



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDE)
PRINCIPALS' ADVISORY COUNCIL (PrAC)
SUMMARY**

JUNE 9, 2026

ATTENDANCE: Liz Kirk, Geco Ross, Sarah Williams, Amanda Fields, Jaziel Guerra, Jeremy Kidd, Jimica Howard, Ginger Estes, Josh Henderson, Nikki Gearheart, Beth St. Bernard, Tim Cline, Faneshia Jones, Amanda Nokes, Hubert Schroer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Peggy Sinclair-Morris, Heather Roaden, James Hood, Jeff Blythe, Martina Skidmore, Bonnie Spears

SUMMARY:

Agenda Item: Welcome

Presenter: Meredith Brewer, Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Brewer discussed the implementation of Senate Bill 4, noting that the legislation will have a significant impact on education across Kentucky. The Kentucky Department of Education is actively engaged in implementation efforts to support the success of this four-year initiative. As part of this work, the department has established a new director position to oversee program content and coordinate stakeholder engagement opportunities focused on curriculum design and support structures. Brewer encouraged members to visit the department's website for additional information, including the position posting.

Additionally, Brewer shared information about an administrator survey requested by educator preparation partners. The survey seeks feedback regarding how effectively educator preparation programs are preparing new teachers for the profession. She encouraged principals to reflect on the performance and readiness of recently hired teachers and provide feedback specific to the educator preparation programs they attended. The survey will remain open through July.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Roll Call of Members

Presenter: Geco Ross, PrAC Chairperson, Paducah Middle School Principal, Paducah Independent School District

Summary of Discussion:

Ross led the roll call of members. Members unmuted and verbally confirmed attendance.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Approve Agenda

Presenter: Geco Ross, PrAC Chairperson, Paducah Middle School Principal, Paducah Independent School District

Summary of Discussion:

Sarah Williams made a motion to approve the agenda. Ginger Estes made a second. PrAC members verified agreement in the chat.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Approve Summary from Last Meeting

Presenter: Geco Ross, PrAC Chairperson, Paducah Middle School Principal, Paducah Independent School District

Summary of Discussion:

Josh Henderson made a motion to approve the agenda. Sarah Williams made a second. PrAC members verified agreement in the chat.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Legislative Updates: Senate Bill 197 and House Bill 257

Presenter: Jennifer Stafford and Shara Savage, Office of Assessment and Accountability, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Stafford and Savage provided comprehensive updates on recent legislative changes impacting Kentucky education, including Senate Bill 197 and House Bill 257.

Senate Bill 197 Changes: Senate Bill 197 requires a new procurement process for the statewide college admissions exam, following the addition of Section 15. The RFP was released on May 21, and the Finance and Administration Cabinet will prioritize the contract, aiming for implementation by spring 2027.

House Bill 257 and Accountability System: House Bill 257 is a result of four years of collaborative work, introducing reimagined assessment and accountability systems. The bill allows districts to adopt locally developed indicators of quality, defines vibrant learning and introduces new measures for educator quality and student readiness, with technical assistance and potential funding available for districts.

Assessment and Accountability System Changes: Stafford and Savage detailed upcoming changes to Kentucky's assessment and accountability systems, including the introduction of chronic absenteeism as an indicator, the removal of certain test components and the implementation of individual student growth measures.

Assessment Changes for 26-27: For the 2026-2027 school year, testing will continue at the same grade levels, but editing and mechanics, on-demand writing, and the school climate and safety survey will be removed from the state assessment. Writing will shift to local control, with superintendents required to adopt and publish a writing program, supported by KDE guidelines and professional learning.

- Chronic absenteeism will become a new accountability indicator, defined as missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason, excused or unexcused. The federal calculation is based on days missed, while the state calculation currently uses minutes. The group discussed the implications for students with chronic illnesses and those observing religious holidays, with KDE considering half-day calculations to mitigate negative impacts.
- **Individual Student Growth Measures:** The accountability system will shift from measuring 'change' to tracking individual student growth, following students' progress from year to year. Technical models under consideration include student growth percentiles and value tables, with feedback solicited from PRAC members on the preferred approach and the feasibility of measuring high school growth.

Feedback:

PrAC members, including Elizabeth St Bernard and Sarah Williams, raised concerns about the potential for chronic absenteeism indicators to disproportionately affect high-poverty and diverse districts, and highlighted the need for special consideration for students with medical or religious absences. KDE committed to capturing and addressing these concerns in ongoing policy development.

Agenda Item: Legislative Updates

Presenter: Brian Perry, Office of the Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

Perry summarized several legislative actions, including a statewide job portal, updates to traceable student communication requirements, budget changes, Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding, and new policies on superintendent/principal pay, student discipline, truancy, and alternative diplomas. He directed PrAC members to the KDE legislative guidance page for further details and encouraged ongoing feedback.

Feedback: None

Agenda Item: Parent and Family Connection Hub

Presenter: Marsha VanHook, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

VanHook presented the Parent and Family Connection Hub, a KDE initiative developed from Family Partnership Council recommendations, providing a centralized resource for parents and families to access information, academic support, and wellness resources, and requested input from PrAC members to continually improve the platform.

Hub Structure and Content: The Hub is accessible from the KDE homepage and organized into four main sections: getting involved, helping students succeed academically, support for diverse needs, and wellness/whole child supports. It includes resources such as family guides to standards, graduation requirements, and information for English learners and students with disabilities.

Resource Highlights and Feedback Mechanism: VanHook highlighted resources like the family resource guide for standards, the parent and family toolkit, and the digital playbook for family engagement. She encouraged PrAC members to suggest additional resources or improvements, noting that the Hub is continually updated based on user feedback.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Strategic Dashboard

Presenter: Susan Strange, Office of the Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

Strange introduced the KDE strategic plan and dashboard, demonstrating how stakeholders can access and use the dashboard to monitor progress on key goals such as accountability, chronic absenteeism, early literacy and numeracy, and educator recruitment, and solicited feedback from PRAC members on potential improvements.

Strange explained how to access the dashboard via the KDE website, reviewed the layout of goals and key performance indicators, and demonstrated demographic filters and data cards for tracking progress in areas like chronic absenteeism and literacy.

Feedback: Geco Ross suggested that the use of "early" in the headings for literacy and numeracy might unintentionally exclude educators working with older students, recommending a terminology change to be more inclusive. Strange acknowledged the feedback and committed to discussing with the relevant personnel.

Agenda Item: Kentucky Academic Standards Update and Resources

Presenter: Chrystal Rowland, Division Director, Academic Program Standards, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

Rowland provided an update on the Kentucky Academic Standards review process, highlighting recent revisions to reading and writing, health, physical education, career studies and financial literacy standards, and shared resources and professional learning opportunities to support implementation.

Standards Revision Timeline: Rowland explained that Kentucky law requires a six-year review cycle for academic standards, with recent revisions to reading and writing standards effective for the 2026-27 school year, and ongoing reviews for social studies, mathematics, computer science, technology and library media.

Implementation Resources: Resources to support the transition to revised reading and writing standards include updated standards-at-a-glance document, implementation guide, standards family guides and professional learning modules available on KYstandards.org and the Kentucky Learning Hub. Technical assistance is available for curriculum implementation. Registration for LETRS training for educators and administrators is open through Aug. 21. A number of professional learning offerings is available for registration through the Kentucky Numeracy Counts.

Feedback:

None

Agenda Item: Advisory Group Priorities for 2026-2027

Presenter: Geco Ross, PrAC Chairperson, Paducah Middle School, Paducah Independent School District

Summary of Discussion

Ross asked members to review the mission statement and consider potential refinements or new priorities in light of changing educational landscapes, with the intention of discussing these at the next meeting.

Feedback:

Agenda Item: Adjournment

Presenter: Geco Ross, PrAC Chairperson, Paducah Middle School, Paducah Independent School District

Summary of Discussion

Tim Cline made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ginger Estes made the second. Council members expressed agreement in the chat.