



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY
July 20, 2021**

SCAAC MEMBERS PRESENT: Kelly Bradley, Scott Bruins, Sarah Burnett, Stacie Earl, Casey Gesenhues, Teresa Nicholas, Amy Smith, David Trimble

SCAAC MEMBERS ABSENT: Taylor Bumgardner, Polly Jolley, Justin Mitchell, Valerie O’Rear, William Owens

The July 20, 2021 virtual School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council (SCAAC) meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Chairman Scott Bruins. Members and guests were welcomed. A quorum of members was present. The open meeting was broadcast live from the State Board Room at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and recorded on the KDE Media Portal.

Casey Gesenhues made a motion to approve the March 16, 2021 meeting minutes as amended and emailed. Teresa Nicholas seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Education Commissioner Jason E. Glass welcomed members to the advisory council meeting. Dr. Glass shared ongoing work at the Department that may be of interest such as the efforts with the Kentucky Coalition and exploring options for new assessments in the future. Labs of Learning are also underway in some of the districts. He also mentioned that Dr. Thomas Woods-Tucker would be sharing important information about the equity efforts underway in Kentucky.

Agenda Item: KDE Equity Update

Presenter: Dr. Thomas Woods-Tucker, Deputy Commissioner and Chief Equity Officer, KDE

Summary of Discussion: Dr. Woods-Tucker shared the Department’s efforts regarding equity in our schools. Equity in education is fundamentally an effort to ensure that all our students have the supports they need to meet our academic standards and to reach their full potential as students, citizens and human beings. An equity focus in education recognizes that public school students come to us with a variety of backgrounds, needs, supports and experiences and that we must take those into account when we consider the education of each child.

Kelly Bradley asked about partnerships underway with higher education. Dr. Woods-Tucker mentioned GoTeachKY and Implicit Bias Modules as just a couple of the important work.

Agenda Item: Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education Overview

Presenter: Karen Dodd, Chief Performance Officer, Strategic Planning and Research, KDE

Summary of Discussion: SCAAC members also were provided with an overview of the work of the Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education (KCAE), which is part of a project that began last fall when Education Commissioner Jason E. Glass joined the department. The KCAE is a part of a larger advancing education project, explained KDE Chief Performance Officer Karen Dodd. The project utilizes effective listening techniques and allows KDE to co-create tools and resources with diverse stakeholders to meet the needs of students, families, educators and community leaders by changing how education is delivered in the Commonwealth.

Last October, KDE opened a community survey to gather ideas and thoughts from school officials, educators and other partners across the state to help guide strategy on what the future of education should look like in Kentucky.

The survey asked what KDE, districts and educators should:

- **KEEP Doing:** Things we value, that bring us meaning and pride, the “right” work.
- **STOP Doing:** Things that are not of value, that don’t have meaning or purpose, or are antithetical to our values as a Commonwealth.
- **START Doing:** Things we should aspire toward, work to put in place, build capacity around.

“We got some good input on that,” Dodd said. “However, because it was in the fall of 2020, you might imagine, it was very heavily based on how teaching and learning were going during the pandemic.” Although the department developed themes to work with, Dodd said staff felt the need to seek more feedback, which led to the development of the virtual Commissioner’s Listening Tour and empathy interviews. In all, KDE hosted 11 stops throughout the state, including one completely in Spanish. More than 1,000 individuals participated and provided input that would help guide the department’s work.

David Trimble and Scott Bruins both mentioned the good work being done as a result of the Listening Tours and empathy interviews.

A group of 62 Kentuckians representing various facets of the state’s education community then accepted an invitation to serve on the KCAE to develop a report that details the current state of education and help create a vision for public education in the Commonwealth. “The ultimate goal will be a vision document that will be released this fall that will point toward a future direction for education in the Commonwealth that is built on the voices and aspirations of Kentuckians,” Glass said.

Members of the coalition recently wrapped up the first phase of their work and have begun developing a description of the future state of education and will produce a pair of reports summarizing their findings in the fall at the Kentucky Education Summit scheduled for Nov. 1-2 in Louisville. The summit will include a report on student mental health from KDE’s Commissioner’s Student Advisory Council, with data being compiled from upcoming student-led mental health roundtables.

Agenda Item: Assessment and Accountability Updates

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

Summary of Discussion: The final administration of the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) assessment came last spring, members were told. Since all content areas have been developed for new *Kentucky Academic Standards* (KAS), the end-of-year assessments will now be referred to as the Kentucky Summative Assessment, said Associate Commissioner Rhonda Sims of KDE's Office of Assessment and Accountability.

School and district staff made extraordinary efforts in administering 2020-2021 assessments, Jennifer Stafford said. Instead of canceling the statewide assessment for the 2020-2021 school year, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) advised states to pursue other assessment flexibilities, including administering a shortened version of the statewide assessment.

KDE's spring 2021 testing plan included flexible test windows, a reduction in the time for assessment administration, where possible, and the opportunity to bring in small groups of full-time virtual students for an in-person assessment.

The state offered seven total ACT administrations, as well as a shortened state assessment that was based on previously administered test items. The shortened assessment took approximately 60 minutes to complete and still measured the KAS, Stafford explained.

Not only was the K-PREP scaled-down, but it also was offered online for the first time. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, KDE conducted successful online field tests that assessed content area standards. Grades 3-8 and grade 10 tested in both reading and mathematics. Grades 5, 8 and 11 were field-tested in editing and mechanics, and on-demand writing.

“We took those learnings from the online administration and applied those to spring 2021 and had a successful administration,” Stafford said. “... We got a lot of positive feedback from both our test administrators as well as the students.”

Kelly Bradley asked what and how was the feedback received from the assessments delivered. Jennifer Stafford mentioned that virtual monitoring visits occurred during the assessments. Schools staff were eager to share the hard effort that took place. Kelly Bradley recommended a summary report of this be made available.

Last spring, KDE also had a successful social studies field test for grades 5, 8 and 11, with nearly 54,000 students participating from 116 of Kentucky's 171 public school districts.

Students who required a paper test still had that accommodation for all testing, Stafford said.

While assessments still occurred, USED offered states flexibility for accountability and for identifying schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) based on data from the 2020-2021 school year. Schools that previously were identified as either TSI, ATSI or CSI were required to remain under those statuses, with KDE continuing to provide technical assistance and support.

As for public reporting, USED maintained the requirement that all data normally required on state and local School Report Cards, including the information and data on spring 2021 assessments, continue to be reported. The information will include both participation and

performance results from the 2021 assessments, Stafford said. “We generally get to about 98% of our (student) population tested on a regular basis,” she said. “We did not meet that threshold this year. It’s going to be important to include the participation of our students within state reporting and within our local reporting when we’re talking about performance results.”

Other items that will be in the publicly reported data include graduation rate and results of the first Quality of School Climate and Safety survey for students.

All publicly reported data will be released on the School Report Card later this fall.

Looking ahead to the 2021-2022 school year, Stafford said she does not expect to see waivers from USED and, “fully anticipates having both assessments and accountability.”

Rhonda Sims added KDE’s Office of Assessment and Accountability staff are working to see if the next iteration of the Kentucky Summative Assessment can be shorter than normal years, similar to the K-PREP that students took last spring. “If we can get what we need and take less time, everyone will be excited about that,” she said.

Council members commended KDE staff for their work around assessments and accountability throughout the pandemic. Members also urged the department to continue soliciting feedback from the state’s education community. “Your group listened, and I think that’s blatantly obvious,” said Teresa Nicholas, SCAAC member and Pulaski County director of curriculum, instruction, assessment and technology. “... We know that you listen because of changes that come out from that, but also of all the committees you have your hands in or groups that you ask to respond.”

Pikeville Independent Superintendent David Trimble said no one was excited about adding assessments to last school year, but because of the partnerships built with districts, they never lost trust in the department. “(KDE) always tries to communicate with us and you have the best of intentions of using assessment for what it’s for, and that’s to determine where we are and where we’re going next,” he said.

Teresa Nicholas asked if everything would be back on a normal schedule, i.e., will there be one or two alternate assessment testing windows? Jennifer Stafford responded that there will be two windows, but the actual testing dates have not been set.

Teresa Nicholas also asked about the Speech-to-Text Pilot available this fall. Has any consideration been given for similar tools for general education students? She suggested that students might respond better orally when being assessed as opposed to writing. Rhonda Sims welcomed the suggestion but would need to inquire about this federally and legally.

Kelly Bradley about the department’s efforts with school districts use of a supplemental year as a result of the pandemic. She recommended that this be tracked in some manner. Rhonda Sims acknowledged that the department was keeping abreast of this.

David Trimble made a motion to adjourn the July 20 SCAAC meeting. Casey Gesenhues seconded the motion. The next SCAAC meeting is scheduled for Sept. 21.