

**The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held day two of its regular meeting on April 9, 2026. The majority of KBE members met 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, Lu Young, Harper Blake, Alfonso De Torres Núñez, and Secretary Jamie Link. President Aaron Thompson was absent. KDE Director of Education Policy GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Ph.D., stated that a quorum was present.

**III. Good News**

Chair Sharon Robinson asked Vice Chair Young to facilitate the meeting. Board members shared information and updates about the following topics:

- A. KDE Unveils New Video Series Highlighting Local Assessment and Accountability Work** (Presented by Lu Young)
- B. Two 2026 Kentucky Education Support Staff Professional (KESSP) winners recognized in surprise ceremonies in Taylor and Spencer counties** (Presented by Julie Pile)
- C. Kentucky welcomes 83 new National Board Certified Teachers** (Presented by Steve Trimble)
- D. Hui Couch of Jefferson County receives Honored National Teaching Award** (Presented by Holly Bloodworth)
- E. Frankfort High School student honored by Kentucky World Language Association** (Presented by Harold McKinney)

**IV. Board Member Sharing**

Vice Chair Young 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. Harper Blake began by discussing the need for strong civics standards in Kentucky, citing low

voter turnout and limited student knowledge of government, and asked the board to implement policies fostering active and informed voters. Alfonso De Torres Núñez reported on the Ed Rising state conference and the Kentucky World Language Association Student Expo, highlighting student engagement, multilingual opportunities, and alignment with Kentucky's model Portrait of a Learner. Randy Poe discussed the Maker Expo in Northern Kentucky, which showcased student entrepreneurship and innovation. Julie Pile shared a student-led project addressing food insecurity in Kentucky youth, demonstrating citizenship and service, and discussed its potential impact in both urban and Appalachian communities. Juston Pate reported that the KBE High School Transformation work group continues to make progress and met on April 8 before the board meeting. Pate said at the meeting the group identified pressing issues related to high school transformation. Sharon Robinson also took time to recognize KBE member Lee Todd, whose term on the board expired April 15. Chair Robinson thanked him for his two terms of service and dedication to the Kentucky Board of Education, educators and students throughout the Commonwealth.

## **V. Reports**

### **A. Report from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB)- Chair Amber Snell**

Chair Amber Snell presented a report on the EPSB. Snell discussed the EPSB's work with legislators and the Pathway for Paraeducators (Option 9) program at Northern Kentucky University that leads to a bachelor's degree and prepares students for elementary or special education certification. She also provided updates on the EPSB/KBE Research Practice Collaborative, which focuses on teacher retention and working conditions.

### **B. 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.

### **C. Report from the Secretary of Education and Labor Cabinet- Secretary Jamie Link**

Secretary Jamie Link presented a report on the Education and Labor Cabinet. He discussed legislative impacts, the transition of the Department of Workers Claims to the Governor's Office, and funding for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. He also discussed the expansion of the

SWATT (Statewide Workforce and Talent Team), registered apprenticeship growth in Kentucky, and record-low workplace injury rates.

**D. Report from the Commissioner of Education- Commissioner Robbie Fletcher**

Commissioner of Education Dr. Robbie Fletcher began by highlighting All in for Agriculture Education Week, which was held March 16-20 and had schools around Kentucky focused on teaching students about agriculture. Dr. Fletcher also provided updates from the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB), Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), and Kentucky's Area Technology Centers (ATCs). Dr. Fletcher shared that he was able to visit KSD recently and has established monthly visits to the state schools, alternating between KSD and KSB. He said that KSB is collaborating with KDE and the Kentucky Museum of Art to bring professional teaching artists into their school on a rotating basis every six to eight weeks. Dr. Fletcher congratulated the KSD boys' and girls' basketball teams, which both travelled to the Tennessee School for the Deaf to compete. He closed his report by discussing the grand opening of the new Breathitt County Area Technology Center and students from Shelby County Area ATC who organized a seasonal donation drive to support local families in need.

**VI. Review Items**

**A. Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

KDE Chief Performance Officer Karen Dodd and KDE Strategic Data Analyst Robert Collins presented the report, which detailed the department's most recent customer service survey results; respondent demographics; domain scores for leadership, communication, qualitative feedback; and progress toward the department's strategic plan goals. Collins described the survey structure, respondent roles, frequency of engagement with KDE, and demographic breakdown, noting a significant increase in teacher respondents compared to previous years. Dodd and Collins highlighted improvements in customer satisfaction and superintendent communication responsiveness compared to past surveys. They noted district administrators rated social media effectiveness lower compared to past surveys, prompting further review. The presenters addressed board members questions about teacher engagement, multilingual communication, and social media effectiveness.

**B. Milken Educator Award (MEA) Recognition**

KDE Division Director Elly Gilbert facilitated the presentation and introduced 2025 Kentucky Milken Educator Sydney Newton, an English and Language Arts teacher at Taylor County High School. The Milken Educator Awards recognizes outstanding K-12 educators for their quality of teaching, professional leadership, engagement with families and the community, and potential for greater contributions to students, schools, and communities in the future. A school ceremony was held at Taylor County High School in December honoring Sydney Newton. The award includes an unrestricted \$25,000 cash prize and the opportunity for an all expenses paid national networking forum. Newton was presented with her commemorative obelisk and spoke about her passion for education.

**C. Presentation of the 2026 Robinson Award for Diversity and Equity in Public Education**

Commissioner Fletcher and Vice Chair Young 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 winner of the award was announced to be Rhonda Logsdon, Executive Director of the Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY-SPIN). Commissioner Fletcher offered his congratulations and thanked Logsdon for her commitment to the students of Kentucky. Logsdon shared her thanks to the board for the recognition and briefly discussed the work of KY-SPIN.

**VII. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Young 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 11:22 A.M. E.T.