

The background of the slide is a collage of two images. The top-left portion shows a line of yellow school buses, with the number '32' visible on the front of one. The bottom-right portion shows a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. There are several small desks and chairs arranged in the room.

Superintendents Webcast

Sept. 10, 2026



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Agenda

Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

Kentucky Department of Education Update

Jennifer Ginn, KDE's Director of Communications

Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Woods Tucker, KDE's Office of Teaching and Learning

Michelle Sircy, Program Coordinator for Comprehensive School Counseling, KDE's Office of Teaching and Learning

School Resource Officer Hiring Portal

Matt Moore, Legislative Liaison, Kentucky Center for School Safety

School of Innovation Pilot Project

Matthew B. Courtney, Policy Advisor, KDE's Office of Continuous Improvement and Support

Questions and Answers

Important Dates

A collage of two images: the top left shows yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' and the number '32' visible; the bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, colorful balloons, and desks.

Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher
Commissioner of Education



2027 Kentucky Teacher of the Year Ceremony

- Molly Seifert, an English teacher at Beechwood High School (Beechwood Independent) with 26 years of experience in the classroom, was named the 2027 Kentucky Teacher of the Year during a ceremony in Frankfort on Sept. 9.
- Seifert is in her 21st year as an educator at Beechwood High School, spending time as a high school English teacher in Owen and Campbell counties prior to her employment in Beechwood Independent. She also earned the 2027 Kentucky High School Teacher of the Year honor.
- Katherine Berner, a library media specialist at Baker Intermediate School (Clark County), was named the 2027 Kentucky Middle School Teacher of the Year.
- Kellie Moses, a general music and choir teacher at Garth Elementary School (Scott County), earned the 2027 Kentucky Elementary School Teacher of the Year award.



Katherine Berner, from left, Molly Seifert and Kellie Moses

Assessment and Accountability Release

- Data will be released under embargo to superintendents the morning of Tuesday, Oct. 13. It will come as an email from the commissioner.
- Data will be released under embargo to members of the press who have asked for early access and signed an embargo agreement at noon ET on Tuesday, Oct. 13.
- During the embargo period, district and school staff may discuss the data internally; however, the data cannot be shared in public meetings or by the media until the public release.
- Select KDE staff members will have an in-person press availability at 10 a.m. ET on Wednesday, Oct. 14, for members of the press who have signed the embargo agreement.
- The embargo will lift at 12:01 a.m. ET on Thursday, Oct. 15. We anticipate the Kentucky School Report Card website will go live with the new data at 8 a.m. ET on Oct. 15.

KDE Seeks Public Comment on Current World Language Standards



- KDE seeks input from all stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, students, families, business and community members.
- The [public comment survey](#) will be open through **Oct. 5**.
- Information will be coming soon via KDE press release, Commissioner's Weekly Message and the Standards Newsletter.
- Please share the link with your local community.

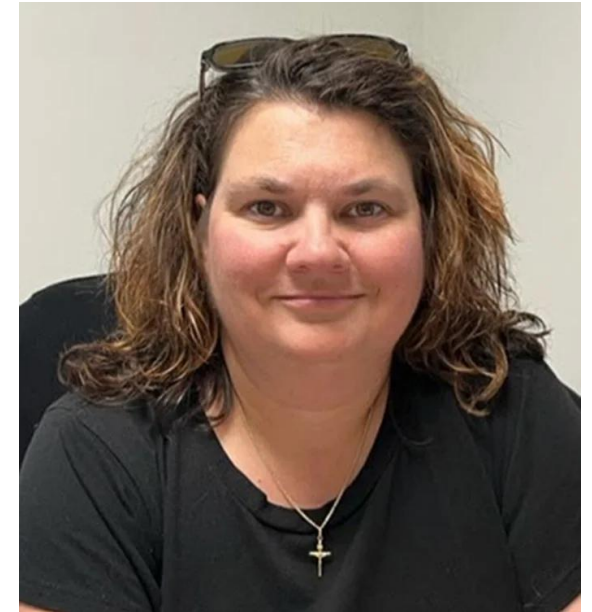
OTL Seeks Standards Committee Members

- [Application for classroom teachers](#) to serve on the world language standards review committees are open through **Oct. 5.**
- Please share the application with world language teachers, instructional leads and building administrators.
- More information coming soon via KDE press release, Commissioner's Weekly Message and the Standards Newsletter.



No Kid Hungry Names Marion County's Jennifer Wheeler as 2026 Summer Hunger Hero

- Jennifer Wheeler, the nutrition director for Marion County Public Schools, was named a 2026 Summer Hunger Hero.
- This annual honor celebrates those who go above and beyond in their efforts to end childhood hunger.
- This year's list of heroes includes 10 honorees from nine states.
- Wheeler has been a big sponsor of rural non-congregate summer meals in Marion County, serving more than 122,000 meals to families last year.
- She goes the extra mile to serve families who don't have access to transportation or might fear attending an in-person site.
- Wheeler also has been key to expanding Summer EBT outreach in the county, ensuring that all kids have access to summer nutrition, regardless of where they live.



Franklin County High School Cooks up Win in School Garden Challenge

- Franklin County High School cooked up a winner at the Kentucky State Fair. Its squash soup, made with ingredients grown largely in the school garden, earned the top spot among eight teams in the second annual School Garden Challenge.
- The Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Ag Education and Outreach Division invited schools from across the state to grow produce in their own school gardens, develop an original signature squash recipe, and present it for judging at the State Fair.
- The Franklin County High School team, which consisted of FFA members Adam AlHamdani, Gage Click, Makenzie Ratliff and Gabby Roe, crafted its original recipe using butternut squash, red bell pepper and jalapenos. The team was coached by Kylen Douglas, Erica Baxter and Grace McGaughey.
- The competition helped kick off the countdown to All in for Ag Education Week, which runs Sept. 21-25.



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 with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons (purple, yellow, and green) and framed pictures. There are several small white tables and chairs arranged in the room, along with storage bins and educational materials.

KDE Update

Jennifer Ginn, KDE's Director of Communications



Kentucky Department of
E D U C A T I O N

Competitive Grants from KDE

FY27 Kentucky Numeracy Counts Grant

- **Grant applications due:** Nov. 17, 4 p.m. ET
- **Award Amount:** \$70,000 per awarded district
- **Matching Funds Requirement:** No

The Kentucky Numeracy Counts Fund grant funds high-quality research and evidence-based curriculum aligned to kindergarten through grade 3 academic standards in mathematics and expenditures for curriculum-based professional learning to implement a new curriculum.

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](#).

Nominate Outstanding Kentucky Education Support Staff

- Gov. Andy Beshear's Office, in partnership with KDE has opened the nomination window for the 2026-2027 [Kentucky Education Support Staff Professional Award](#).
- Eligible candidates must work in any of the following occupational specialties: paraprofessional, clerical and administrative services, transportation services, food and nutrition services, custodial and maintenance services, security services, health and student services, technical services and skilled trades.
- Nominees must illustrate excellence in each of the following areas:
 - Work performance;
 - School and community involvement;
 - Leadership and commitment;
 - Local support (from co-workers, school administrators, community members, etc.); and
 - Enhancement of classified school employees' image in the community and in schools.
- The nomination period will close at 11:59 p.m. ET on Oct. 9.
- The top two nominees also will be considered for the national 2027 Recognizing Inspirational School Employees (RISE) Award. Enacted by Congress in 2019 and overseen by the U.S. Department of Education, the RISE Award recognizes classified school employees who have displayed exemplary service to students in pre-kindergarten through high school.

Display Your Student's Artwork at KDE!

- KDE has proudly showcased student artwork from Jefferson County, Fayette County and Danville Independent Schools.
- Through partnerships with these districts and the Kentucky Arts Council, student-created pieces have been displayed throughout KDE facilities, including 12 randomly selected works currently featured in the Kentucky Board of Education Board Room.
- We are excited to expand this initiative and invite all school districts across the Commonwealth to participate. Districts interested in sharing student artwork are encouraged to submit pieces for display at KDE.
- Artwork would be showcased for approximately three months before being returned and rotated with submissions from other participating districts.
- If you are interested in having your students' work showcased, email [Jessica Greene](#) or call her at (502) 564-2106, ext. 4102.



You Belong!

Attendance Matters Contest: *Student Voice in Action*



Register by Oct. 15

More information and contest details coming soon.

Questions?

Ashley Gates | Persistence to Graduation Team

ashley.gates@education.ky.gov

Student Voice Supporting School Connectedness & Attendance

- Statewide K-12 student-voice contest exploring one big question: *What keeps you connected?*
- Builds on last year's contest and KDE's broader chronic absenteeism and You Belong KY! Campaign efforts.
- Powered by STLP to support creation, judging and statewide amplification.
- Students may use voice, data, research or storytelling
- Photography, video, infographics, coding, design and more!



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

The background of the slide is a composite image. The top left portion shows a line of yellow school buses parked outdoors. The bottom left portion shows the interior of a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. Several small, empty desks and chairs are visible in the foreground of the classroom.

Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Woods Tucker
Michelle Sircy, Program Coordinator for
Comprehensive School Counseling
KDE's Office of Teaching and Learning

Per [KRS 158.4416\(3\)\(f\)](#), by Nov. 1 of each year, "the local school district superintendent shall report to the department ...

- a) the number of school-based mental health service providers,
- b) the position held,
- c) placement in the district,
- d) certification or licensure held,
- e) the source of funding for each position,
- f) a summary of the job duties and work undertaken by each school-based mental health service provider,
- g) and the approximate percent of time devoted to each duty over the course of the year."

[KRS 156.4416\(3\)\(h\)](#) further requires KDE to collect the information reported by each district superintendent for submission to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

Definitions for school-based mental health services providers are provided under KRS 158.4416(1).

Process Components Include ...

Collection



Excel Spreadsheet

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following content:

Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report

Per [KRS 158.4416\(3\)\(f\)](#), by November 1st of each year, "the local school district superintendent shall report to the department ...

a) the number of school-based mental health service providers, b) the position held, c) placement in the district, d) certification or licensure held, e) the source of funding for each position, f) a summary of the job duties and work undertaken by each school-based mental health service provider, g) and the approximate percent of time devoted to each duty over the course of the year."

[KRS 156.4416\(3\)\(h\)](#) further requires the KDE to collect the information reported by each district superintendent for submission to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

Definitions for school-based mental health services providers are provided under [KRS 158.4416\(1\)](#).

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q1: We have several staff members in our district who have the school social worker certification but serve as the counselor in a couple of our schools and the categories about how they use their time would probably be more appropriate under the counselor tab. Should I list them in the counselor tab or in the school-based mental health provider tab?

Answer: According to current legislation - KRS 161.020(1)(a) provides "No person shall be eligible to hold the position of superintendent, principal, teacher, supervisor, director of pupil personnel, or other public school position for which certificates may be issued, or receive salary for services

[Click Here for a Video Tutorial](#)

Submission



SharePoint

The screenshot shows a SharePoint page with the following content:

Use of Time Collection Tool

McKinney, Leslie - Office of the Commissioner of Education
KDE/KDE Ed Academic Program Manager

The purpose of this site is to collect district level use of time information for counselors and other mental health providers for the Superintendent's Report due by November 1st, 2025.

Please ensure the document is an Excel file prior to beginning the upload process. Do not save the file as a PDF.

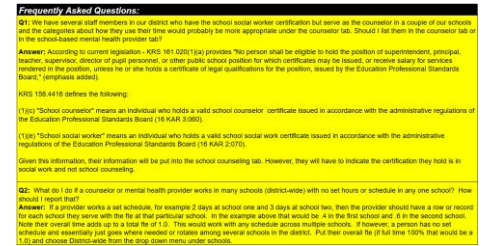
Document Submission Instructions:

1. Select Upload below from the Document Submission Library. (Alternatively, you can choose to drag and drop your Excel file into the Document Submission Library space below. Move to step 3 if you choose to drag and drop instead.)
2. Select the Excel file to upload.
3. A pop-up window will automatically appear after upload with additional document properties to complete for the file. To successfully submit, you MUST complete the following properties after uploading:
 1. School District
 2. Superintendent's Name
4. Files that have been successfully submitted will automatically be MOVED from this location after 30 minutes. You will receive an email notification verifying your submission once the file has been moved.

***Notes:**

Districts are encouraged to ...

1. Ensure compliance, completeness and accuracy of district submissions;
2. Refer to the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of the excel spreadsheet located in the “ReadMeFirst” tab; and
3. Watch the *Completing and Submitting Video* included with this presentation and available as a link in the “ReadMeFirst” tab.



KRS 158.4416(3)(f)



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING

the School Counselor and
School-based Mental Health
Provider Use of Time
Collection Tool

Questions

For technical questions or assistance, please contact: Leslie McKinney at Leslie.mckinney@education.ky.gov

If you require clarification or have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to contact Michelle Sircy at Michelle.sircy@education.ky.gov

The background of the slide is a collage. The top left shows a line of yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' written on their sides. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. There are several small desks and chairs in the classroom.

School Resource Officer Hiring Portal

Matt Moore, Legislative Liaison
Kentucky Center for School Safety

The background of the slide is a composite image. The top left portion shows two yellow school buses parked outdoors, with the word 'SCHOOL BUS' visible on the front of the one in the foreground. 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. A large white diagonal line separates the image from the text on the right.

School of Innovation Pilot Project

Matthew B. Courtney, Ed.D., Policy Advisor
Office of Continuous Improvement and Support

SB 263 (KRS 160.125)

- Schools may be designated as Schools of Innovation without participating in the pilot project.
- The School of Innovation Pilot Project began Aug. 1, 2026, and ends June 30, 2028.
- In fiscal year 2026-2027, participating schools in Covington Independent will receive up to \$2.5 million as the first pilot project participant.
- Two schools will be chosen to participate in the pilot project for the 2027-2028 school year and \$5 million has been appropriated for this purpose.

Pathway to Participation

- To participate in the School of Innovation Pilot Project in 2027-2028, a school must do the following:
 - Submit a waiver request to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to waive a statute or regulation that poses an obstacle to innovation.
 - Receive the waiver and be designated a School of Innovation by the KBE.
 - Submit an application for funding in the spring of 2027.
 - The application must identify matching moneys consisting of district revenues, philanthropic contributions or other funds dedicated for the operation of the School of Innovation until the end of the pilot project.

Timeline Considerations

- A successful waiver application and School of Innovation designation is required prior to the awarding of funds. To be considered for funds, the waiver application must be heard at either the October, December, February or April KBE meeting.
 - The final day to submit a waiver application to be considered for the pilot program is March 1, 2027.
 - School of Innovation waivers from schools not seeking funds can be heard at any KBE meeting.
- Applications for funding will be due March 1, 2027.
- Funds will become available July 1, 2027, to two awardees.

The background of the slide is a collage. The top left shows a line of yellow school buses, with the number '32' visible on the front of one. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. There are several small desks and chairs in the classroom.

Question and Answer Session

(Submit Questions in Teams)

KDE Leadership



Kentucky Department of
E D U C A T I O N

Important Dates

Continuous Improvement Summit, Lexington

Sept. 21-22

All in for Ag Week

Sept. 21-25

Local Superintendents Advisory Council

Sept. 29

Kentucky Board of Education (in-person)

Oct. 7-8

Superintendents Webcast

Oct. 13



Kentucky Department of

E D U C A T I O N