

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day two of its regular meeting on December 4, 2025. The KBE met both 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 9:02 A.M. ET.

II. Roll Call

Chair Robinson asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: Harold McKinney, Juston Pate, Julie Pile, Randy Poe, Sharon Robinson, Lee Todd, Steve Trimble, Lu Young, Harper Blake, and Alfonso De Torres Núñez. Holly Bloodworth, Diane Woods, Secretary Jamie Link, and President Aaron Thompson were absent.

III. Good News

- A. Zachary Stumbo awarded 2025 McKinney-Vento State Coordinator of the Year Award (Lee Todd)**
- B. Barren County teacher created prosthetic hand for his student using school's 3D printing lab (Steve Trimble)**
- C. Former Student KBE Member Honored with NASBE Distinguished Student Service Award (Lu Young)**
- D. Two Kentucky Students Named 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars (Harold McKinney)**
- E. Spencer County Educator Michelle Gross Named 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year (Julie Pile)**

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. Lu Young began by sharing that she was appointed as the Southern Regional Director for the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). Juston Pate shared updates on the Kentucky High School Transformation Work Group, including a summary of the first work group meeting held Dec. 3, 2025. Randy Poe shared that he had the opportunity to visit the Nelson County school district. Chair Robinson stated that she would like to see the board review the

health and authority of Site-Based Decision Making Councils (SBDM). Chair Robinson then invited Jim Tackett from the KDE Office of Finance and Operations to give an update on the WSCC (Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child) Subcommittee. Tackett shared on the subcommittee's activities, including Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention-funded initiatives in Fayette County, recognition of healthy schools, and efforts to enhance family and community engagement, as well as transitions in committee membership.

V. Report from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB)- Vice Chair C.J. Fryer

Vice Chair C.J. Fryer attended the meeting virtually to present a report on the EPSB. Fryer shared that the EPSB approved participation in the research practice collaborative with KBE, which seeks to engage active K-12 teachers to inform research and practice, and aims to better understand and support Kentucky's educator workforce. He said that the EPSB set legislative priorities for 2026, including ensuring ethical conduct, funding internships, providing financial incentives such as competitive salaries, and recommending statutory updates to support teacher recruitment and retention. Finally, Fryer shared that the EPSB initiated a spotlight series to highlight exemplary educator preparation programs, with recent recognition of Lindsey Wilson University and Eastern Kentucky University for achieving accreditation without stipulations.

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

President Aaron Thompson was unable to attend, but provided a written report available in the board's portal.

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

Secretary Jamie Link was unable to attend.

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

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher began by sharing that he was asked to serve on the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) annual policy forum panel regarding Kentucky's work in reimagining assessment and accountability. He also shared that he recently attended the Commissioner's Student Advisory Council meeting and commented on how their feedback helps to inform decisions for Kentucky students. Finally, Dr. Fletcher shared updates

from the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB), Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), and Area Technology Centers (ATCs).

IX. Review Items

A. 2024-2025 Data-at-a-Glance

KDE Associate Commissioner Jennifer Stafford, Ed.D., KDE Associate Commissioner Kelly Foster, Ed.D., and KDE Chief Academic Officer Micki Ray Marinelli presented a comprehensive overview of 2024-2025 assessment and accountability data, including NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) and Kentucky Summative Assessment results, trends in student performance, and the impact of literacy and numeracy initiatives. The team reported on NAEP reading and math results for grades 4 and 8, noting Kentucky's performance trends relative to national averages, and highlighted improvements in state assessment scores across elementary, middle, and high schools, while acknowledging persistent achievement gaps among demographic groups. Board members requested more detailed breakdowns of assessment data by subgroups at a future meeting, and the impact of LETRS training. Members identified the need for future reports to include disaggregated data to inform targeted interventions. Marinelli detailed the implementation of Kentucky Reads to Succeed, LETRS training, and the scaling of literacy coaching and leadership networks. The board reviewed the rollout of the Kentucky Numeracy Counts Act, the awarding of grants to Kentucky districts, and the development of math leadership collaboratives, while noting the lack of dedicated funding for science instruction and the need to scale successful pilot programs.

B. Performance Monitoring Update

KDE Chief Performance Officer Karen Dodd presented the update. Dodd shared the department's progress on strategic goals, including reimagining assessment, reducing absenteeism, improving literacy and numeracy, educator recruitment, and internal process management. Dodd outlined how using key performance indicators and outlining achievements and challenges can further this process. Dodd also introduced plans for a new strategic dashboard that will also be shared with board members.

C. Audit Report and Expense Reports for the Kentucky Board of Education and Commissioner of Education

KDE Associate Commissioner Matt Ross and KDE Division Director Karen Wirth presented the update. They shared the results of desk reviews for

school district financial audits and reporting on board and commissioner expenses. Ross and Wirth responded to follow-up questions from board members regarding audit deficiencies and procedures.

D. 2026 Legislative Preview

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher presented the preview. Dr. Fletcher provided a comprehensive preview of the upcoming 2026 legislative session, including key dates, bill tracking resources, committee engagement, and a detailed overview of KDE and KBE legislative priorities and proposed bills relevant to education. Board members discussed communication strategies and the importance of legislative relationships.

E. Presentation of the Kevin M. Noland and Mary Ann Miller Award for Outstanding Public Service to Kentucky Schools

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher facilitated the award presentation. The winner of the award was announced to be Allison Johnson, an assistant program administrator in KDE's Office of Special Education and Early Learning. Commissioner Fletcher offered his congratulations to the recipient and thanked her for her commitment to the students of Kentucky.

F. 2025 National Blue Ribbon Schools

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher and KDE Director of Communications Jennifer Ginn facilitated the presentation. Fletcher and Ginn recognized the four schools that qualified to receive the National Blue Ribbon School Program award from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) before USED ended the program abruptly in 2025. The schools recognized were Tamarack Elementary School (Daviess County), Maxwell Spanish Immersion Elementary (Fayette County), Meadowthorpe Elementary School (Fayette County), and Graves County Central Elementary School. Governor Andy Beshear and Lieutenant Governor Jacqueline Coleman also issued a proclamation recognizing the four schools, highlighting their commitment to excellence and community support. Commissioner Fletcher read the proclamation and invited representatives from each school to speak with the board about the work that led to the recognition.

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

Lu Young. The motion passed with a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 P.M. E.T.