

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day two of its regular meeting on October 2, 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, Juston Pate, Julie Pile, Randy Poe, Sharon Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Diane Woods, Lu Young, Harper Blake, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, Secretary Jamie Link, and President Aaron Thompson. Harold McKinney was absent.

III. Good News

- A. Nine Kentucky educators named 2026 Teacher Achievement Award winners** (Holly Bloodworth)
- B. KDE hosts inaugural KY Transition 360 Institute to enhance outcomes for students with disabilities** (Randy Poe)
- C. Kentucky educators honored with JROTC Instructor of the Year awards** (Diane Woods)
- D. WKEC learning coach recognized nationally for work in positive behavior support** (Steve Trimble)
- E. 79 Kentucky students participate in 2025 SkillsUSA Championships** (Juston Pate)

IV. Board Member Sharing

Chair Sharon 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. Holly Bloodworth began by sharing that she was able to attend a Kentucky Reading Association conference. Steve Trimble mentioned he had the opportunity to attend a regional meeting with the Kentucky School Boards Association. Diane Woods, Julie Pile, and Randy Poe shared their experiences attending the KDE Continuous Improvement Summit. Lu Young said that Julie Pile and her company Parent Camp were selected as one of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's 100

small businesses of the year. Alfonso De Torres Núñez shared his experience attending the Kentucky World Language Association conference. Chair Robinson also discussed her experiences and reflections on the 50th anniversary since busing and desegregation efforts in Louisville schools.

V. Report from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB)- Chair Amber Snell

Chair Amber Snell attended the meeting virtually to present a report on the EPSB. Chair Robinson said a report from the EPSB will regularly be included on future meeting agendas. Snell shared that the EPSB met recently and had two new members sworn in, Dr. Elizabeth Dinkins from Bellarmine University and Dr. Nicholas Pace from the University of Kentucky. She said that the EPSB's next in-person meeting is scheduled for October 21 when EPSB members will review the proposed EPSB/KBE research collaborative (approved by the KBE on Oct. 1). Snell provided to KBE members an annual report to highlight the work of the EPSB and the KDE Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness during the 24-25 school year.

VI. Report from the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE)- President Aaron Thompson, Ph.D.

President Aaron Thompson attended the meeting virtually to give his report. A written version was also included in the portal. Thompson shared that Kentucky's dual credit participation has reached 46% for the 2024-2025 school year, with significant positive impacts on college enrollment and completion, especially for students of poverty. He highlighted Kentucky's national leadership in retention, persistence, and debt reduction, as well as ongoing FAFSA awareness campaigns and summer bridge programs.

VII. Report from the Secretary of the Education and Labor Cabinet- Secretary Jamie Link

Secretary Jamie Link attended the meeting in-person to give his report. Link discussed the cabinet's response to potential federal funding disruptions, ongoing budget development, the governor's pre-K for all initiative, unemployment insurance system upgrades, and the expansion and formalization of SWATT (Statewide Workforce and Talent Team), emphasizing cross-agency collaboration to address workforce needs.

VIII. Report from the Commissioner of Education- Commissioner Robbie Fletcher

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher began by updating board members on the implementation of the SAT as Kentucky's college admissions exam. Fletcher responded to technical questions from Harper Blake, student KBE member, regarding the differences between the SAT and ACT exams. Dr. Fletcher shared he was able to visit various different school districts, including Grant County and Rowan County, since his last report to the KBE. He also shared updates from the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB), Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), and Area Technology Centers (ATCs).

IX. Action/Discussion Items

A. 701 KAR 5:170 E, Statement of Consideration- KDE Deputy Commissioner & General Counsel Todd G. Allen

Todd Allen presented the Statement of Consideration related to 701 KAR 5:170E, Waiver requests. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the Statement of Consideration for 701 KAR 5:170E, Waiver requests. The motion was made by Randy Poe and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed with a voice vote.

B. Amendments to 704 KAR 8:020, Required academic standards for reading and writing- KDE Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Ph.D., KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli, KDE Director Division of Program Standards Chrystal Rowland and KDE Policy Advisor Sarah Medley

KDE Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Ph.D., KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli, KDE Director Division of Program Standards Chrystal Rowland and KDE Policy Advisor Sarah Medley presented the amendments. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the amendments to 704 KAR 8:020, Required academic standards for reading and writing. The motion was made by Steve Trimble and seconded by Holly Bloodworth. The motion passed with a voice vote.

C. Amendment to 704 KAR 3:410, Preschool education programs for four (4) year old children- KDE Associate Commissioner Gretta Hylton, Ed. D., KDE Early Learning Unit Director Thomas Williams, Ph.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Melody Cooper

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704 KAR 3:410, Preschool education programs for four (4) year old children. The motion was made by Randy Poe and seconded by Juston Pate. The motion passed with a voice vote.

D. Amendments to 701 KAR 5:150, Nontraditional Instruction Program- KDE Associate Commissioner Kelly Foster, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Matthew Courtney, Ed.D.

KDE Associate Commissioner Kelly Foster, Ed.D., and KDE Policy Advisor Matthew Courtney, Ed.D., presented the amendments. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the amendments to 701 KAR 5:150, Nontraditional Instruction Program. The motion was made by Juston Pate and seconded by Julie Pile. The motion passed with a voice vote.

E. Amendments to 704 KAR 3:406, Superintendent training program and assessment process- KDE Associate Commissioner Meredith Brewer, Ph.D.

KDE Associate Commissioner Meredith Brewer, Ph.D., presented the amendments. Following a discussion with the full board, Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the amendments to 704 KAR 3:406, Superintendent training program and assessment process. The motion was made by Randy Poe and seconded by Julie Pile. The motion passed with a voice vote.

X. Review Items

A. Update on Educator Preparation Program Literacy/Numeracy Efforts

KDE Associate Commissioner Meredith Brewer, Ph.D., and KDE Academic Program Manager Melissa Diebel, Ed.D., presented the updates. The presenters discussed ongoing efforts to standardize and improve early literacy and numeracy preparation in educator programs, including the development of baseline standards and self-study processes across Kentucky's educator preparation providers. Dr. Diebel reported that the early literacy group, now in its third year, has conducted self-studies, reviewed coursework, and established minimum standards for early literacy preparation, ensuring consistency across educator preparation programs. The group developed two key documents outlining the essential components of early literacy instruction, including the big five literacy components, progress monitoring, and interventions, to be adopted by all educator preparation providers.

B. Presentation of the 2025 Kelly Award for Business and Education Partnership- Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KBE Chair Sharon Porter Robinson, Ed.D.

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KBE Chair Sharon Robinson facilitated the award presentation. Each year, the KBE grants this award to a Kentucky businessperson or business who has partnered with a public school or district to provide outstanding leadership that promotes school improvement and student success. The winner of the award was announced to be the Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters (IKORCC). Fletcher offered his congratulations to the recipient and thanked them for their commitment to the students of Kentucky.

C. Updates on Unified Champion Schools

Chair Robinson welcomed Special Olympics Kentucky Senior Director Karen Michalak-Parsley and representatives from Bullitt East High School (Bullitt County Schools) and Westport Middle School (Jefferson County Schools) for an update on Unified Champion Schools. Presenters explained that the national Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools initiative aims to promote social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities in K-12 schools and college campuses. More than 100 schools in Kentucky participate in the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools initiative, according to Michalak-Parsley. Special Olympics Kentucky assists schools in the Commonwealth with implementing the three pillars of a Unified Champion School: inclusive sports, youth leadership, and whole school engagement. Several Unified Champion Schools participants at both schools shared their favorite parts of the program, including the sports they participate in and the fun they have with their classmates.

XI. 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 Juston Pate. The motion passed with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 P.M. E.T.