

**SUMMARY MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AT NEXT MEETING in
2026-2027 school year.**



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDE) School Counselor Advisory Council Summary

FEBRUARY 11, 2026

ATTENDANCE: Completed using Feb. 11, 2026, spreadsheet

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alecia Bush, Strauzie Collins, Fatemia Fuson, Suzanne Gibbs, Mary Lewis, Juli Link, Karla McCarty, Kari McGrath, Heather Moore, Cordia Pickrell, Manijeh Reynolds, Jalina Wheeler, Chloe Wilcher, Kristyn Williamson

SUMMARY: Minutes from the meeting on Nov. 11, 2025, were approved by 1. John Hargis and 2. Carl Schoensiegal

Agenda Item: Welcome and KDE Greetings

Presenters: Robbie Fletcher, Ph.D., Commissioner of Education, Kentucky Department of Education, Thomas Tucker, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Fletcher thanked school counselors for their service on this council. He discussed a few house bills that pertain to the work of school counselors. He mentioned that Rep. Vanessa Grossl has sponsored a bill that gives a financial bump to school psychologists and social workers who have the national certification.

- House Bill (HB) 307 - concerns about the list of students that schools send to CPE will have social security numbers attached.
- HB 257 - Fletcher is excited about this bill because it will allow the KDE to incentivize local accountability. This bill will also remove the on demand writing component as a required summative assessment.

Tucker thanked school counselors for the work that they do, as he had a school counselor that helped change the trajectory of his life.

Feedback:

A council member asked for a list and summary of the bills discussed.

Agenda Item: Chronic Absenteeism

Presenter: Ashley Gates, Education Program Consultant, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Gates discussed chronic absenteeism including the definition, the four categories of why students are chronically absent, how it relates to school connectedness, and the You Belong campaign. The Persistence to Graduation team is very passionate and eager to partner with districts and education cooperatives to provide technical assistance and support.

Agenda Item: Multilingual Learners

Presenter: Will Spalding, Multilingual Learner Specialist, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Spalding shared that in Kentucky, multilingual learners represent 13% of the total student enrollment K-12. Spalding discussed the geographic locations of these students, ways that schools and districts can improve our support for multilingual learners, and barriers that we experience. He works with multiple departments within the KDE to improve outcomes for these learners.

Agenda Item: School Counselor Advisory Feedback

Presenter: Michelle Sircy, Ed.D, Program Coordinator of Comprehensive School Counseling, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Sircy thanked each member of the council for their service on this advisory council. The Feb. 11 meeting is the last meeting of each member's three-year term. Sircy asked that we share the application for the advisory council with school counselors who are vocal and want to be involved.

Adjournment and Next Meeting: The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting will be in the fall of the 2026-2027 school year.