

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day two of its regular meeting on June 5, 2025. The KBE met both virtually and in-person at the Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort KY. Members of the public were permitted to attend the meeting in person although encouraged to view the meeting on the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Media Portal. The board conducted the following business:

I. Call to Order

Chair Sharon Robinson welcomed all board members and guests to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. ET.

II. Roll Call

Chair Robinson asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: Holly Bloodworth, Harold McKinney, Juston Pate, Julie Pile, Randy Poe, Sharon Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Diane Woods, Lu Young, Lawrence McCrobie, Preston Graham, Secretary Jamie Link, and President Aaron Thompson.

III. Good News

- A. Two educators honored with 2025 SHAPE Teacher of the Year Award in Middle School Physical and Health Education (Randy Poe)**
- B. 2024 Kentucky World Language Association Teacher of the Year advances to nationals (Steve Trimble)**
- C. Students show off their skills at 2025 Kentucky Student Technology Leadership Program State Championship (Juston Pate)**
- D. Somerset High School Solar Jumpers members focus on collaboration over competition (Harold McKinney)**
- E. KDE's Kaleidoscope Community of Practice project designed to help improve education for students with disabilities (Julie Pile)**

IV. Board Member Sharing

Chair Robinson said that the next item on the agenda is board sharing. It is an opportunity for board members to raise issues, pose questions, share concerns, and suggest topics to include on future board meeting agendas. Lawrence McCrobie began by offering his reflections as the 2024-25 KBE non-voting teacher member. Board members thanked him for his service over the year and wished him best of luck into the future. Juston Pate then shared an update on the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) High School Transformation State Network. Pate said that planning logistics are underway for the group to provide a method to present recommendations to transform high

schools. He also said that the group had their first convening with other states at a conference hosted by NASBE in Indianapolis, Indiana. Additionally, Lu Young shared that she was able to attend the Kentucky School for the Blind graduation ceremony and congratulated all the graduates, including those from the Kentucky School for the Deaf.

V. Report from the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE)

President Aaron Thompson attended the meeting virtually to give his report. Thompson shared that six Kentucky K-12 public high schools and area technology centers were named the recipients of grants to support postsecondary readiness advising. The grants, reimbursable up to \$10,000, were awarded by the Kentucky Advising Academy (KAA), an initiative of the Kentucky CPE in its efforts to support postsecondary advising and improve access to postsecondary opportunities in the state. Thompson said that CPE is receiving a grant for \$488,676 from Kentucky's Opioid Abatement Commission to work with postsecondary institutions to provide trauma informed recovery support services to adult learners impacted by opioid use disorder and co-occurring mental health challenges. The program will begin on July 1 and run for 12 months. Finally, Thompson shared that the next CPE board meeting will be held on June 12 at Shaker Village in Harrodsburg at 9 a.m. On June 11, the CPE board will hold its annual retreat, also at Shaker Village.

VI. Report from the Secretary of the Education and Labor Cabinet

Secretary Jamie Link attended the meeting in-person to give his report. He began by sharing that the cabinet has been closely watching changes at the federal level to assess how they will impact Kentucky. He said that Job Corps centers in Kentucky are being closed, effective at the end of June. Link also said that the governor announced an initiative for Pre-K for all in Kentucky. He said that the Team Kentucky Pre-K for All Advisory Committee is composed of leaders in education, child care, workforce development, government, and business. The purpose of the Committee is to study existing models of successful state-funded pre-kindergarten programs to make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on best practices to effectively implement a voluntary pre-K program in Kentucky.

VII. Report from the Commissioner of Education

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher began by sharing that Rhonda L. Sims, associate commissioner in KDE's Office of Assessment and Accountability will retire effective July 1, 2025 after nearly 31 years at KDE. Fletcher said that

her decades of experience with Kentucky's assessment and accountability systems and reporting will be sorely missed. Commissioner Fletcher then shared federal funding updates and discussed items from Kentucky's state schools and area technology centers.

VIII. Action/Discussion Items

A. Appointment of At-Large Member to Kentucky High School Athletic Association Board of Control- KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen and KDE Associate Commissioner and KHSAA Designee David Couch

KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen and KDE Associate Commissioner and KHSAA Designee David Couch presented the appointment. Allen said that the KBE must appoint an at-large KHSAA Board of Control member to fill the seat currently held by Dr. Gavin Washington. Having served one term on the Board of Control, Dr. Washington is eligible for re-appointment. The Commissioner recommended Dr. Gavin Washington for re-appointment to the KHSAA Board of Control. Allen said that further information relating to Dr. Washington was provided to board members in advance of the meeting. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Gavin Washington to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) Board of Control for the term July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029. The motion was made by Diane Woods and seconded by Harold McKinney. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

B. Local Board Member In-Service Training- KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen and Kentucky School Boards Association Director of Board Team Development Debra Webb

KDE Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Todd Allen and KSBA Director Debra Webb presented the report. Allen said that Kentucky Revised Statute 160.180 requires that school board members complete annual (calendar year) in-service training. He said that the 2024 report, 2024 exceptions, and 2026 plan were provided to board members in advance of the meeting. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the 2024 report, 2024 exceptions and 2026 plan as required by 702 KAR 1:116, Annual In-Service Training of District Board Members. The motion was made by Julie Pile and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

C. Estill County Board of Education Request to exceed the ten (10) percent limitation in 702 KAR 4:050 Section 5(1)- KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Chay Ritter

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Chay Ritter presented the waiver request. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the request from the Estill County Board of Education to exceed the ten (10) percent limitation in 702 KAR 4:050 Section 5(1) to allow for the construction of the new Estill County Middle School. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

D. Laurel County Board of Education Request for Waiver of 702 KAR 7:140 Section 4(1)- KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Policy Advisor Lindsey Swartz

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Policy Advisor Lindsey Swartz presented the waiver request. Laurel County experienced significant damage throughout the county caused by a tornado. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the waiver of the requirement in 702 KAR 7:140 Section 4(1) which provides that “[a] school district shall not be granted an emergency day waiver unless the district has missed more than twenty (20) regular student attendance days district-wide” and that the “district shall make up at least the first twenty (20) regular student attendance days missed in a school year by adding these equivalent hours back into the school calendar” from the Laurel County Board of Education. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

E. 2025-2026 KBE Non-Voting Student Member

Chair Robinson spoke about the annual item to approve the new non-voting student board member. She said that board members had the opportunity to review application materials of the qualified candidates and asked board members to share their top selection. After coming to a consensus, Chair Robinson then called for a motion to approve the selection of student candidate #3 to serve as the 2025-26 non-voting KBE member. The motion was made by Juston Pate and seconded by Julie Pile. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

F. Clarification of Board Action related to Amendments to 704 KAR 8:080, Required academic standards in career studies and financial literacy

Chair Robinson said that clarification was necessary regarding an item approved by the board in the June 4, 2025 KBE meeting. She said that “Amendments to 704 KAR 8:080, Required academic standards in career studies and financial literacy” involved the amendment of an administrative regulation which incorporates the academic standards for career studies and financial literacy, however, the board’s motion was only to approve the standards. Chair Robinson said that out of an abundance of caution and to clarify the board’s intent to approve the amendments to the regulation, that she would call for a motion to approve the amendments to 704 KAR 8:080, which includes the updated standards document. The motion was made by Harold McKinney and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

IX. Review Items

A. 2026-2028 Biennial Budget Requests

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Karen Wirth facilitated the discussion. Wirth began by recapping the mandatory process for ABRs (Additional Budget Requests). Commissioner Fletcher joined Ross and Wirth to discuss budget prioritizations that were selected by board members in advance of the meeting through a survey. Wirth said that at the August meeting, the recommended budget will be presented for the KBE’s approval and then submitted to the Governor’s office on October 1.

B. Everybody Counts Initiative- Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development Mike Yoder and Deputy Executive Director of the Office of Educational Programs Chris Sanders

Secretary Jamie Link joined the presenters to provide background on the Everybody Counts Initiative. Link said that Everybody Counts equips Kentucky’s students with a personalized career plan and confidence in their workforce skills to prepare and achieve their career goals. He explained that Governor Andy Beshear launched this dynamic initiative in 2021 to support high school seniors’ successful transition into education, the workforce, or both after high school. Since then, Everybody Counts Career Coaches have supported the creation of over 4,000 personalized career plans for students. Sanders and Yoder discussed how during the

2024-2025 school year, 20 full time Career Coaches worked in over 15 A1 high schools, five A5 program schools, and two Technical Centers across seven Kentucky school districts supporting 2,500 students. Everybody Counts works with school districts to also deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans. They said school district superintendents, high school principals, and teachers report increased student engagement and student preparedness due to Everybody Counts services. They also report a high level of satisfaction with Everybody Counts' collaboration and delivery of work-based learning, career, and education events throughout the school year.

C. Kentucky Reading Research Center Update- Executive Director Amy Lingo, Project Manager Reilly Brown and KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli

KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli and Kentucky Reading Research Center (KyRRC) co-directors Dr. Amy Lingo and Dr. Terry Scott presented the update. The presenters shared that KRS 164.0207 establishes the statewide reading research center for the purposes of supporting educators in “implementing reliable, replicable evidence-based reading programs, and to promote literacy development, including cooperating with other entities that provide family literacy services.” The presentation provided the first annual update on the progress of the KyRRC on meeting statutory responsibilities. Dr. Lingo and Dr. Scott provided updates on the scope of work, research agenda, methods for evaluation, establishment of a clearing house, engagement efforts with state and local education agencies and next steps. They also responded to questions from KBE members.

D. Reflection from the 2024-2025 Student Non-Voting KBE Member

Preston Graham offered his reflections as the 2024-25 KBE non-voting student member. Board members thanked him for his service over the year and wished him best of luck into the future.

E. Update from the 2025 Kentucky Teacher of the Year (KTOY)

The 2025 Kentucky Teacher of the Year, Jennifer Montgomery, presented a reflection on her sabbatical experience at KDE before returning to the classroom in the fall of 2025.

F. Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)- Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher and KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli

Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher and KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli facilitated the awards presentation. Fletcher said that the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) are the highest honors bestowed by the United States government specifically for K-12 mathematics and science (including computer science) teaching. Teachers who are selected as PAEMST awardees are invited to Washington, D.C. where they attend a series of recognition events and receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. Fletcher and Marinelli recognized the accomplishments of the following awardees: Benjamin Molberger, Miranda Messer, Nova Pleman, Hillary McWhorter, Marcus Blakeney, and Matthew Bryant.

G. Presentation of the Teresa Perry Compassion Award- Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher and KDE Communications Director Jennifer Ginn

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KDE Communications Director Jennifer Ginn presented the 2025 Teresa Perry Compassion Award to Chris Williams. Fletcher said the Perry Award is given annually in June to a KDE employee who exhibits the characteristics and professionalism Perry showed every day. Williams, who has been with KDE for 14 years, is a program consultant in KDE's Division of Assessment and Accountability Support. Fletcher said that Williams has consistently demonstrated accessibility, responsiveness, and the ability to foster understanding for those she serves.

H. Presentation of the 2025 Robinson Award for Diversity and Equity in Public Education

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KBE Chair Sharon Robinson facilitated the award presentation. Each year, the KBE grants this award to a Kentuckian or a Kentucky organization demonstrating extraordinary efforts and contributions in the area of educational diversity and equity. The winners of the award were announced to be Dr. Marty Pollio, superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, and Michael Griffin, principal of Browning Springs Middle School (Hopkins County Schools). While honored individuals for the Robinson Award are typically recognized at the April KBE meeting, Griffin was unable to attend. Fletcher offered his

congratulations to Griffin, who was able to join the June KBE meeting and receive the award, and thanked him for his commitment to the students of Kentucky.

I. Presentation of the 2025 Karem Award for Excellence in Education Policy

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KBE Chair Sharon Robinson facilitated the award presentation. Each year, the KBE grants this award to a Kentucky policymaker, education leader, or citizen who has made notable state-level contributions to the improvement of Kentucky's public education system. The winner of the award was announced to be Robin Fields Kinney, former Interim Commissioner of Education at KDE. Fletcher offered his congratulations to the recipient and thanked her for her commitment to the students of Kentucky.

X. Adjournment

Chair Robinson thanked everyone for their time and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Diane Woods. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 P.M. E.T.