



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY
March 16, 2021**

SCAAC MEMBERS PRESENT: Kelly Bradley, Scott Bruins, Taylor Bumgardner, Stacie Earl, Casey Gesenhues, Polly Jolley, Teresa Nicholas, Valerie O’Rear, Amy Smith, David Trimble

SCAAC MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Burnett, Justin Mitchell, William Owens

The March 16, 2021 virtual School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council (SCAAC) meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairman Scott Bruins. Members and guests were welcomed. A quorum of members was present.

Teresa Nicholas made a motion to approve the Jan. 19 meeting minutes as emailed and presented. David Trimble seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Education Commissioner Jason E. Glass also welcomed members to the advisory council meeting and stressed the importance of feedback received from advisory groups, such as SCAAC, to the overall assessment and accountability process. He shared information concerning recent communications from the United States Department of Education (USED). The USED is committed to doing everything in their power to support Kentucky students, educators and schools. He also acknowledged that other states have postponed assessments until the fall of 2021. While he said he understands the thought process behind these decisions, he believes waiting for the fall is not necessary for the data to be used for instructional purposes.

“Let’s just go ahead, get it done and get the results back and see how those can be used,” said Commissioner Glass, adding that KDE has looked into the possibility of schools substituting local formative assessments for the state assessment. “I’m not optimistic about that, so we’re going to stay the course for now.”

Agenda Item: Amendment to 703 KAR 5:240, Accountability Administrative Procedures and Guidelines

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

Summary of Discussion: Rhonda Sims echoed comments from Commissioner Glass and shared that on Feb. 22, the USED announced it would require states to administer a statewide

assessment for the 2020-2021 school year. (Copy of letter shared in Member Folder). The decision came after many states had requested a waiver of the testing requirement due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead of canceling the test, USED advised states to pursue other assessment flexibilities, including administering a shortened version of the statewide assessment and offering flexible testing windows, both of which KDE prepared for in anticipation of the USED decision.

On Feb. 15, a week before the USED decision, KDE released two COVID-19 guidance documents to assist districts in preparing to administer spring testing, "[COVID-19 Participation in Spring 2021 Kentucky State Testing](#)" and "[Kentucky Summative Assessment Administration Guidance 2020-2021 School Year](#)." Both have been updated to include the most recent federal guidance.

Rhonda Sims shared that the Accountability Administrative Procedures and Guidelines regulation (703 KAR 5:240) is undergoing some minor revisions, language clean up and overall readability. Also, within the regulation, an amendment is being proposed, with approval needed from the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). In Section 8, Student Participation in State Assessments, the phrase "extraordinary circumstances" will be stricken from the language and will read, Exceptions for testing shall be made for medical-exempted students. The amendment comes as a result of a federal audit recommendation. Scott Bruins asked about the process in which schools requested an extraordinary circumstance non-participation. Teresa Nicholas mentioned that the school makes the request for a student to be exempt from testing, due to a medical or extraordinary circumstance. With the removal of extraordinary circumstances, there will be more of an emphasis placed on a medical exemption request. The medical non-participation (exemption) has been expanded to include social, emotional and mental conditions as well as physical, as possible reasons for students to not participate in state assessments.

Casey Gesenhues made a motion that SCAAC support the amendment to 703 KAR 5:240 that strikes "extraordinary circumstances" from the regulation as a type of exemption. The medical exemption will remain and be expanded to fit more of the exemptions that previously would have been identified as an extraordinary circumstance. Teresa Nicholas seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Agenda Item: Amendment to 703 KAR 5:070, Inclusion of Special Populations in the State-Required Assessment and Accountability Programs

Presenters: Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner, Officer of Assessment and Accountability; Kelly Foster, Associate Commissioner, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support; and Gretta Hylton, Associate Commissioner, Office of Special Education and Early Learning, KDE

Summary of Discussion: Like the previous topic, the Inclusion of Special Populations in the State-Required Assessment and Accountability Programs regulation (703 KAR 5:070) is undergoing several minor revisions to make the language in the regulation more accurate and concise. Each section of the regulation was summarized as to the proposed amendments needed for accuracy and conciseness. A copy of the complete list of changes in the Summary of Changes Incorporated by Reference 703 KAR 5:070 was shared in the Member Folder. Some examples include:

- Removed language, “being faded or reduced as the student gains/demonstrates increased skill and confidence and moves toward greater independence.” The language was deleted because not all students will be able to move toward greater independence due to the nature of the disability. Therefore, not all accommodations can be faded.
- Removed language regarding modifications. Modifications not being allowed on state testing can be stressed during trainings and incorporated into test administration manuals and doesn’t need to be included in regulation.
- Removed outdated language and inserted new language that a student must possess a significant cognitive disability to participate in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment. Each student’s Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) must determine if the student meets participation guidelines for the Kentucky Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS).
- Renamed “students with Limited English Proficiency” to “English Language Learner Students.”
- Added language that each school shall assess all English Language Learner students enrolled during the testing window as identified in the state student information system.
- Added language that the most recent version of the student’s IEP, 504 plan or PSP should be reviewed prior to the state-required content assessment to ensure student needs are met.
- Removed paraphrasing as a testing accommodation. Paraphrasing may be used on test directions but not on the test. This will be emphasized in test administration manuals and trainings but does not need to be included in the regulation.
- Specifically stated that a student’s IEP must be reviewed and revised annually.

The amendment and revisions are the culmination of cross-agency work to clean up the regulation’s language and increase the overall readability, as well as to ensure compliance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Teresa Nicholas made a motion that SCAAC support the amendments and recommendations proposed in 703 KAR 5:070 as it moves forward to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) for consideration. David Trimble seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Agenda Item: Assessment and Accountability Updates

Presenters: Kelly Foster, Associate Commissioner, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support; Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner, and Jennifer Stafford, Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability, KDE

Summary of Discussion: While assessments still will occur, the USED offered 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.

Kelly Foster said the department hopes to submit a waiver template to USED within the next week that will grant flexibility in identifying ATSI and CSI schools. “In that waiver template, we are requesting that CSI schools and ATSI schools not be identified until the fall of 2022,” said Foster.

TSI schools, on the other hand, will require an additional waiver. Kentucky only labels TSI schools when it has three consecutive years of testing data. In the spring of 2020, the

state [received a waiver from federal testing and accountability requirements](#), which also waived the requirements for the identifying of federal classifications – including TSI – in the fall of 2020.

Kentucky cannot identify schools for TSI status in the fall of 2022 because it will not have three consecutive years of accountability data. The USED has assured us that we would be able to ask for additional time through another waiver process once we get through sending in the one next week.

While the department is excited for the flexibilities Kentucky has received, KDE would have liked to have seen more regarding public reporting, said Jennifer Stafford. The USED has maintained that it will require the public reporting of all data normally required on state and local School Report Cards, including the information and data on spring 2021 assessments. “We will have to report the students who are assessed this year ... specifically in two areas: performance and participation,” explained Stafford.

SCAAC Chair Nathan Bruins, who is a social studies teacher at Great Crossing High School (Scott County), said that around 20% of his school’s student population has remained in a virtual setting. Based on surveys KDE has sent to schools, Stafford said there are other schools in the Commonwealth where that percentage of virtual students could be as high as 70%.

Kelly Bradley and Nathan Bruins noted concerns about inequity. They recommended thorough documentation be made as to how the data will be used and shared.

Stafford said KDE will make a concerted effort to caution those who are examining the data about which student populations tested and which did not so that the data is not misinterpreted.

Agenda Item: Integrating Social, Emotional and Academic Development (SEAD) within the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Mathematics

Presenters: Erin Chavez and Maggie Doyle, Academic Program Consultants, Division of Program Standards, Office of Teaching and Learning, KDE

Summary of Discussion: Maggie Doyle and Erin Chavez met with the council to discuss a new resource for mathematics teachers in Kentucky. The tool, “[Integrating Social, Emotional and Academic Development \(SEAD\) within the Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for Mathematics](#),” is designed for educators to use when planning mathematics instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

For each grade level, the resource contains:

- Connections between the five social and emotional competencies established by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning and the expectations set forth within the *KAS for Mathematics*, specifically the Standards for Mathematical Practices;
- Design considerations and specific examples of what integrating social, emotional and academic development might look like within each specific grade level;
- Questions to empower teachers to reflect on ways to integrate social, emotional and academic development within effective mathematics instruction; and

- Questions teachers can use with students to encourage the development of social and emotional competencies while also engaging students with the Standards for Mathematical Practices.

Prior to the meeting, all feedback received on the resource was overwhelmingly positive, Doyle said. It has been reviewed by numerous national partners and has received positive feedback from multiple educators across Kentucky and other states, including more than 90 Kentucky principals.

When presenting the tool to educators, Pikeville Independent Superintendent David Trimble said it is important for school and district administrators to specify that this resource is not a mandate or in law, but rather professional learning guidance involving social, emotional and academic development.

“What we say in our schools’ matters,” he said. “If it is felt as some obligation, it won’t work. ... I see this as a way that we can approach things that are really important and just have a nice guide to have that conversation.”

Doyle said the department hopes to provide resources to support relationships and community building in other content areas as a part of the fall professional learning series within the Office of Teaching and Learning.

Adjournment: Kelly Bradley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Paula Jolley seconded the motion. Motion carried. The next meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2021.