

The background of the slide is a collage. The top-left portion shows a line of yellow school buses, with the number '32' visible on the front of the lead bus. The bottom-left portion shows a classroom interior with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. Several small, square tables with chairs are arranged in the room.

Superintendents Webcast

January 13, 2026



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Agenda

Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

Kentucky Department of Education Update

Jennifer Ginn, KDE Director of Communications

Accountability Bill Update

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

Associate Commissioner Jennifer Stafford, Ed.D., Office of Assessment and Accountability

Special Education Class Sizes and Caseloads

Melody Cooper, Policy Advisor, KDE's Office of Special Education and Early Learning

AI Resources from KDE for School Districts

David Couch, Associate Commissioner, KDE's Office of Education Technology

Marty Park, K-12 Deputy CIO and Chief Digital Officer, KDE's Office of Education Technology

Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, KDE's Office of Career and Technical Education

Micki Marinelli, Chief Academic Officer, KDE's Office of Teaching and Learning

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Office of the Commissioner

2026 Legislative Preview

Brian Perry, Ph.D., Director of Government Relations, Office of the Commissioner

Kentucky Board of Education Virtual Meetings

GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Ph.D., Director of Education Policy, Office of the Commissioner

Questions and Answers

Important Dates

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Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher
Commissioner of Education



Taylor County's Sydney Newton Wins Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award

- Sydney Newton, an English language arts teacher at Taylor County High School, was honored Dec. 16 as the latest Kentucky educator to receive the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award.
- Newton was presented with the award, which includes a \$25,000 unrestricted cash prize, in a surprise ceremony at her school that included students, faculty, and district and community leaders.
- The prestigious award, hailed as the “Oscars of Teaching,” was presented by Robbie Fletcher, Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman and Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President Jane Foley.
- Newton has been an English language arts teacher for Taylor County High School since her teaching career began in 2016.



Jessica Youart Named the 2025 Special Education Teacher of the Year

- KDE's Office of Special Education and Early Learning, in collaboration with the Kentucky Council for Exceptional Children (KYCEC), recognized Jessica Youart of Meade County as the 2025 Special Education Teacher of the Year.
- The KYCEC Teacher of the Year award celebrates special educators who go above and beyond in providing direct services to children and youth with exceptionalities, demonstrating excellence in supporting students with disabilities.
- Youart was recognized for her deep commitment to students both inside and outside the classroom. She initiated a community-based instruction program for diploma-tracked special education students, helping them gain real-world skills. Each year, she organizes a field trip to the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Center to expose students to college life and available resources.
- Youart also runs Camp TESSA (Teaching Effective Social Skills to Students with Autism), a summer program, and serves as a court-appointed special advocate for those in her area.



Jessica Youart, middle, stands with Sheena Wethington, left, exceptional children consultant with KDE, and Stacy Bewley, president of the Kentucky Council for Exceptional Children

KDE Recognizes 215 schools for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

- KDE's Safe and Supportive Schools Branch recognized 215 schools across the state through the annual fidelity recognition program for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
- PBIS is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional and mental health,
- The schools were selected through an application process for how well they are implementing and managing their PBIS framework, achieving one of three levels of fidelity standards: Bronze, Silver or Gold. Achievement in each of these categories is determined according to KDE's PBIS State Recognition of Fidelity Standards.
- If a school is not currently implementing PBIS but would like more information on how to start, please use the [request training or assistance link](#) to request free assistance and/or training.
- The full list of standards for Bronze, Silver and Gold categories can be found on [KDE's PBIS webpage](#).

KDE's Office of Special Education and Early Learning Honors 50 Years of IDEA



- Signed into law on Nov. 29, 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guaranteed access to a free and appropriate public education for millions of children who were once excluded or inadequately served.
- During the past five decades, IDEA has shaped classrooms, guided educators and opened doors for countless students. Its impact is seen every day in early intervention services, individualized instruction, inclusive classrooms and transition supports that prepare students for life beyond school.
- On Dec. 4, 2025, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution recognizing IDEA's 50th anniversary. The resolution honored the millions of infants, toddlers, children and youth who have benefited from IDEA and acknowledged the educators, families, advocates and policymakers who have worked tirelessly to uphold its intent. It also reaffirmed a shared commitment to ensuring students with disabilities have access to high-quality education and meaningful opportunities.
- As Kentucky marks this anniversary, KDE invites educators, families and communities across the Commonwealth to honor IDEA's legacy and recommit to ensuring every student with a disability has the opportunity to thrive.

A collage of two images: the top left shows yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' written on them, and the bottom right shows a classroom with blue walls, desks, and colorful balloons.

KDE Updates

Jennifer Ginn

KDE Director of Communications



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Competitive Grants from KDE

FY26 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant

- Grant Applications Due: Jan. 20 at 4 p.m. ET
- Award Amount: \$150,000 per year for up to 3 years.
- Matching Funds Requirement: No

The 21st CCLC program offers academic, artistic and cultural enrichment opportunities for students attending high-poverty and low-performing schools, helping them meet challenging state academic standards through effective out-of-school programs that improve student achievement and social development.

FY26 Math Achievement Fund Middle School Coaching (MAF MSC) Pilot Grant

- Grant Applications Due: **March 19** at 4 p.m. ET (**Extension of Deadline**)
- Award Amount: \$62,000 per year for up to 2 years.
- Matching Funds Requirement: No

The MAF MSC pilot grant will provide developmentally appropriate diagnostic assessment and intervention services to students to help them reach proficiency in mathematics. The mathematics coach will improve mathematics teaching practices by working with teachers of grades 6-8 in their classrooms. **Eligibility for this grant has been increased to additional districts/schools.**

Competitive Grants from KDE (2)

FY26 Migrant Education Program (MEP) Grant

- **Grant Applications Due:** March 17 at 4 p.m. ET
- **Award Amount:** Up to \$280,000 per year for up to 4 years.
- **Matching Funds Requirement:** No

The Migrant Education Program provides states with funding to reduce the impact of educational barriers on migratory children ages 3 through 21. These children run a greater risk of failing to meet the challenging state content and performance standards that all students are expected to meet. Low academic achievement and frustration with school cause many migrant children to drop out in their early teens.

Competitive Grants from KDE (3)

FY26 Math Achievement Fund (MAF) Mini-Grant

- **Grant applications due:** Feb. 19 at 4 p.m. ET
- **Award Amount:** Award Amount: \$40,000 per awarded school.
- **Matching Funds Requirement:** No

The MAF high-quality instructional resource (HQIR) mini-grant provides funding for the purchase of materials needed for modification of instruction (tier one, tier two and/or tier three) in mathematics and pays for extended time or release time for teachers to engage in professional learning on the HQIR.

Reminder:

Applicants are responsible for monitoring KDE's Competitive Grants webpage for amendments and updates to the posted RFAs and supporting materials. More information about grants can be found on the [KDE Competitive Grants webpage](#) or by emailing [Jennifer Bryant](#).

You Belong KY! Attendance Matters Video & Poster Contest

Student Voice Supporting School Connectedness & Attendance

- Statewide student-voice contest promoting belonging, connection, and attendance.
- Open to all grade levels (K-12).
- Aligned to KDE's chronic absenteeism and You Belong KY! Campaign efforts.
- Powered by STLP to support creation, judging, and statewide amplification.
- Centers student voice in defining what belonging looks like in their school community.



Why This Matters

- Students who feel connected at school attend more regularly.
- Belonging is one of the strongest protective factors against chronic absenteeism.
- Student-led messaging reinforces connection using the language of students themselves.
- Aligns with KDE's statewide efforts around re-engagement, belonging and student voice.
- Connectedness improves attendance, academic outcomes and well-being.

Key Dates for Districts

- Contest Launched: Dec. 11 on Superintendents Webcast
- Registration Deadline: **Feb. 13**
- District Submission Deadline: **March 13**
- KDE Submission Deadline: **March 27**
- Winners Announced: **April 24** at the STLP State Championship main stage

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Accountability Bill Update

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education
Associate Commissioner Jennifer Stafford, Ed.D., Office of
Assessment and Accountability

Comparing the Current Bill Version with Model Framework 4.0

The original Model Framework 4.0 and the current bill version assign the accountability system into two categories:

1. State accountability indicators that meet federal requirements for CSI designation.
2. Local accountability indicators with required options and inclusion that are NOT USED in calculations for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designation. ***In the current bill version, the phrase “local indicators of quality” replaces the phrase “local accountability.”***

Category	Component	Model Framework 4.0	Current Bill Version (1.7.26)
State	Assessment	Reading and mathematics are used in the calculation for CSI status. • Adaptive test • Provides grade level equivalency AND grade level content proficiency	Reading, mathematics, science and social studies are used for CSI calculation. • Adaptive tests are not used. • Provides grade level content proficiency in the same manner as the current state assessments
State	Assessment	Science is assessed and reportedly individually, but it is not used in the CSI calculation.	Reading, mathematics, science and social studies are used for CSI calculation.
State	Assessment	Social Studies and Writing would be removed from the state assessment but required in the local accountability model.	Reading, mathematics, science and social studies are used for CSI calculation and continue to include constructed (written) responses. Bill language focuses on SBDM policy for writing across the curriculum. On-demand writing and editing mechanics would not be assessed individually and reduces the testing time for the students. Districts may determine additionally methods for assessing writing as part of the local indicators of quality. <i>Removing the On-Demand portion will save money and potentially shorten the time required to have accountability results publicly available.</i>

Category	Component	Model Framework 4.0	Current Bill Version (1.7.26)
State	Change vs. Student Growth	Individual student growth replaces change in the CSI calculation.	Individual student growth replaces change in the CSI calculation.
State	Other Required Indicators	Transition readiness, graduation rate, English language progress are included in the CSI calculation to meet federal requirements.	Transition readiness, graduation rate, English language progress are included in the CSI calculation and meet federal requirements.
State	Other Required Indicators	Climate and Safety Survey Data is included in the CSI calculation to meet federal requirements.	Chronic Absenteeism replaces Climate and Safety Survey Data for the CSI calculation to meet federal requirements.
Local	Implementation	Using piloting, sustaining and sustainability phases, all districts SHALL have a local accountability model within the next 4 years.	A financial incentive of \$10,000 per district with an additional \$3 per student would be allocated when a district has their local committee, identified local indicators, and provided a timeline for implementation. The financial incentive would be yearly to help maintain the system. This would help offset (initially in its entirety) the financial incentive for districts.

Category	Component	Model Framework 4.0	Current Bill Version (1.7.26)
Local	Implementation	Using piloting, sustaining and sustainability phases, all districts SHALL have a local accountability model within the next 4 years.	If 60% of all school districts adopt local indicators of quality, then a “trigger” is initiated to require all districts to implement local indicators of quality.
Local	Requirements	Each local accountability model shall include vibrant learning experiences, writing, social studies and locally determined indicators of performance. KDE would supply Social Studies/Writing assessments or districts could develop their own method of assessing.	Each system of local indicators of quality shall include vibrant learning experiences and locally determined indicators of performance.
Local	Requirements	Provide disaggregated data when applicable based on student demographics.	Provide disaggregated data when applicable based on student demographics.
Local	Requirements	Develop and publicly available display of local indicators/data.	Develop and publicly available display of local indicators/data.

Category	Component	Model Framework 4.0	Current Bill Version (1.7.26)
Local	Assistance	KDE shall provide technical assistance through the hiring of 6 regional specialists.	KDE shall provide technical assistance through the hiring of 6 regional specialists (included in discussions, but not explicitly written as 6 regional specialists).
Local	Other assessments	Inclusion of interim assessment in reading and mathematics that are aligned with the summative assessments to provide formative data for districts. This information MAY be included in local accountability models. Also, utilizing state-developed interim assessments would eliminate one testing window in the current practice on interim assessments/state testing.	Interim assessments are not included.

Category	Component	Model Framework 4.0	Current Bill Version (1.7.26)
Local	Other assessments	Currently, science is assessed once in each of the elementary, middle and high school grade bands. Science off-grade assessments would be provided for formative data for districts and MAY be used in local accountability models.	Science assessments are administered (SEE ABOVE) in the grade band levels, but “off grade” assessment are not included.
Local	Other	An external evaluator would review all local accountability models on a 3-year cycle.	No external evaluator; regional specialists would be utilized to monitor.

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Special Education Class Sizes and Caseloads

Melody Cooper, Policy Advisor,
Office of Special Education and Early Learning

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AI Resources from KDE for School Districts

David Couch, Associate Commissioner, KDE's Office of Education Technology

Marty Park, K-12 Deputy CIO and Chief Digital Officer, KDE's Office of Education Technology

Associate Commissioner Beth Hargis, KDE's Office of Career and Technical Education

Micki Marinelli, Chief Academic Officer, KDE's Office of Teaching and Learning

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Office of the Commissioner

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2026 Legislative Preview

Brian Perry, Ph.D.

Director of Government Relations



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

2026 Regular Session Schedule

- MLK Day – Jan. 19
- President's Day – Feb. 16
- Last day for new Senate bills – March 2
- Last day for new House bills – March 4
- Concurrence days – March 31 and April 1
- Veto days – April 2 - 13
- Sine Die – April 15
- Session calendar:
 - https://legislature.ky.gov/Documents/26RS_Calendar.pdf

2026 Committee Schedule

- HOUSE

- Primary & Secondary Education – Wednesday, 8 a.m. ET
- ETBR Sub Primary & Secondary Education/Workforce Development – Tuesday, 10 a.m. ET
- A&R – Tuesday, noon ET
- Families & Children – Thursday, 9 a.m. ET
- State Government – Thursday, noon

- SENATE

- Education – Thursday, 10 a.m. ET
- A&R – Wednesday, 9 a.m. ET
- State & Local Government – Wednesday, 11 a.m. ET
- Families & Children – Tuesday, 8 a.m. ET

- Committee Schedule

- https://legislature.ky.gov/Documents/26RS_Standing_Schedule.pdf

How to Follow Along

- How to watch committee meetings
 - KET: <https://ket.org/legislature/>
 - LRC YouTube site:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmnoJBrwFmd7JK0HA9KcPaw>
 - Where to follow bills
 - <https://legislature.ky.gov/Legislation/Pages/default.aspx>

Education Committee Members

SENATE

- Stephen West - Chair
- Lindsey Tichenor - Vice Chair
- Danny Carroll
- David P. Givens
- Jimmy Higdon
- Stephen Meredith
- Gerald A. Neal
- Steve Rawlings
- Aaron Reed
- Reginald Thomas
- Gex Williams
- Mike Wilson
- Max Wise

HOUSE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Scott Lewis - Chair
- Mike Clines - Vice Chair
- Tina Bojanowski
- Steve Bratcher
- Emily Callaway
- Josh Calloway
- Adrielle Camuel
- Steven Doan
- Ken Fleming
- Daniel Grossberg
- David Hale
- Kevin Jackson
- Marianne Proctor
- Felicia Rabourn
- Steve Riley
- James Tipton
- Timmy Truett
- Lisa Willner

KBE/KDE Priorities

- [HB 257](#) (Payne): Proposed changes to the assessment and accountability system
- [SB 22](#) (Higdon): Expanded dual credit for registered teacher apprenticeship programs
- Clean-up items
 - Stagger Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) member terms
 - Replace KEPS with statewide job portal using existing funds from certification fees
 - [SB 207](#): Extends time for KBE to review waiver requests, allows the commissioner to approve class size waiver requests for special education, removes the automatic expiration of waivers related to district facility projects
 - Repeal [KRS 156.690](#) (Teachers' computer purchase program)
 - Repeal statutory language concerning the Council for Education Technology (CET), which has not been needed nor met in more than 33 years
 - Clarify ownership/authority regarding the FFA Leadership Training Center
 - Mirror maternity leave provided to district employees under [SB 9 \(2025\)](#) for KRS 156 employees (ATCs)
- SB 181 (2025) clean-up: [SB 181 \(2026\)](#)
- Workgroup looking at certification related to science
- Simplification of options

Questions

- Brian Perry, Ph.D., Director of Government Relations, Office of the Commissioner
- brian.perry@education.ky.gov

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Kentucky Board of Education Virtual Meetings

GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Ph.D., Director of Education Policy
Office of the Commissioner

2025-2026 Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) Goals



**Foster Educational
Innovation Through Vibrant
Student Learning
Experiences**



**Advance Educational
Excellence Through
Continuous
Professional Improvement**



**Cultivate
Collaborative Partnerships**



**Measurement
and Reflection**

KBE 2026 Regular Meeting Dates

KBE Regular Meetings for the Purpose of Conducting Board Working Sessions	KBE Regular Meetings for the Transaction of Business
Jan. 7 (Virtual)	Feb. 4-5 – Frankfort
March 4 (Virtual)	April 8-9 – Frankfort
May 6 (Virtual)	June 3-4 – Frankfort
July 1 (Virtual)	Aug. 5-6, KBE Retreat & Regular Meeting – Louisville
Sept. 2 (Virtual)	Oct. 7-8, Commissioner Evaluation Discussion & Regular Meeting – Frankfort
Nov. 4 (Virtual)	Dec. 2-3 – Frankfort

Approved August 2025

KBE Meeting Agendas, Recordings and Additional Information

- Information on upcoming and past KBE meetings is available on the [Kentucky Board of Education Meeting Information](#) webpage.
- KBE meetings are live-streamed and video recordings of meetings are posted on the [KDE Media Portal](#).
- Meeting agendas and materials are available on the [KBE Agenda Book](#).

Contact Information

KDE Office of the Commissioner

- Director of Education Policy GlyptusAnn Grider Jones, Ph.D.,
glyptusann.jones@education.ky.gov
- Executive Administrative Secretary Taylor Perry,
taylor.perry@education.ky.gov

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Question and Answer Session

(Submit Questions in Teams)

KDE Leadership



Important Dates

Kentucky United We Learn Council (in-person)

Jan. 23

Education Professional Standards Board

Jan. 26

Local Superintendents Advisory Council

Jan. 27

Kentucky Board of Education (in-person)

Feb. 4-5

Superintendents Webcast

Feb. 10



Kentucky Department of

E D U C A T I O N