



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

**SEPT. 17, 2026**

**ATTENDANCE:** Faneshia Jones, Liz Kirk, Geco Ross, Sarah Williams, Heather Roaden, Hubert Schroer, Bonnie Spears, Josh Henderson, Nikki Gearheart, Jaziel Guerra, Amanda Bretz, Jimica Howard

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Peggy Sinclair-Morris, Jeff Blythe, Tim Cline, Amanda Nokes, Martina Skidmore, Ginger Estes, James Hood

**Agenda Item:** Welcome

**Presenter:** Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:**

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher welcomed PRAC members, highlighted the council's role, confirmed that KDE is on track to name the college admissions exam vendor by October, and previewed upcoming accountability reporting and principal leadership work.

**Agenda Item:** Roll Call of Members

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

**Agenda Item:** Approve Agenda

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

**Summary of Discussion:**

Sarah Williams made a motion to approve, Hubert Schroer seconded. All were in favor.

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

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

**Summary of Discussion:**

Josh Henderson made a motion to approve, Jimica Howard seconded. All were in favor.

**Agenda Item:** Research Blogs

**Presenter:** Leslie McKinney, Office of the Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:**

McKinney introduced KDE's new Research Blog, which converts longer research into short, accessible series beginning with chronic absenteeism and followed by teacher wellbeing, while inviting educators and community members to suggest topics and comment.

**Blog Purpose:** McKinney explained that KDE's research team reviews action research and published research at state, national and global levels, then presents selected findings in shorter blog posts so practitioners and other stakeholders can more readily use the information.

**Featured Series:** The inaugural series focuses on chronic absenteeism and contains five planned posts released approximately every two weeks. Three posts had been published, with a fourth forthcoming; the next series will address teacher wellbeing, school climate, and leadership-teacher relationships, drawing in part on Kentucky Working Conditions Survey research.

**Stakeholder Participation:** Each blog includes a reflection question or prompt, and McKinney encouraged educators, parents, policymakers, and community members to leave comments that can inform and be shared with the broader Kentucky community. KDE also welcomes suggestions for future blog series.

**Access And Archives:** The blog can be found by searching for "research blog" on the KDE website. The site includes current series, supporting graphics, and archived posts from an earlier research blog.

**Feedback:**

None

**Agenda Item:** Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Showcase

**Presenter:** Susan Strange, Office of the Commissioner, and Michelle Sircy, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:**

Sircy and Strange explained Kentucky's flexible ILP approach for grades 6–12 and promoted a statewide video showcase through which students, teachers, and counselors can demonstrate how ILPs support career exploration, goal-setting, and future planning.

Sircy stated that Kentucky has offered ILPs for grades 6–12 since 2009. Beginning in 2026, districts may use a purchased program, a locally developed program, or a combination rather than relying on one statewide platform.

Showcase requirements were shared with the group and PrAC members were encouraged to promote the showcase. It is open from Aug. 17 through Oct. 23 to middle and high school students, teachers, and counselors, with teamwork encouraged. Entries must be entirely original, cannot use AI-generated video, and require signed media releases for every student shown.

Participants should submit a 30- to 120-second commercial through the KDE-linked Google form. Selected videos may be featured on KDE's website and social media.

The KDE ILP webpage produces additional details pertaining to the project.

**Feedback:**

NONE

**Agenda Item:** Kentucky Principal Leadership Development Program

**Presenter:** Kelly Foster, Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:**

Foster described the Kentucky Leadership Development Program (KYLDP) which originated from Senate Bill 4. Foster detailed the program's four-year structure, the 2026–27 curriculum development year, a planned July 2027 launch for KDE-led components, and continued opportunities for principal feedback.

SB 4 legislation establishes a four-year program. KDE will develop and implement years one and two around seven mandated curriculum topics; year three is intended to be developed by the Chamber of Commerce; and year four will offer a vetted menu of approved training options.

KDE held listening sessions in Bowling Green, Lexington, and Hazard with principals, assistant principals, teachers, parents, community members, legislators, superintendents and central-office staff invited to inform the design of KYLDP. Foster emphasized that there are additional feedback opportunities planned and she encouraged PrAC members to participate.

**Feedback:**

Sarah Williams suggested Jefferson County as a potential location for a feedback session, as the other available locations require significantly more travel and time away from the building.

**Agenda Item:** Kentucky Academic Standards Update

**Presenter:** Chrystal Rowland, Division Director, Academic Program Standards, Office of Teaching and Learning, and Sara Merideth, World Language Consultant, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:**

Rowland explained that Kentucky law requires academic standards to be reviewed and revised on a rotating six-year schedule. World Language standards, last approved in December 2020, are now scheduled for review.

Merideth said the public comment survey is open through Oct. 5 for business leaders, teachers, retired teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. The survey collects demographic information and feedback on each strand of the current World Language standards.

KDE is recruiting K–12 classroom teachers for both the standards review committee and advisory panel. The first in-person meeting is planned for Nov. 4–6, with additional work expected in January and April; selected teachers will need principal permission to be released from class.

PRAC members were asked to distribute the survey and committee application through their districts and professional networks, so the panels include broad regional and grade-level representation.

**Feedback:**

NONE

**Agenda Item:** K-8 Social Studies Curriculum Project

**Presenter:** Lauren Galliccio, Assistant Director, Division of Program Standards, Office of Teaching and Learning

**Summary of Discussion:**

Lauren Gallicchio presented Our Commonwealth, Our Nation, Our World, a free, optional K–8 social studies resource being built with the Core Knowledge Foundation specifically for

Kentucky standards, with phased releases beginning in 2027–2028 and professional learning provided by KDE.

The curriculum responds to district requests for a high-quality, standards-aligned social studies resource requiring less local adaptation. Lauren Gallicchio emphasized that it is being built for Kentucky rather than adapted from another state, with Kentucky history, communities and instructional priorities integrated throughout.

Our Commonwealth will be an optional open educational resource available at no cost for digital download. Assessments and answer keys will be hosted in the KY Learning Hub, and low-cost print options will be available for districts that prefer printed student materials.

A tentative spring 2027 preview will include one unit from kindergarten, grade 3, grade 5 and grade 8. Those four grade levels are scheduled for full release in 2027–2028; grades 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 are scheduled for release in 2028–2029, with all units for a grade released together.

KDE plans regional in-person training, live virtual follow-up sessions, and self-paced KY Learning Hub modules. Districts can follow development through the KY standards landing page and the weekly KY standards newsletter.

#### **Feedback:**

Ross expressed gratitude for the resource being free.

#### **Agenda Item: KyMTSS Resources and Support**

**Presenter:** Melissa Wainwright, MTSS Coordinator, Division of Program Standards, Office of Teaching and Learning

#### **Summary of Discussion:**

Wainwright reviewed free Kentucky MTSS implementation resources, including an updated guide, self-assessment tool, annual action-plan form, KY Learning Hub course, and appointment-based support for schools and districts.

A revised implementation guide and self-assessment tool were shared. The guide reflects current resources and legislation and is intended to support strategic planning, implementation and sustainability for schoolwide MTSS teams. The self-assessment tool helps teams discuss the current state of their MTSS implementation, identify strengths and gaps, create action plans, and consider the supports and strategies needed by both students and adults.

Wainwright shared that a new KYMTSS Annual Plan of Action will be released through the newsletter as a Google Form. It will consolidate the action plan, meeting agendas, and minutes, and includes a month-by-month planning structure that teams can copy and customize.

To support training and coaching, Wainwright shared that an introductory KY MTSS self-paced course will launch in the KY Learning Hub to onboard new staff or help teams recalibrate around the six essential elements and related tools. A monthly booking page will also allow schools to schedule direct support, with individualized appointments available by email when listed times do not work.

Wainwright encouraged principals to share the MTSS resource landing page and implementation materials with colleagues so teams can remain current on available supports.

**Feedback:**

NONE

**Agenda Item:** Accountability Regulation Updates

**Presenter:** Jennifer Stafford, Associate Commissioner, and Shara Savage, Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability

**Summary of Discussion:**

Stafford and Savage reviewed the fall 2026 accountability release schedule and proposed House Bill 257 changes for fall 2027, including one overall score, new indicators, removal of writing and survey components, and an individual student growth model.

The current accountability system remains in place for the fall 2026 release, including status, change, reading and mathematics, science, social studies, writing, English language proficiency, survey, secondary readiness, and graduation indicators. Quality-control review is planned for the following week, tentative embargo dates are Oct. 13–14, public reporting is tentatively Oct. 15, and a 10-day regulatory data review follows release.

Individual Student Growth Model: Stafford explained that the proposed growth indicator compares the same students' reading and mathematics performance across consecutive years in elementary and middle school using a categorical table, while Robbie Fletcher described how stakeholder feedback shaped the current point values.

Chronic Absenteeism Accountability: Stafford and Fletcher explained the proposed chronic absenteeism indicator, including the federal half-day calculation, K–12 scope, unresolved school-membership threshold, and the distinction between chronic absenteeism and truancy.

Commissioner Fletcher clarified that chronic absenteeism is not the same as truancy. The proposed accountability calculation would count time missed under the federal half-day approach whether the absence is excused or unexcused, whereas truancy involves a different attendance and legal framework.

**Feedback:**

Sarah Williams asked about locating student performance levels. In response to Sarah's question, Jennifer Stafford clarified that low/high subcategories are not part of the fall 2026 reporting and are intended for accountability calculations only; students will continue to receive their regular performance level. Median cut points will be shared later through future training and system guidance.

Geco Ross reported that principals are concerned chronic absenteeism may function more as a context for achievement results than as a direct achievement measure, and that the excused-or-unexcused language creates concern for students with legitimate chronic conditions.

**Agenda Item:** Advisory Group Priorities for 2026-2027

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

**Summary of Discussion:**

Geco Ross and Stacy Noah directed PRAC members to identify three to five priority topics for the coming year, submit breakout-room feedback by email, and use the results to shape the December agenda and future council work.

**Feedback:**

Submitted via email

**Agenda Item:** Adjournment

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

**Summary of Discussion:**

Hubert Schroer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Bonnie Speaker seconded. All in agreement.

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