KENTUCKY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (KTAC)

Summary of January 13-14, 2026 Meeting
Draft

Meeting Summary

The Kentucky Technical Advisory Committee (KTAC) provided advice to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) regarding the state's assessment and accountability programs. This included discussion about the 2025 science assessment standard setting process, science item development, and proposed science research studies. It also included results from a study on inclusion rules for equating and results from a review of item bank health across content areas. The group heard updates from KDE regarding accountability and assessment results from 2024-25 and innovation work spearheaded by the Kentucky United We Learn (KUWL) Council through a competitive grant for state assessment (CGSA). Lastly, they discussed growth measures for English learners using ACCESS For ELLs data and academic growth measures for reading and mathematics.

January 13, 2026

Attendance

Kentucky Technical Advisory Committee (KTAC) Members: Elena Diaz-Bilello, Pete Goldschmidt, Corinne Huggins-Manley, Leslie Keng, Suzanne Lane

Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Staff: Devon Avery, Ben Riley, Jessica Alexander, **Kevin O'Hair**, Megan Osborn, Helen Jones, Krista Mullins, **Jennifer Stafford**, Kevin Hill, David Curd, Jennifer Larkins, Melissa Chandler, Tiffany Christopher, Mike Prater, Jessica Brumley, Shara Savage, Haley Williams, Christen Rosenberry, Amy Patterson, Susan Strange

KDE Guests:

Bill Auty, EDMeasure

HumRRO: Arthur Thacker, Emily Dickinson, Gertrudes Velasquez

Pearson: Tracy Gardner, Likun Hau, Jennifer Kash, **Abraham Rudnick, Denise Stiglich**, Lisa Persels, Llana Williams, Bianca Redd

Center for Assessment: Kyla McClure

Facilitators: Chris Domaleski, Laura Pinsonneault, Center for Assessment

(Presenters in **bold**)

Day 1 Summary

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions

Presenters: Jennifer Stafford Ed.D, Associate Commissioner, KDE, Kevin O'Hair, Academic Program Manager, KDE

Summary: O'Hair opened the meeting and welcomed the group at 11:07am Eastern time. He provided information about KTAC open meeting requirements and virtual meeting expectations. Stafford also welcomed the group.

Agenda Item: Review Agenda and Approve Minutes from January 28, 2025 Meeting

Presenter: Laura Pinsonneault, Associate, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Pinsonneault reviewed the agenda and reminded the group of the protocol for documenting, reviewing, revising, and voting to approve recommendations daily. The motion to approve minutes was approved unanimously and the minutes are considered final.

Action: Vote to approve January 28, 2025 meeting minutes

Goldschmidt motioned to approve. Lane seconded. Pinsonneault invited discussion, with TAC members indicating it was helpful to review the minutes in advance of the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voting TAC members.

Agenda Item: Science Standard Setting Review from September 4-5, 2025

Presenters: Tracy Gardner, Senior Measurement Advisor, Pearson, Likun Hau, Senior Research Scientist, Pearson

Summary: Gardner and Hou provided information about the science assessment standard setting that took place remotely on September 4-5, 2025. Their overview included information about the context and rationale for the standard setting, recruitment and participation, methodology, and data and resources shared in the meeting. There was discussion about performance level descriptors (PLDs) and particularly threshold descriptors. TAC members provided feedback to inform future standard setting events.

Agenda Item: Science Standard Setting Independent Review

Presenter: Erika Landl, PhD, Senior Associate, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Landl served as an independent reviewer of the science assessment standard setting that took place remotely on September 4-5, 2025. She explained the role of an independent observer, highlighting what activities she did and did not engage in. She then shared her observation findings, highlighting that the standard setting was overall very well organized and facilitated, while noting that panelists may have benefitted from additional time for some portions of the workshop.

Agenda Item: Breakdown of Science Items
Presenters: Abraham Rudnick, Science Content Specialist, Pearson, Denise Stiglich, Test Development Manager, Pearson

Summary: O'Hair provided context for this agenda item, explaining that KDE requested information from Pearson about item development for science in response to broad shareholder interest in science education and science assessment outcomes in the Commonwealth. Presenters shared information about science item development with examples from different domains and each grade level (4, 7, 11). TAC members provided guidance regarding the potential value of cognitive labs with students, the importance of collecting validity evidence and employing task templates, design patterns, and item specifications that describe desired characteristics and features of items.

Agenda Item: Study on Including Text to Speech and Accommodations into Equating
Presenter: Likun Hou, Senior Research Scientist, Pearson

Summary: Hou provided background about Kentucky's post-equating process and current calibration data inclusion/exclusion rules. She then described analyses to include examinees who use text-to-speach (TTS) and large-print and paper accommodations in the calibration sample. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of including this population in the equating data. After describing their methodology, Hou reviewed the results, noting minimal differences between results generated with and without the study group. TAC members provided suggestions for additional analyses and discussed the potential to explore pre-equating.

Agenda Item: 2026 Item Bank Review
Presenter: Denise Stiglich, Test Development Manager, Pearson

Summary: Stiglich provided background about Kentucky's item bank, then described how Pearson evaluates the health of the bank. The current item banks can support operational testing for two to three years. Pearson recommends item development across all grades and content areas to ensure a robust item bank. TAC members discussed the value of having at least a three-year plan to ensure sufficient numbers of items across domains in each operational assessment and how item statistics can inform details of this plan. The plan should be a joint effort with the state and vendors.

Agenda Item: Kentucky United We Learn (KUWL) Council Update
Presenter: Susan Strange, Strategic Plan Program Manager, KDE

Summary: Strange provided an overview of the KUWL Council, which is funded by a competitive grant for state assessments (CGSA). The grant ends on September 30, 2026. Over the last year there have been major convenings of the Council, multiple additional town halls, and extensive additional outreach to shareholders across the Commonwealth. This work has recently resulted in a proposed House Bill (257) to support changes to Kentucky's assessment and accountability system, with significant proposed investments to support the continued development of local accountability systems in districts across the Commonwealth. The Council convenes next week and is broadening its focus toward high school transformation.

Agenda Item: Future TAC meeting plans

Presenter: Chris Domaleski, Executive Director, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Domaleski invited TAC members to review proposed meeting dates for 2026 and 2027. Dates were selected when possible and additional follow-up will be conducted by The Center to schedule a Spring 2026 meeting. Additionally, TAC members were invited to review the recommendations gathered throughout the meeting for final discussion and vote. The recommendations passed unanimously by voting TAC members.

Action: Manley motioned to approve the January 13, 2026 KTAC recommendations. Lane seconded. There was some discussion about some minor language adjustments, which were agreed upon by the group. The recommendations were approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 3:52pm Eastern.

Agenda Item: Adjourn

Action:

Goldschmidt motioned to adjourn the KTAC meeting. Manley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously at 3:52pm Eastern.

January 14, 2026

Attendance

Kentucky Technical Advisory Committee (KTAC) Members: Elena Diaz-Bilello, Pete Goldschmidt, Corinne Huggins-Manley, Leslie Keng, Suzanne Lane

Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Staff: Devon Avery, Ben Riley, Jessica Alexander, **Kevin O'Hair**, Megan Osborn, Helen Jones, Krista Mullins, **Jennifer Stafford**, Kevin Hill, DAvid Curd, Jennifer Larkins, Melissa Chandler, Tiffany Christopher, Mike Prater, Jessica Brumley, Shara Savage, Haley Williams, Christen Rosenberry, Amy Patterson, Susan Strange, Chris Williams

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Pearson: Tracy Gardner, Likun Hau, Jennifer Kash, Lisa Persels, Llana Williams

Center for Assessment: Kyla McClure

Facilitators: Chris Domaleski, Laura Pinsonneault, Center for Assessment

(Presenters in **bold**)

Day 2 Summary

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions

Presenter: Jennifer Stafford, Associate Commissioner, KDE, Kevin O'Hair, Academic Program Manager, KDE

Summary: O'Hair opened the meeting at 11:00am Eastern, welcoming the group and reminding participants of open meeting requirements in a virtual meeting environment.

Agenda Item: Review of Agenda

Presenter: Laura Pinsonneault, Associate, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Pinsonneault reviewed the agenda, reminding TAC members that recommendations will be documented and reviewed throughout the meeting and that members will be asked to vote to approve the recommendations at the end of the day.

Agenda Item: KDE Update

Presenter: Jennifer Stafford, Associate Commissioner, KDE

Summary: Stafford provided highlights from the 2024-25 assessment and accountability release, highlighting that overall performance is up across grade spans and for some specific indicators in the Commonwealth's accountability system. She then provided updates about the Commonwealth's college admissions exam, which is transitioning from the ACT to the SAT. Many districts are familiar with the College Board because of Advanced Placement courses and exams. Lastly, she provided an update about timelines for the KUWL-related work introduced in the KTAC meeting on January 13th. She provided more detail about how House Bill 257 may impact assessment and accountability locally and for KDE. TAC members celebrated the progress of these efforts and discussed considerations related to supporting and monitoring high quality implementation of these efforts.

Agenda Item: HumRRO Research and Reports 2025-2026

Presenter: Art Thacker, Chief Scientist, Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), Emily Dickinson, Principal Scientist, HumRRO

Summary: Thacker and Dickinson provided information about the support that HumRRO provides for KDE, noting that this presentation would focus on science-related support, informed by concerns in the field regarding overall low and/or decreasing percentage of students scoring proficient or above in science. HumRRO proposes two studies focusing on instructional and assessment alignment and on science instructional practices case studies. They explained work completed in spring and summer 2025 to inform these studies and TAC members provided suggestions about study design, potential resources to inform observational rubrics, and the importance of engaging with KDE to ensure that observations align with KDE priorities. Lastly, TAC members provided some suggestions for potential future areas of study for HumRRO.

Agenda Item: EL Growth/Progress

Presenter: Kyla McClure, Postdoctoral Fellow, The Center for Assessment, Chris Domaleski, Executive Director, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Domaleski introduced the topic broadly, then McClure described what data she has used to inform development of models for potential approaches to measuring progress in attaining English language proficiency. She shared results to date, highlighting the variables that can be altered across models, e.g., incorporating partial credit and accounting for starting grade and/or English language proficiency level. TAC members provided suggestions for additional analyses and considerations and criteria to inform selection of a model that can satisfy intended uses of the information provided by the measure.

Agenda Item: Growth in Accountability

Presenter: Chris Domaleski, Executive Director, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Domaleski introduced this topic, noting that selection of a student growth measure by KDE is on a different timeline that work underway to update the Progress in English Language Proficiency indicator discussed in the previous agenda item. He invited TAC input on criteria to prioritize in evaluating different growth model options, what models to consider, and processes to inform selection. Discussion highlighted a priority for a model that is simple and replicable. TAC members discussed the importance of focusing on usefulness and clarity for intended users and suggested that engaging with shareholders could be useful. This included a suggestion to present different options - illustrated via anonymized school profiles - to various shareholders and see how they interpret the information.

Agenda Item: TAC Priorities and Discussion
Presenter: Chris Domaleski, Executive Director, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Each TAC member was invited to share reflections on this meeting and/or suggest priorities for future meeting topics. Some of the items discussed included the value of good pre-reading materials, the benefit of bringing psychometric processes to the TAC for review and input, and the value of holding regular meetings of the TAC.

Agenda Item: Summary and Next Steps
Presenter: Chris Domaleski, Executive Director, The Center for Assessment

Summary: Domaleski invited TAC members to conduct a final review of the recommendations documented throughout this day of the meeting. Final updates were made and Domaleski invited a vote. The recommendations were approved unanimously.

Action: Manley motioned to approve the January 14, 2026 KTAC recommendations, Diaz-Bilello seconded and the recommendations were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item: Adjourn
Summary: O'Hair and Stafford thanked TAC members, presenters, and behind-the scenes support for their time and contributions. Pinsonneault invited a vote to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:38pm Eastern.

Action: Lane motioned to adjourn. Manley seconded. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 3:38pm Eastern.