

SUMMARY MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AT THE JUNE 2026 MEETING



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL  
SUMMARY

**March 18, 2026**

**ATTENDANCE:** Megan Hall (chair), Amber Hinkle, Scot Bratcher, Amy Leasgang, Brooke Leffingwell, Mandy Perez, Kristen Morgan, Wendy Young, Robyn Ballinger, Corey Burns, Jason Davidson, Shane Baker

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kevin Dailey, Jessica Hobson, Sarah Lizer, Emmanuel Anama-Green, Tyler Saylor, Joseph Stivers, Becky Spies, Toni Prater, Nick Shoffner, Casey Page

**Agenda Item:** Welcome

**Presenter:** Meredith Brewer, Associate Commissioner, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

**Summary of Discussion:** Brewer welcomed the Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) members and extended Commissioner Robbie Fletcher's condolences for not being able to attend due to his participation in All In for Ag Week.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Roll Call of Members

**Presenter:** Megan Hall, TAC Chairperson, Rosa Parks Elementary, Fayette County

**Summary of Discussion:** Hall led the roll call of members.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Approve Agenda

**Presenter:** Megan Hall, TAC Chairperson, Rosa Parks Elementary, Fayette County

**Summary of Discussion:** Hall asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Baker made a motion to approve the agenda. Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**Feedback:** None

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

**Presenter:** Megan Hall, TAC Chairperson, Rosa Parks Elementary, Fayette County

**Summary of Discussion:** Hall asked for a motion to approve the summary of the December meeting. Burns made a motion to approve the agenda. Baker seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** New Member Introductions

**Presenter:** Justin Edwards, TAC Liaison, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

**Summary of Discussion:** Edwards requested that new members unmute and answer the following prompts about themselves with the group:

- Your name
- Where you teach
- What you teach
- How long you've taught
- Why you stay in teaching

All new members present, unmuted and provided responses.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Accountability Framework Update

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

**Summary of Discussion:** Stafford and Savage provided a comprehensive update to the council on the development and legislative status of Kentucky's assessment and accountability systems. Stafford focused on House Bill 257, its proposed changes and the stakeholder engagement process. Stafford described the multi-year process of gathering input from educators, students, superintendents, legislators, business leaders and community members through the Kentucky United We Learn Council, surveys, focus groups and town halls to inform the redesign of the assessment and accountability systems. Stafford then explained that House Bill 257 incorporates many of the proposed elements from their efforts, such as maintaining current assessments in reading, math, science and social studies. The bill also removes on-demand writing and editing and mechanics from state assessments, and shifts on demand writing assessment responsibilities to local districts. Lastly, Stafford, informed the council of a new provision in the bill incentivizing districts to develop local measures of quality (formerly local accountability) with a one-time \$15,000 payment, requiring inclusion of vibrant learning experiences and public reporting. Savage then updated the council on the status of ongoing assessments for English learners and students with disabilities, the transition from ACT to SAT for high school testing, and the resources and training provided to districts.

**Feedback:** In response to Davidson's question, Stafford clarified that House Bill 257 is not currently an emergency bill, and if passed in its current state, the changes to the assessments wouldn't take effect until the spring of 2027 and reporting in the fall of 2027.

**Agenda Item:** Q & A with Division of School and Community Nutrition

**Presenter:** Lauren Moore, Division Director, Office of Finance and Operations

**Summary of Discussion:** Moore addressed the council regarding the impact of updated federal dietary guidelines on school meal programs, anticipated regulatory changes, the challenges related to funding and definitions of ultra-processed foods. Moore first outlined the current federal requirements for school breakfast and lunch programs, including components such as fruits, grains, protein, vegetables and fluid milk, with specifications for calories, saturated fat, added sugars, sodium and whole grains. Moore informed the council that any changes to meal patterns resulting from the new 2025-2030 dietary guidelines will undergo a federal rulemaking process, including a public comment period, making it unlikely that changes will affect the 2026-2027 school year. Moore then discussed the emphasis on reducing ultra-processed foods in the new guidelines, noting the absence of a federal definition. Although the FDA and USDA are currently gathering input on a federal definition, some states have implemented their own definition, resulting in challenges for states and food manufacturers. To date, Kentucky has not implemented its own definition. Finally, Moore highlighted concerns about the adequacy of federal reimbursement rates considering rising food costs and the potential shift toward more

expensive whole and minimally processed foods, especially under the Community Eligibility Provision.

**Feedback:** In response to Baker's question, Moore clarified that protein requirements include both animal and plant-based sources, with accommodations available for students with medical needs, and that meat alternatives are commonly provided.

**Agenda Item:** Strategic Dashboard

**Presenter:** Karen Dodd, Chief Performance Officer, Office of the Commissioner of Education  
Susan Strange, Strategic Program Manager, Office of the Commissioner of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Strange presented the 2024-2029 Strategic Dashboard to the council demonstrating its features, goals and data visualizations. Strange explained that the dashboard is accessible via the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) website and tracks progress on KDE's eight strategic goals (accountability, absenteeism, literacy, numeracy, educator recruitment, customer satisfaction, process management, and leadership capacity) with interactive features for demographic filtering and key performance indicators. After her presentation of the dashboard, Strange invited the council to provide feedback on the dashboard.

**Feedback:** Baker complemented the layout of the information in the dashboard and wondered how it was being pushed out to districts. Strange explained that it was initially shared with the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) in February and that now it is being shared out through advisory groups such as the TAC.

**Agenda Item:** Applications Open for 2026-2027 KBE Non-Voting Teacher Position

**Presenter:** GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Director of Education Policy, Office of the Commissioner

**Summary of Discussion:** Jones informed the council about the application process for the 2026-2027 non-voting teacher position on the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) and, in alignment with 701 KAR 5:160, requested volunteers from the TAC to form a special committee to review non-voting teacher applications and recommend finalists to the KBE. The non-voting teacher position is open to full-time teachers in Kentucky's 4th Congressional District, with applications due by March 31. The selected teacher will serve a one-year term beginning July 1. Jones said that council members that join the review committee would be asked to review applications, score them using the provided rubric, and recommend three finalists to the Kentucky Board of

Education. Members interested in serving on the special committee should contact Justin Edwards.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Legislative Update

**Presenter:** Meredith Brewer, Associate Commissioner, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

**Summary of Discussion:** Brewer provided the council with a legislative update covering key bills in the Kentucky General Assembly related to assessment, accountability, educator pathways, school nutrition and budget matters. Brewer highlighted:

- House Bill 257 (assessment and accountability)
- Senate Bill 22 (teacher apprenticeship dual credit)
- Senate Bill 121 and House Bill 727 (KEPS system overhaul)
- House Bill 759 (alternative certification pathways)
- House Bill 500 (budget bill), which is under Senate consideration, with notable provisions such as the removal of a cap on insurance contributions following educator advocacy
- House Bill 562 (alternative high school diploma for students with special needs)
- Senate Bill 4 (principal induction program)
- Senate Bill 5 (local food purchasing for school nutrition)
- Senate Bill 101 (student expulsion for violence against teachers)
- Senate Bill 124 (teacher sick time cash-out).

She explained their purposes and current status. Brewer concluded her update by informing the council that the department will release a guidance document summarizing legislative actions and their impact on schools and districts after the session concludes, with resources available on the KDE website.

**Feedback:** In response to a question from Bratcher, Brewer noted ongoing discussions about salary flexibility for Career and Technical Education teachers but was not aware of current legislation addressing this issue, offering Bratcher a contact in the relevant office of the department for more information.

**Agenda Item:** Adjournment

**Presenter:** Megan Hall, TAC Chairperson, Rosa Parks Elementary, Fayette County

**Summary of Discussion:** Hall asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Young made a motion to approve the agenda. Hinkle seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The next meeting will be held on June 17, 2026.

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