



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SCHOOL CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY  
Nov. 17, 2020**

**SCAAC MEMBERS PRESENT:** Scott Bruins, Taylor Bumgardner, Sarah Burnett, Stacie Earl, Casey Gesenhues, Paula Jolley, Teresa Nicholas, Valerie O’Rear, Amy Smith, David Trimble

**SCAAC MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kelly Bradley, Justin Mitchell, William Owens

The November 17, 2020 virtual School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council (SCAAC) was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Scott Bruins. Members and guests were welcomed. A quorum of members was present.

Casey Gesenhues made a motion to approve the Sept. 15 meeting minutes as emailed and presented. David Trimble seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Scott Bruins introduced Kentucky’s new Education Commission and Deputy Commissioner and requested remarks.

Dr. Jason Glass, Kentucky Education Commissioner and Chief Learner, welcomed the members and emphasized the importance of their role as an advisory member regarding assessment and accountability. He stressed the need for rich discussions around Kentucky assessments. While KDE continues to monitor the situation with the U.S. Department of Education (USED), as of Nov. 17, USED has said not to expect waivers in the spring. “I think, at this point, anyone who tries to look into what is going to happen in March or April and says that they know, or make a prediction is way overreaching,” he said. According to Glass, the department has been working to prepare for a possible administration of content assessments. “It will look a lot like the assessments that have been given in previous years,” he said. “This is not the time to make a radical change.” KDE has looked at how to scale back the assessment due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on learning, and to make it as simple as possible while maintaining its validity and reliability, Glass said.

Dr. Glass then introduced Dr. Thomas Woods-Tucker, new Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Teaching and Learning and Chief Equity Officer. Dr. Woods-Tucker also shared with members the need to eliminate barriers in our school system. He stated, “Before achievement can be raised, barriers must be eliminated.” He is looking forward to having conversations with Kentucky’s school leaders.

## **Agenda Item: Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Committee**

**Presenters:** Robin Kinney, Associate Commissioner, and James Tackett, Director, Division of Support Services, Office of Finance and Operations, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** SCAAC members learned more about the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Subcommittee. Initially formed in 2011 by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to address health in schools, this interagency subcommittee meets regularly to emphasize the role of the community in supporting the school, the connections between health and academic achievement and the importance of evidence-based school policies and practices.

Aside from KDE, members include the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and Family Resource Youth Services Centers. “This is a true success story across the Commonwealth,” said Robin Kinney.

James Tackett said when districts consider starting similar groups at the local level, they should “start where they are. This is a huge framework and it’s not meant to be implemented all at once,” He recommends having representation from the school and district level for local committees, as well as examining any data collected within the district to make informed decisions.

**Action Taken:** Information Only

## **Agenda Item: 704 KAR 8:110 Kentucky Academic Standards for World Languages**

**Presenters:** Krista Hall, Director, Division of Program Standards; Thomas Clouse, Academic Program Manager; and Erin Chavez, Academic Program Consultant, Office of Teaching and Learning, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** KDE’s Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) provided SCAAC members with an update on the *Kentucky Academic Standards for World Languages*. The department has had world language teachers from across the state meeting for the better part of a year to work on revising the current world language standards, said Krista Hall.

Highlights from the shared document include using culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills to build relationships with people of different cultures and intentionally pushing the focus of culture to the core of the language learning experience. OTL staff will present the draft standards to the KBE at its December meeting, but will continue receiving feedback from the department’s different advisory groups and make final adjustments or create living, supporting resources for the standards as needed.

Stacie Earl inquired if American Sign Language could be included in the world language standards. Erin Chavez stated that they are embedded. Scott Bruins and Paula Jolley agreed with the recommendation and suggested that several cultures be included. Krista Hall mentioned that the specific individual courses offered was a district/school decision.

**Action Taken:** Information Only

## **Agenda Item: Amendment to 703 KAR 5:270 Kentucky's Accountability System**

**Presenters:** Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner, and Jennifer Stafford, Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** SCAAC members also heard about changes to Kentucky's accountability system resulting from [Senate Bill \(SB\) 158 \(2020\)](#).

The bill amends [KRS 158.6455](#) to create an accountability system that includes an annual differentiation of all public schools in the state using multiple measures that describe each district's overall performance, school and student demographic group.

In the new system, performance is based on a combination of academic and school quality indicators. These indicators include results of student assessments, progress toward achieving English proficiency by limited English proficiency students, quality of school climate and safety, high school graduation rates and postsecondary readiness.

At the Nov. 6 KBE meeting, board members discussed these changes to the accountability system. Multiple stakeholders, including SCAAC, will be consulted and KBE will be presented with input from the various groups.

SCAAC members agreed to the following KDE recommendations:

- A 5 x 5 color-coded table that would help combine status and change. Status is the annual school-level summary based on student performance, whereas change is the difference between one year's status score and the subsequent year's status score. The colors represented on the table would be red, orange, yellow, green and blue, with red representing schools in the bottom levels of performance on each indicator that blends status and change, and blue representing schools with the highest designation. Council members agreed there should be fewer mid-level designations on the table, and said this will allow schools to better see change - good or bad - and will reduce the likelihood of schools becoming stagnant;
- An overall performance rating for elementary, middle and high schools using a color rating system to communicate the performance of schools. Color ratings would have five performance levels including, from highest to lowest, blue, green, yellow, orange and red;
- An index method with weights on the multiple indicator measures, producing an overall school performance rating;
- Include federally allowed factors of age, degree of English language proficiency and degree of interrupted schooling of English Learners into the English Learner Progress indicator of the state's accountability system; and
- Setting the minimum number of students needed for inclusion of school indicators and to form a student subgroup. For accountability, members agreed the minimum number should be 30 students per school. As for reporting on the School Report Card, members said the minimum number should remain at 10 students per grade.

Valerie O'Rear asked about the rationale behind removing the proposed second read for a regulation. Rhonda Sims indicated that it may have been to move forward a previous change to a 60-day public comment period.

Valerie O’Rear asked why Kentucky legislators looked to a California model as a prototype. Rhonda Sims said that the legislators liked the color ratings of the California model, and it was not as number-oriented. She also asked if California had overall good performance. Rhonda said that they were very diverse.

Teresa Nicholas asked how a school could be “very low” and “increase significantly.” How would this be explained to a school board or community. Scott Bruins supported the 5x5 chart but questioned the metrics behind – need to clarify and communicate. Casey emphasized the need for reading/mathematics to be strong at the early grades in terms of weighting.

**Action Taken:** Information only

**Agenda Item: Discussion of Kentucky’s Assessment System**

**Presenters:** Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner, and Jennifer Stafford, Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** The 703 KAR 5:270 Kentucky’s Accountability System is being updated and contains many strike-throughs. Recommend that this regulation be brought back to SCAAC for a detailed discussion at a future meeting. As Dr. Glass mentioned, thoughtful discussions are being made pertaining to future assessments.

**Action Taken:** Information only

**Adjournment:** Teresa Nicholas made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Paula Jolley seconded the motion. Motion carried. The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2021.