



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SCHOOL CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COUNCIL  
MEETING SUMMARY  
Sept. 21, 2021**

**SCAAC MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kelly Bradley, Scott Bruins, Taylor Bumgardner, Casey Gesenhues, Paula Jolley, Teresa Nicholas, Amy Smith, David Trimble

**SCAAC MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sarah Burnett, Stacie Earl, Taylor Bumgardner, Justin Mitchell, Valerie O’Rear, William Owens

The Sept. 21, 2021 virtual School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council (SCAAC) meeting was called to order at 9 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.

All materials available in Google Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SyPBcoYC1bWfTmHIZw7tqjleH68gRV3p?usp=sharing>

David Trimble made a motion to approve the July 20, 2021 meeting minutes. Casey Gesenhues seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item: Commissioner’s Greetings**

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. The Department recently released a new guidance document to support schools and districts as they implement Senate Bill 1 (SB1), which was passed during the General Assembly’s recent special session.

Dr. Glass stated that SB1 provides supports and flexibility for schools as they seek to provide the best education possible for Kentucky’s students amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance document provides important updates to help schools and districts implement the legislation. SB1 requires the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) to create a model “Test to Stay” policy. Test to stay policies allow students to circumvent quarantine requirements through daily COVID-19 screenings.

In the legislation, the General Assembly also granted districts the ability to temporarily assign individual schools, grades, classrooms or student groups to temporary remote instruction while the rest of the school or district keeps with in-person learning. Districts have up to 20 days to use for temporary remote instruction until Dec. 31.

## **Agenda Item: Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

Teresa Nicholas made a motion to re-elect Scott Bruins chairman of the School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council (SCAAC) for the 2021-2022 term, and Casey Gesenhues, vice chairman for the same term. Taylor Bumgardner seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **Agenda Item: Advancing Education Overview**

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

**Summary of Discussion:** SCAAC members were provided with an overview of the work of the Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education who has recently developed a report on the future state of education. The purpose of this work is to utilize effective listening techniques and co-create tools and resources with diverse stakeholder for the purpose of meeting the needs of students, families, educators and community leaders by changing how we educate in Kentucky. The coalition's report will be released at the Kentucky Education Summit, scheduled for Nov. 1-2 in Louisville.

Multiple components of this work include:

- ▶ Keep, Stop, Start Survey
- ▶ Commissioner's Listening Tour
- ▶ Courageous Conversations
- ▶ Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education
- ▶ Local Laboratories of Learning (L3)
- ▶ Student Mental Health Forums
- ▶ Kentucky Future of Education Summit

The Kentucky Education Summit will also include a session on student mental health from Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman and KDE's Commissioner's Student Advisory Council, with data being compiled from ongoing student-led mental health forums.

The forums – being held in each of the eight different educational cooperative regions – include closed-session and peer-facilitated roundtables, where attendees can confidentially share stories about what challenges they are experiencing, resources that are needed and provide recommendations.

## **Agenda Item: KDE Equity Toolkit Update**

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

**Summary of Discussion:** Dr. Woods-Tucker shared the Department's efforts in creating awareness and implementing equity in Kentucky public schools. Woods-Tucker provided some common language with new DEI initiatives and next steps:

- Diversity -- Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, country of origin, differing abilities, as well as cultural, political, religious or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning.
- Equity – Equity is not about demonizing people because of their race or indoctrinating students. “Equity in education is fundamentally an effort to ensure that all of 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.” (Kentucky Commissioner of Education Jason E. Glass, Ed.D.).

- Inclusion -- The intentional act of creating an environment that fosters mutually respectful relationships in which each student, regardless of intellectual, social, cultural and geographic background, is welcomed, supported and valued as fully participating members of society.

### **Agenda Item: ACT Online**

**Presenters:** Helen Jones, Program Manager, and Shara Savage, Program Consultant, Division of Assessment and Accountability Support, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** Helen Jones gave SCAAC members the opportunity to provide feedback on the transition from paper to online state assessments that occurred during the previous school year.

Jones said with online testing, students could start and complete many assessments in a single day. On May 11 alone, nearly 180,000 assessments were started statewide, with over 1 million online Kentucky Summative Assessments (KSA) completed during the spring of 2021.

“It actually went well for us,” Teresa Nicholas said about Pulaski County’s transition to online testing. “Because of the pandemic, we became a 1:1 district, so we had a Chromebook for every student. ... Because we were 1:1, it actually went very smoothly. We did not encounter any major issues with testing.” She also added that the expanded testing window was key in order to accommodate the different technology situations of the districts -- from number of devices to the bandwidth available to support concurrent online sessions.

Scott Bruins, a social studies teacher at Great Crossing High School (Scott County), said his district was not 1:1 and that led to some constraints, though overall, online testing was not an issue. “We just had to be a little bit strategic in how we scheduled everybody and how we balanced it with daily instruction.”

Kelly Bradley noted that online testing does not address equity concerns. It increases the gap of scores and creates a bigger divide between the haves and the have nots.

Jennifer Stafford indicated that the Department would be very thoughtful as it moves to the online world. The Department’s Student Advisory Council was very supportive of online testing – acknowledging that often younger students were more comfortable with online testing than older students and educators.

Kelly Bradley further noted that it would be critical to educate all students on the use of the online tools and resources.

David Trimble noted that students are very comfortable with online testing – the comfort level of educators is sometimes a little less.

Casey Gesenhues agreed that there are differences across the state that need to be considered when phasing in online testing. Her district has a higher socioeconomic status whereas others have a large poverty level.

## **Agenda Item: Assessment and Accountability Updates**

**Presenters:** Dr. Jennifer Stafford, Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability, KDE

**Summary of Discussion:** Through a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education, 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*.

"A shortened form and less testing time were very much appreciated by staff and students," said Teresa Nicholas.

Not only was the KSA 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.

The department will release school Report Card data publicly on Sept. 29. The information will include both participation and performance results from the 2021 assessments.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students faced learning disruptions, changes in the opportunities to learn, lower participation rates and a shortened assessment in 2021. Because of these challenges, direct comparisons of assessment data from prior years should not be made, Stafford advised.

"Our schools and districts made an extraordinary effort just to get students tested," she said. 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.

Paula Jolley made a motion to adjourn the Sept. 21 SCAAC meeting. David Trimble seconded the motion. The next SCAAC meeting is scheduled for Nov.16.