

SUMMARY MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AT NOVEMBER MEETING



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Family Partnership Council

SUMMARY

Sept. 10, 2025

ATTENDANCE: Marsha Vanhook, Amy Nickerson, Jeremy Cole, Leah Marcum, Rhonda Logsdon, Stephanie Barker, Tara Truckor.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ashley Bruce, Autumn Neagle, Britney Faulkner, Laura Beard, Liz Delaney, Melissa Goins.

Agenda Item: Kentucky Department of Education Accountability Model Updates

Presenter: Robbie Fletcher, Ed.D., Commissioner of Education, Kentucky Department of Education

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher provided an update on the proposed Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) accountability model, which balances federal requirements with local accountability. The model requires districts to define success by seeking input from parents, students, teachers and local officials, and mandates ongoing community engagement. Examples from Logan and Bullitt Counties illustrated efforts to build trust through transparency. The model, developed through extensive stakeholder input, will be shared during the January legislative session. Karen Dodd and Susan Strange, both with KDE's Office of the Commissioner, explained how KDE's strategic plan, United We Learn, aligns with the model and emphasized the council's important role in shaping statewide initiatives.

Agenda Item: 2024-2029 Strategic Plan - United We Learn Update

Presenters: Karen Dodd, Chief Performance Officer, Office of the Commissioner of Education, Kentucky Department of Education

Susan Strange, Strategic Plan Program Manager, Strategic Planning and Research, Office of the Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Dodd and Strange outlined the strategic plan's core priorities: reducing chronic absenteeism, improving early literacy and numeracy and expanding educator recruitment. They noted that progress will be tracked by using defined metrics and encouraged advisory council members to actively support and help shape these initiatives.

Agenda Item: Opportunities for Apprenticeships and Other Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs and Pathways

Presenters: Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, Office of Career and Technical Education, Kentucky Department of Education

Beth Hargis provided an overview of the expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE), apprenticeships and work-based learning in Kentucky. She highlighted the integration of academic and technical education through pathways that start with career exploration in middle school and continue through post-secondary education. These pathways offer students technical and employability skills, as well as dual credit opportunities. Hargis also described the state's emphasis on work-based learning, including cooperative education, youth apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships. She noted the TRACK pre-apprenticeship program leads to industry certifications and post-secondary credit, and that Kentucky has received national recognition for its apprenticeship model.

Agenda Item: Supporting Students with Disabilities in Career and Technical Education

Presenters: Bill Bates, Exceptional Child Education Consultant, Transition Education Unit, Office of Special Education and Early Childhood Education, Kentucky Department of Education
Tracy Parks, Coaching Coordinator, Transition Education Unit, Office of Special Education and Early Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Bill Bates and Tracy Parks, along with Hargis, discussed the collaboration between the Office of Special Education and Early Learning and the Office of Career and Technical Education to improve CTE access and post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities. They noted that while many students enroll in CTE, few reach concentrator status, prompting a focus on research, intentional scheduling and targeted support. Strategies include joint professional development for teachers, a comprehensive guidance document for families and Individual Education Program (IEP) teams, and the use of tools such as PISA and the Transition 360 initiative to support positive post-school outcomes.

Agenda Item: Attendance Matters

Presenters: Judi Vanderhaar, Ph.D., Educational Program Consultant, Division of Student Success, Kentucky Department of Education
Lisa Henry, Educational Program Consultant, Division of Student Success, Kentucky Department of Education

Judy Vanderhaar and Lisa Henry reported that chronic absenteeism increased from 17% in 2018 to 30% in 2023, with a goal to reduce this rate by half. Henry introduced the "You Belong" attendance campaign, which uses billboards and social media for outreach. Council members suggested expanding to platforms such as TikTok, offering attendance incentives, and

developing resources to address barriers such as mental health. Henry confirmed that resources are available and welcomed ongoing feedback for further support.

Agenda Item: An Update to the Family Partnership Council's Recommendations to the Kentucky Department of Education (Parent and Family Connection Hub)

Presenters: Marsha VanHook, Full-Service Community Schools Manager and Council Chair, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Marsha Vanhook introduced the new Parent and Family Connection Hub, a one-stop digital resource designed to centralize parent-facing information. Developed in response to council recommendations, the Hub organizes resources into key categories like getting involved, academic support, diverse needs and wellness, while also linking to guides and legislative updates. Council member feedback focused on usability, with suggestions like breaking up text-heavy pages into clearer subpages to make first-time navigation more intuitive. Vanhook confirmed that the team plans to continue expanding the Parent Family and Connection Hub, notably by adding more parent-focused CTE resources, with the official launch targeted for November.

Next Meetings:

Nov. 12, 2025

Mar. 18, 2026

May 20, 2026

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