevention efforts through regional collaboration and direct outreach. Highlights include exhibiting at the Together We Bloom Summit, partnering with NorthKey to plan a Regional Youth Advisory Board, and leading the NKY Regional Youth Summit Planning Committee. We participated in multiple coalition meetings, including NKY ASAP, Regional Prevention Partners, Campbell County Drug Free Alliance,, and the Kentucky Prevention Network. Additionally, we delivered a vaping prevention presentation to 18 Campbell County High School students and shared resources with Cooper High School FRYSC, supporting ongoing education and prevention initiatives.

#### **School-Based Mental Health (SBMH):**

The School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) team concluded a successful year by hosting an in-person SBMH/TISS Steering Committee meeting. During this session, district representatives engaged in a

reflective process guided by the team and developed individualized next steps to enhance mental health initiatives in their schools. The SBMH team also played a key role in the success of the Mental Health Youth Summit, collaborating with several other NKCES teams to support student well-being. The SBMH team continued to work closely with districts to build capacity and sustain comprehensive mental health support through data collection. Their ongoing efforts continue to strengthen mental health frameworks and partnerships across the region.

#### **Trauma-Informed School Services (TISS):**

This month, the TISS team continued its impactful work supporting student and staff well-being through a series of powerful initiatives. They facilitated Mental Health Round Tables, creating space for students for honest dialogue about mental health issues faced today. The team attended the **Together, We Bloom Summit**, and heard voices and strategies around resilience and trauma-informed care. The **RSP You Matter Campaign** emphasized student belonging and mental wellness, delivering affirming messages that students are seen, valued, and supported. Finally, the **Advisory Board Meeting** brought key partners together to reflect on current initiatives and co-design next steps for deepening trauma-informed practices across the region.

#### **Learning Acceleration:**

The Learning Acceleration Specialist (LAS) team continued their professional growth through leading an NKCES book study on *The New Science and Art in Teaching*, building upon insights gained at the High Reliability Summit. This study deepened their understanding of effective teaching practices and aligned with ongoing regional instructional initiatives for continual support for districts. In addition to their own learning, the team has been actively preparing for summer professional learning opportunities to support districts across the region. The LAS team also contributed to the successful implementation of the Youth Mental Health Summit, working in collaboration with multiple NKCES teams. Their collective efforts demonstrate a continued commitment to both educator and student success.

#### **Grant Consortium Update:**

##### **District Reports**

Dayton received \$8,000 from the Opioid Settlement Funds to bring in Michael Deleon's Steered Straight substance misuse prevention programming.

##### **Grants available**

[6/18 and 6/26 School Violence Prevention Program](#): \$500,000 over three years to purchase equipment and training for school safety. Ms. Vicki Dansberry reviewed several key aspects of the grant and discussion ensued. Seven districts had expressed interest through the Interest Survey. Two have met with Ms. Dansberry for support and are still making decisions. Others have been invited to reach out for brainstorming, questions, and draft review.

##### **Grants Pending**

- [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#). Awards were announced: Greenup County (2); Ludlow; Newport; Erlanger- Elsmere; Kenton County; Dayton; and Boone County were awarded.
- [3-7 Connecting Kids to Coverage](#) to be announced in September
- [3-17 Strategic Prevention Framework](#) to be announced in September
- [4-14 Rural Communities Opioid Response Program -- Pathways](#) to be announced in September
- [5-5 Drug Free Communities](#) to be announced in September

### Grant Tips and News

- [Opioid Settlement Funds Webinar Registration](#) If your district is interested in accessing funding from the Opioid Settlement funds, you might want to consider the webinar to be held June 4 at 11 AM.
- The group discussed the limited range of Federal funding being offered and began to explore other funding options.
- July meeting date change: The meeting will be July 8.
- June meeting and following Grants Consortium meetings will be virtual at [this meeting link](#).
- **Open office hours will begin July 15** and continue each month on the third Tuesday from 12 - 4. Ms. Dansberry will be at NKCES in the Learning and Empowerment office to host networking events, work on current projects, and provide whatever support is needed. These events will be optional opportunities, added supports to help meet district needs. The Grants Consortium list should have received invitations.

### Regional School Programs (RSP) Update:

- RSP had their last day of school on May 28th.
- We held our 11th annual Awards and Promotion Ceremony on May 27th, with 11 graduates this year! We added cords this year for a few various reasons (peer tutor/building aid, work with our transition coach, etc.)
- RSP Scorpions enjoyed Field Day on May 23rd with a Kona Ice treat for all.
- RSP's first day of school for the 25-26 school year is August 13th, 2025.
- Leadership is working this summer to develop procedures for additional ongoing communication between RSP and our partnering districts.