



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PRINCIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
SUMMARY

DECEMBER 14, 2023

**Members Present:** Nick Brooks, Brian Eerenberg, Jarrod Hankins, Sara Kise, Amy Rhodes

**Members Absent:** Wayne Ackerman, Erika Bowles, Ashley Burd, Anne Cox, Beth Davidson, Kevin Garner, Carla Kolodey, Ann-Maire Landry, Robert Lightning, Catrina McDermott, Matt Shafer, Peggy Sinclair-Morris, Sarah Woodford

**Agenda Item: Welcome**

**Presenter:** Robin Fields Kinney, Interim Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Kinney provided an update on the search process for Kentucky's new Commissioner of Education. The goal is to have a new commissioner in place by July 1, 2024. Kinney highlighted some of the priority work that KDE is especially focused on during this time of transition. Time was provided for questions from members of the group.

**Agenda Item: Approve Agenda**

**Presenter:** Brian Eerenberg, Principal Advisory Council (PrAC), Chairperson, Boyd County Schools

**Summary of Discussion:** Nick Brooks made a motion to approve the agenda. Amy Rhodes made a second. Members used the chat to approve.

**Agenda Item: Approve Summary from Last Meeting**

**Presenter:** Brian Eerenberg, Principal Advisory Council (PrAC), Chairperson, Boyd County Schools

**Summary of Discussion:** Sara Kise made a motion to approve the summary minutes from the September 2023 meeting. Nick Brooks made a second. Members used the chat to approve.

**Agenda Item: The Importance of High-Quality Instructional Resources**

**Presenter:** Alison Gregory, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Gregory reviewed some of the requirements of Senate Bill 9 (known as the Read to Succeed Act). Specifically, time was spent exploring the tools available at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to support schools in adopting high-quality instructional resources. Participants were encouraged to implement supports to equip teachers to provide high quality instruction that leads to positive student outcomes. The discussion centered on the value of investing time and energy on strengthening Tier 1 instruction. Multiple free, professional support provided by the KDE to support improved literacy practices were also shared with the group.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item: Chronic Absenteeism**

**Presenter:** Florence Chang and Christina Watford, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Chang, a program consultant in the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, gave an overview of [chronic absenteeism](#) across the state.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as when a student misses 10% more of his or her enrolled academic year, which equates to missing a combined total of 17 days of instructional time if the school year is 170 days.

"Just a quick reminder, it's not the same as truancy," said Chang. "It includes both excused and unexcused absences such as suspensions, illnesses, as well as things just like missing school for doctor's appointments and getting to school late."

Chang said the department started to see an increase in chronic absenteeism before the pandemic and believes it exacerbated the issue.

"In the 2016-2017 school year, we saw 17% of students in the state were chronically absent," she said. "The most recent data from this past year shows it's gone up to 30%."

Christina Watford, a program consultant in KDE's Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, shared strategies to address some of the factors impacting attendance, such as different barriers in students' lives, disengagement and misconceptions.

"First, we need to start by looking at how we foster a welcoming and supportive culture for students and for adults using positive and nurturing language that emphasizes the well-being of everyone in the school, not only for students, but include our adults as well," said Watford.

Watford provided additional ideas to help decrease absenteeism, such as ensuring academically engaging and challenging environments, creating an attendance campaign, tracking attendance and using data, and engaging with families and communities.

"One thing that we can probably all agree on is that chronic absenteeism requires a comprehensive approach and that all of the staff members in your schools have to contribute toward that approach," said Watford.

**Feedback:** Members requested the slides that were used so they could review.

**Agenda Item: IMPACT KY Survey Data**

**Presenter:** Elly Gilbert, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** The contractor of the IMPACT KY Survey, Panorama, is planning professional development for the spring to help school leaders better utilize the data that is embedded in the Impact KY Survey. Gilbert urged PrAC members to share what they would like to see in the professional development that will be offered. The goal is to design the learning around the most pertinent needs of school leaders. Gilbert encouraged members to share their suggestions during the meeting or after the meeting.

**Feedback:** A member requested clarification on when the survey data would be released.

**Agenda Item: Principal EdCamp**

**Presenter:** Emily Satterly, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Principal EdCamp registration information was shared with the group by Principal Partnership Project (P3) member Emily Satterly. PrAC members were encouraged to register and facilitate a session. Details regarding the keynote speakers and logistics were also provided.

**Feedback:** None.

**Agenda Item: Assessment and Accountability: District Spotlight**

**Presenter:** Kristina Thomas, Director of Accountability and Elementary Education, Laurel County Schools

**Summary of Discussion:** Upon the request from PrAC members, Thomas, from Laurel County Schools, shared an overview of assessment and accountability initiatives within the district. As state data was recently released, PrAC members were interested in learning how districts dissect the data and then enact next steps. Thomas explained the importance of utilizing standards mastery assessments/diagnostic assessments to drive school wide goal setting, individual support plans, and teacher professional development/curriculum needs.

**Feedback:** PrAC members had several specific questions at the end of the district presentation. Sara Kise inquired about the structure that was utilized for the time to complete the work that was described by Thomas. Chair Eerenberg asked if the middle and high schools in the district

followed the same process as the elementary school. Nick Brooks asked for additional details regarding the correlation study.

**Agenda Item: Mental Health Resources**

**Presenter:** Lori DeHart, Educational Consultant, Kentucky Educational Development Corporation

**Summary of Discussion:** DeHart, an educational consultant for the Kentucky Educational Development Corporation, spoke with the members of the council about mental health concerns with students.

“About 50% of all cases of mental illness begin at a very young age, around the age of 14, and then 75% by the age of 24,” said DeHart. “So that's pretty scary within itself. And we know that mental health concerns occur much earlier as well in our students.”

DeHart asked the principals to express some of their concerns when it comes to their students and how their mental health has impacted behavioral issues.

“I would say one of the big issues we're seeing is students being able to regulate themselves when things don't go well,” said Wolfe County Middle School Principal Nick Brooks. “What used to be a minor incident that we could work through blows up much quicker than what I was seeing in the past.”

DeHart said this concern is one the of biggest issues she is hearing from schools across Kentucky.

“Our students lack those skills (to regulate their emotions),” said DeHart. “And even if they have the skill, they don't know what to do.”

“First of all, we have to make sure that our students understand emotions. Identifying emotions and other people's emotions. Then, can they identify those emotions in themselves? They're not going to be able to self-regulate without having that knowledge.”.

DeHart said it's important to break things down for students and teach them the skills they are missing to help them understand their emotions and mental health.

“We have to teach intently the skill of perspective, and if they don't understand, they can't put themselves in someone else's shoes. Then it's really hard for them to empathize with anyone,” said DeHart. “Those are just the little pieces of it.”

**Agenda Item: School Report Card Survey**

**Presenter:** Stacy Noah, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Noah shared that a new vendor is being selected for the School Report Card. PrAC members were encouraged to provide feedback about what principals want to see incorporated in the upcoming design specifications of the School Report Card.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** PSEL Possible Examples

**Presenter:** Stacy Noah, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** PrAC members were surveyed regarding the best way to complete the design of updated Possible Examples for the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). Members agreed to think about the task and timeframe and make suggestions regarding the next steps for completion.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Adjournment

**Presenter:** Brian Eerenberg, PrAC Chairperson, Ponderosa Elementary School, Boyd County

**Summary of Discussion:** Nick Brooks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jarrod Hankins made a second motion to adjourn. Members noted agreement in the chat.