



# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Our Schools

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*Thomas Woods-Tucker, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner and Chief Equity Officer  
Office of Teaching and Learning*



# WHY?

*We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood (and sisterhood). Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.*

*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*"I Have a Dream" Speech*

# WHY?

- Kentucky's schools should be safe havens where **all students and staff** – regardless of their race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, national origin, or ability – feel safe, respected and welcomed.
- KDE wants to support and assist all school entities in their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts.
- KDE wants to lead the charge for DEI and establish a culture that does not accept any type of achievement gaps.



## Part I: KDE's Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- KDE has identified four priorities in its Strategic Plan: **Equity, Achievement, Collaboration** and **Integrity**.
- [In July, the Kentucky Board of Education affirmed its commitment to racial equity and racial justice in all schools in a resolution stating, in part:](#)
  - Educational leaders must embrace diversity, assure equity and shape the future of all of Kentucky's children
  - Every student in the Commonwealth deserves equitable access to excellent educators who have unique experiences and perspectives, quality preparation and are committed to the success of all learners
  - Educators, schools and districts must commit to listening to those seeking to be heard and to ensure that young people of color feel valued and safe in school and the community.

## Part II: Where We Are Now?

- Acknowledgement that our teachers, principals, support staff and superintendents are facing some of the **most difficult challenges** in the history of education – heightened bipartisan politics, racial tension and uncertainty of new educational policies in Washington, D.C.
- How do we take care of the **social and emotional needs of our students, staff, and administrators** during this time?

# Where We Are Now?

- Ensure we are utilizing the resources of professional staff (school counselors, psychologists and social workers) as well as community partners
- We are building true comprehensive school counseling programs that are preventative vs. reactive. The majority of our school mental health practitioners should be in tier 1 vs. tiers 2 and 3.
- KDE is working with the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental & Intellectual Disabilities to educate schools on interconnected systems frameworks and asset mapping
- Acknowledgement that **diversity, equity, inclusion** and **social emotional learning** are all drivers within our curriculum – they should go hand in hand with teaching and learning.  
Awareness that societal issues that impact our communities also impact our schools. Our success in addressing these issues is directly related to our ability to **collaborate** and **work together as a community**.

# Part III: KDE's On-going Equity-related Initiatives

- **Kentucky Academic Standards Implementation**
  - Ensure equitable access to grade-level appropriate learning for all students.
- **CCSSO High-Quality Instructional Resources Professional Learning Project**
  - Equip and empower local schools in evaluating, selecting and providing access to high-quality instructional resources to support all students with engaging, relevant, standards-aligned grade-level assignments.
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Cross-Agency KDE Project**
  - Establish guidance on a MTSS framework to help schools and districts provide equitable services, instruction and intervention practices and resources designed to meet the needs of the whole child (**academic, behavioral, social and emotional learning**).
- **Equitable Practices/Policy Scan**
  - Seek feedback from local superintendents, principals, district staff, instructional staff, students, parents, school board members and community members on equitable practices already in place in school districts, such as an equity and inclusion action plan. **We will continue to seek input to further this difficult work.**
- **Funding for the Kentucky Academy for Equity in Teaching**

The proposed program will be dedicated to not only the recruitment of minority teachers, but also the recruitment and retention of minority educators to the profession.

# Where We Are Now?

- KDE is speaking to district and school leaders about addressing disproportionality in special education and ensuring access to high rigor courses like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge International and dual credit for all students.
- KDE is also speaking to district and school leaders about common obstacles that prevent this access (e.g. lack of access to Algebra 1 in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, outdated policies, over reliance on test scores, inadequate parent/caregiver input and most importantly, improving Pre-school education.
- The Kentucky Department of Education is also engaged in its own continuous improvement through professional learning opportunities through national experts such as, Dr. Roger Cleveland.
- And we are investigating how to marshal and reallocate our assets and expertise at KDE to ensure every child in the Commonwealth has the resources, teachers, interventions, and support they need to be successful in school and life.





# KDE's Commitment

- KDE is also committed to...
- Providing sample language that schools/districts can adapt and use
- Creating surveys/scan for district/school employees, students and families about equitable practices in each school that are working or that are needed; Pull out questions from existing surveys (ex: Panorama Impact Survey-educating all student indicator to show growth in equity over time) to compare data; Choose mandatory survey; Use advisory/steering committee to create suggested items to add; Create equity action plan exemplars
- Encouraging equity being embedded in each school district's strategic plan
- Facilitating professional development opportunities for districts to share what is working and to share ideas to create better outcomes for what may not be working
- Pointing to innovative research that will further our work in the Commonwealth
- Provide Access to High Quality, Standards/aligned Instructional Resources to Ensure Equitable Access to Learning (CCSSO)



## Part IV: More Courageous Conversations

- There is a lack of understanding among stakeholders of what **equity, equality** and **inclusivity** mean in our schools.
- How do we have **courageous conversations**, create **common ground to create support** for all students and **broaden the definition** of diversity?
- How do we ensure that **students see themselves** in the curriculum?

**Equity**: Respecting each student's culture and providing each student the resources he or she needs to be successful. **A call for Equity does not implicitly suggest racism.**

**Equality**: Treating every student in the same manner, irrespective of differences and assuming all of us have bootstraps.

**Inclusivity**: All stakeholders have a voice in the educational process; Critical Pedagogy

(A)meritocracy suggests that all students “Just pull up your bootstraps.”



Opportunity  
~~THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP~~

Black and traditionally marginalized students often didn't get a pair of boots...

# Race-Based Stress and Trauma

- Conversations about **racial trauma** and **implicit bias** are needed across Kentucky regardless of the racial makeup in our schools, districts or communities, because such events impact us all and we must address their emotional and traumatic consequences.
- [In June, “Guidance on How Districts Can Facilitate Conversations About Race- based Stress and Trauma,” was prepared by the Kentucky Department of](#) Education’s cross-agency Trauma and Resilience Team, in partnership with colleagues from the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities.

# Part V: Creation of an Equity Tool Kit

KDE's racial toolkit will provide resources like the following:

- How to utilize a multitiered system of support that connects to equity

- Equity Data Assessments and Equity Scorecards

- How Districts and Schools Can Facilitate Courageous Conversations About Race

- The connection between social and emotional learning and conversations about race

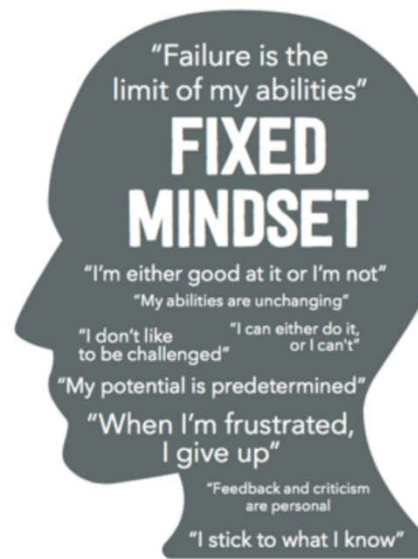
- Resources that help educators choose inclusive curricula

- Resources that help ensure new policies do not oppress or discriminate against traditionally marginalized students

- Unconscious Bias Training: Researched informed series of cultural competency and equity modules

# It's Up to Us

- To help us examine our privilege and implicit biases.
- By doing so, educators can reflect on where they are and decide where they want to go.
- Just a few words of caution. This will take...



## Part VI: Statewide Equity and Inclusion Scan

- When you look at your building(s), what are some existing equitable practices, with an emphasis in racial equity, inclusion and diversity?
- What do you have that already is in place?
- Does your district have an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan or is equity included in your district's strategic plan?

# Google Form: KDE Equity & Inclusion Scan



In order to know how we can help, we need your feedback.



What systems do you currently have in place?



How can we best support you in creating a more inclusive learning environment for all students?

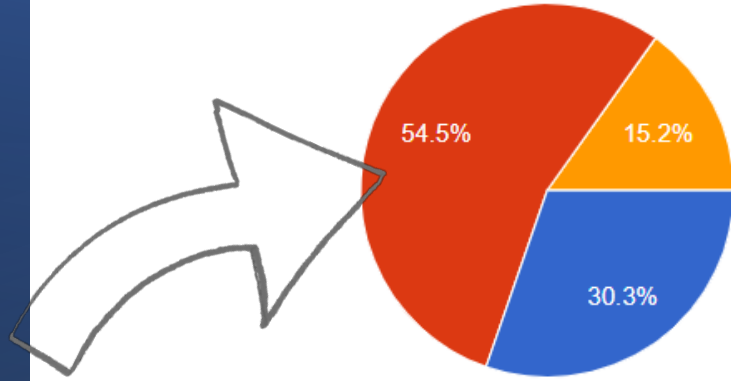


Our goal: Share and discuss results with the field. Act on these results.



### Do you currently have an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan?

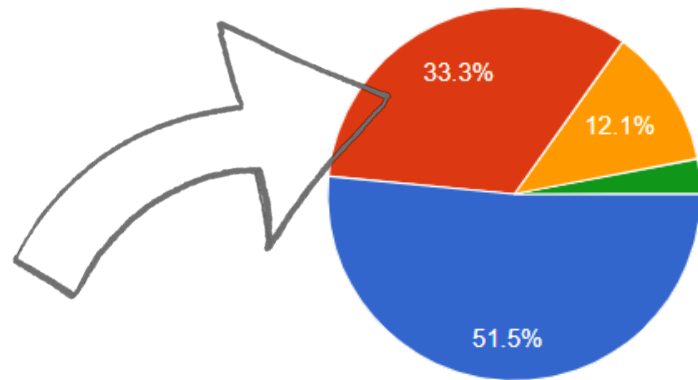
33 responses



- Yes, my district has an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan
- No, my district does not have an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan
- I don't know if my district has an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

### Is Equity included in your district's strategic plan?

33 responses



- Yes, equity is included in my district's strategic plan
- No, equity is not included in my district's strategic plan
- I don't know if my district has an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan
- I don't know if my district does has an Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

# Listening Is Half the Battle: What Do Our Stakeholders Say They Want/Need?

- Most of our students are Caucasian and need exposure to more diversity and assistance with unintentional biases.
- Show us models of best practices, include more than race or ethnicity.
- Provide us with guidance and resources, real resources, to help us to make an equitable and rigorous learning environment a reality for our students.
- Continue to take feedback on this issue and hold meetings with teachers, staff and families.



It's up to All of Us to Advance Equity and Racial Justice in Kentucky Schools.

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# State Assessments and Accountability Update

January 2021

Jennifer Larkins

Division of Assessment and Accountability Support

## Guiding Question

*What do we need to know  
and what should we expect  
with spring testing?*

# State Assessments Update

- Current direction from USED is for states to plan and prepare to assess students.
- Participation in state assessments
  - USED requirement of 95% participation has not been waived as of Jan. 28, 2021.
  - Spring Rosters and Data Review details will be shared with District Assessment Coordinators (DACs).

# 2021 Tentative Test Windows Overview

Assessment	Window		
ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	March 1 - April 23		
The ACT			
<b>Initial Testing</b>	<i>Standard (Paper):</i> March 9	<i>Accommodations (Paper):</i> March 9-12 and March 15-19	<i>Online Standard and Accommodations:</i> March 9-11 and March 16-18
<b>Makeup Testing</b>	<i>Standard (Paper):</i> March 23	<i>Accommodations (Paper):</i> March 23-26 and March 29-31 & April 1-2	<i>Online Standard and Accommodations:</i> March 23-25, March 30-31, and April 1
<b>Emergency Testing</b>	<i>Standard (Paper):</i> April 13	<i>Accommodations (Paper):</i> April 13-16 and 19-23	<i>Online Standard and Accommodations:</i> April 13-15 and 20-22
Alternate Assessment	March 22 - May 28		
EOC Exams (EG Pathway)			
<b>Window 2</b>	February 22 - March 5		
<b>Window 3</b>	April 19 - 30		
Kindergarten Screen	Currently Open - TBD		
K-PREP Summative Assessments	TBD		



# K-PREP Summative Assessments Plan



# K-PREP Summative Assessments

- Priorities for Spring 2021 test development include:
  - develop a new shorter form,
  - populate the form with previously-used items,
  - code items to both new and old content standards, report student performance (Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished) using the old scale and normative 2021 results (i.e., raw score, school, district and state percentiles), and
  - enhance survey questions to include instructional impact of COVID.
- This plan will not meet all federal assessment requirements and will require interaction with USED.



# ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

# New ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Testing Schedule for 2020-2021

## KENTUCKY STATE TESTING DATES 2020-2021

Testing Specifics		Start Date	End Date
Pre-Testing	WIDA AMS Test Setup Available for Test Sessions	Thu 12/3/20	Fri 4/23/21
	Districts Receive Test Materials (On)	Thu 12/3/20	Thu 12/3/20
During Testing	Test Window	Mon 3/1/21	Fri 4/23/21
	Additional Test Material Ordering Window in AMS	Thu 12/3/20	Fri 4/16/21
Post-Testing	Deadline for Shipping Completed Test Materials to DRC	Fri 5/7/21	Fri 5/7/21
	Pre-Reporting Data Validation – LEAs in AMS	Thu 5/27/21	Fri 6/11/21
	Reports and Data Files Available - Online (On)	Tue 6/29/21	Tue 6/29/21
	Reports Available in District - Printed (On)	TBD	TBD
	Post-Reporting Data Validation – SEA Only in AMS	TBD	TBD
	Updated Data Posted in AMS	TBD	TBD



# ACT Spring 2021 State Administration

# ACT Spring 2021 Test Dates

## **Initial Testing** (ACT Test Window 1)

- **Standard (Paper): March 9, 2021**
- **Accommodations (Paper): March 9-12 and March 15-19**
- **Online Standard and Accommodations: March 9-11 and March 16-1**

## **Makeup Testing** (ACT Test Window 2)

- **Standard (Paper): March 23, 2021**
- **Accommodations (Paper): March 23-26 and March 29-31 & April 1-2**
- **Online Standard and Accommodations: March 23-25, March 30-31, and April 1**

## **Emergency Testing** (ACT Test Window 3)

- **Standard (Paper): April 13, 2021**
- **Accommodations (Paper): April 13-16 and 19-23**
- **Online Standard and Accommodations: April 13-15 and 20-22**

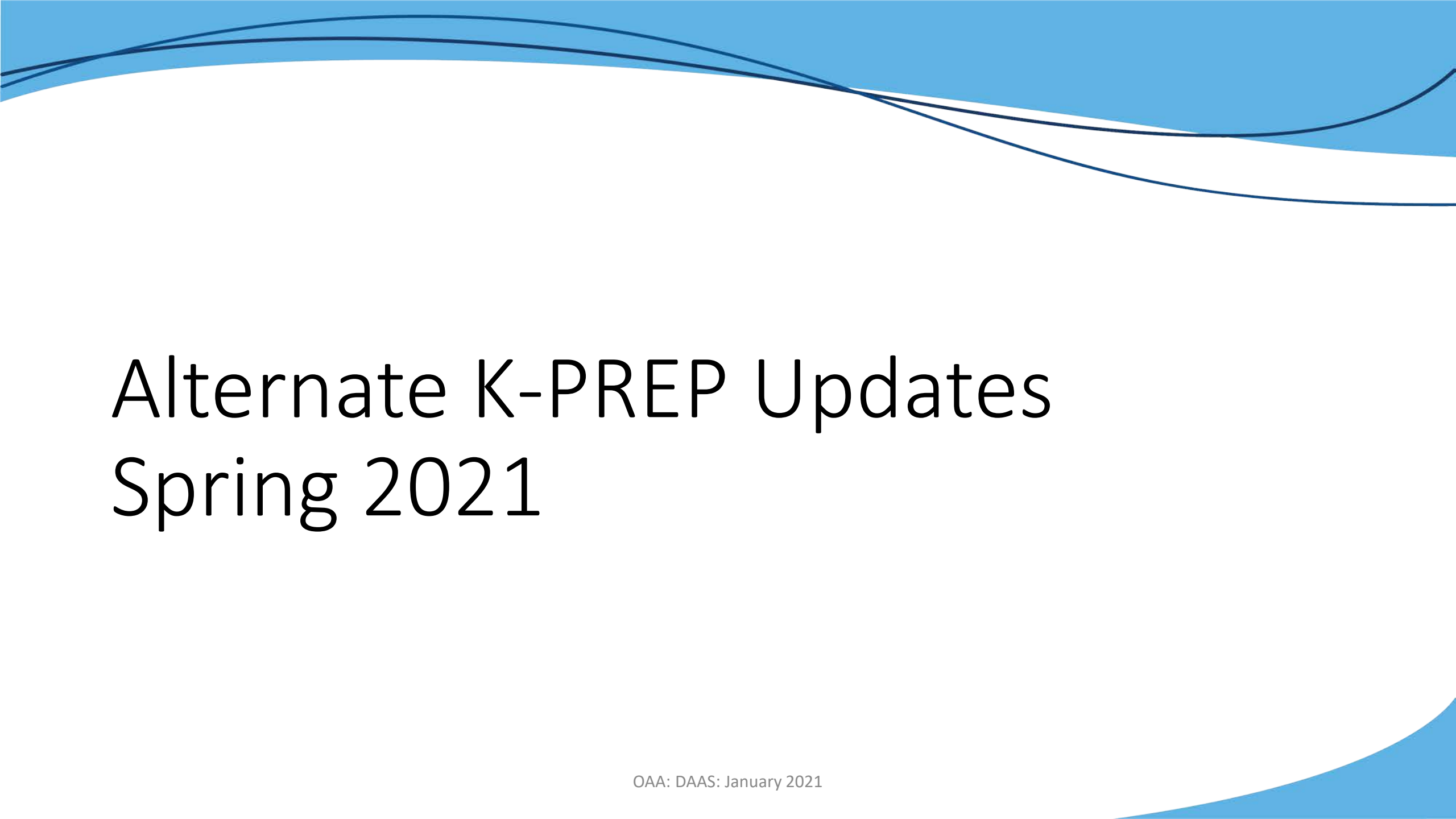
# Upcoming ACT Office Hours

Friday,  
Jan. 29 @  
11 a.m. EST

Thursday,  
Feb. 4 @  
1 p.m. EST

Friday,  
Feb. 12 @  
11 a.m. EST

*Please Note: DACs, BACs, TACs, and TCs will be able to ask questions and receive assistance during this time. DACs, please extend the invitations to all testing staff.*



# Alternate K-PREP Updates Spring 2021

# Alternate K-PREP Tentative Testing Window Postponed

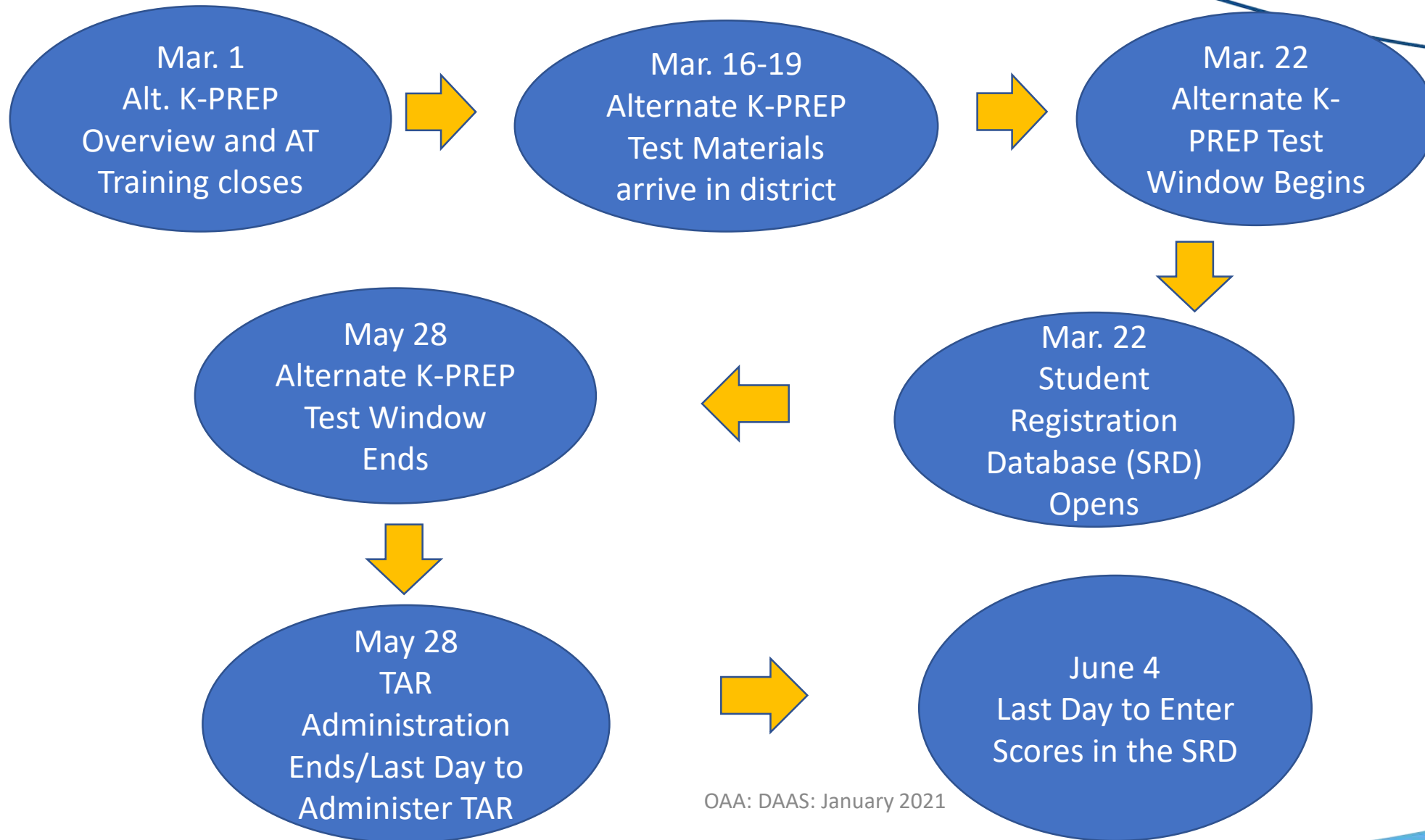
- Test administration window is tentatively scheduled for March 22-May 28.
  - Will consist of one testing window
  - No requirement to start March 22

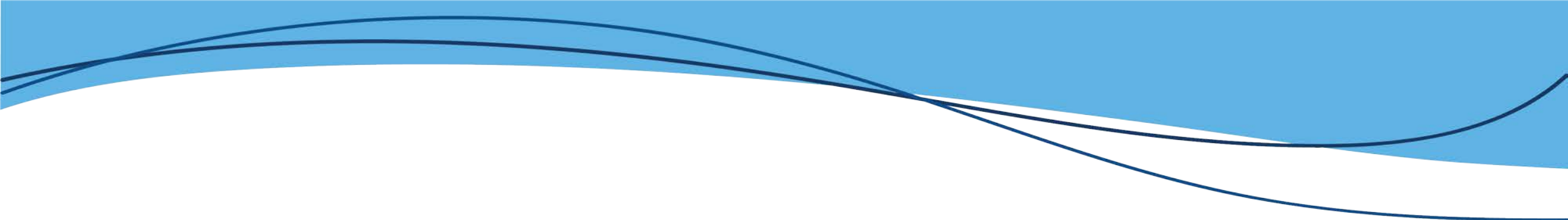
Note: Guidance for the spring administration and handouts will be provided during the Feb. DAC Trainings.

- Administration end date and score entry date have not changed:
  - May 28--last day to administer assessments
  - June 4--last day to enter scores in the Student Registration Database (SRD)
- Postponing the administration date allows more time for instruction while still staying within the closing dates for schools and districts.



# Spring 2021 Alternate K-PREP Schedule





# End-of-Course Exams for Early Graduate Pathway Students

# EOC Exams for Early Graduates



Test Window 2

February 22-March 5, 2021

Test Window 3

April 19-30, 2021



Test Window 2 Return Shipping Deadline

March 11, 2021

Test Window 3 Return Shipping Deadline

May 5, 2021



Return Shipping Address

Kentucky Department of Education

300 Sower Blvd. Frankfort, Ky 40601

Attention: Shara Savage



# Future Assessment Work

# Future Assessment Work Planning

- Discussion was held at the Dec. KBE meeting about assessment, including Spring 2021 testing.
- Explore innovative assessment
- Project planning began formally mid-December
- Partners in the work include
  - The Center for Innovation in Education (University of Kentucky, Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director)
  - The Center for Assessment (Brian Gong, Scott Marion)
  - Division of Innovation (KDE Office of Continuous Improvement) and Districts of Innovation

# Resources on Assessments

- [Assessment Comparison Chart](#)
- [KBE December 2, 2020 Assessment PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- [Link to KBE December 2 Regular Meeting](#)  
(assessment discussion begins about the 3:50 hour/minute)



# Assessment and Accountability Legislative Update

# Introduction of House Joint Resolution (HJR) 8

- [House Joint Resolution \(HJR\) 8](#) was introduced in House on Jan. 5, 2021.
- Directs the commissioner of education to convene a strategic assessment and accountability committee;
- Establishes minimum requirements for the composition and duties of the committee;
- Requires the commissioner to report the findings of the committee to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by December 1, 2021, and December 1, 2022.



# HJR 8 (continued)

The committee shall conduct a thorough examination of assessment and accountability that may:

- a) Assign value within the school accountability system to equitable opportunity and access to rich and diverse learning opportunities;
- (b) Replace the single summative assessment required by KRS 158.6453 with a series of statewide interim assessments that provide educators prompt and detailed information on individual student achievement and growth throughout the school year;
- (c) Reduce the emphasis on high-stakes standardized testing;
- (d) Incorporate alternative performance measures in determining the single summative score required by the ESSA of 2015;
- (e) Utilize the universal designs of learning teaching approach to develop a statewide, criterion-referenced test that is accessible to all students, including students with learning disabilities;
- (f) Review federal testing requirements to determine whether a computer adaptive criterion-referenced test can be utilized to provide a more precise measure of an individual student's academic achievement and growth with fewer questions or items;
- (g) Restrict the number of classroom hours allocated to state- and district-required testing; and
- (h) Improve the ability of state-required assessments to drive meaningful and individualized student instruction.

# Summary of Accountability Regulation Changes

- Alignment of language and requirements to SB 158 (2020)
- Alignment of language in regulation to process for dual credit data collection for academic and career readiness
- Recommendations to KBE based on guidance and discussion from Nov. 6 meeting
  - Status and Change for indicators;
  - Weights and combining performance; and
  - English learner progress indicator with flexibilities; and
  - Minimum-n count.
- Connects reporting requirements in Section 5 to Kentucky's Consolidated State Plan

# Division of Assessment and Accountability Support

## Contact Information

- KDE DAC Information  
[dacinfo@education.ky.gov](mailto:dacinfo@education.ky.gov)  
(502) 564-4394

# School Counselor Advocacy

Jenny Ray, Office of Educational Licensure and Effectiveness

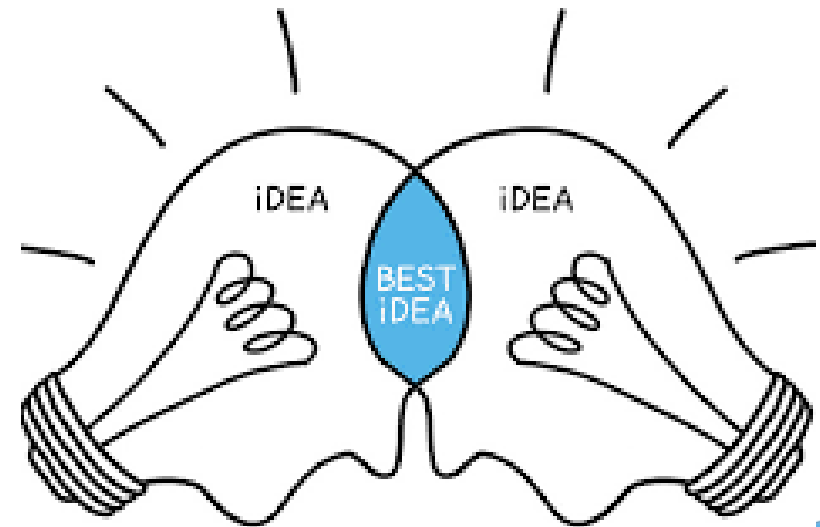
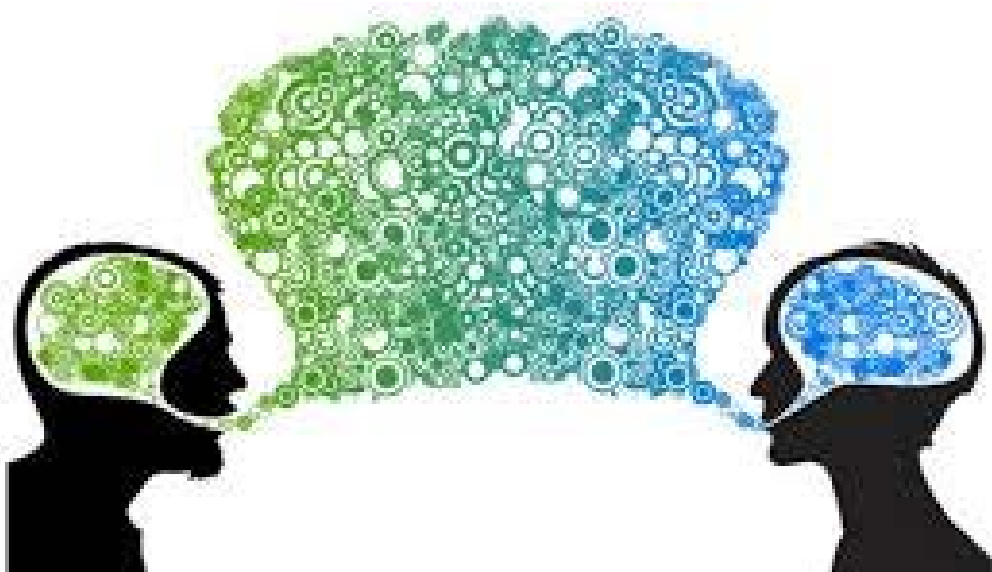
Guiding Question:

*How might school counselors advocate for their roles with their principals?*

# advocate

**Verb: publicly recommend or support**

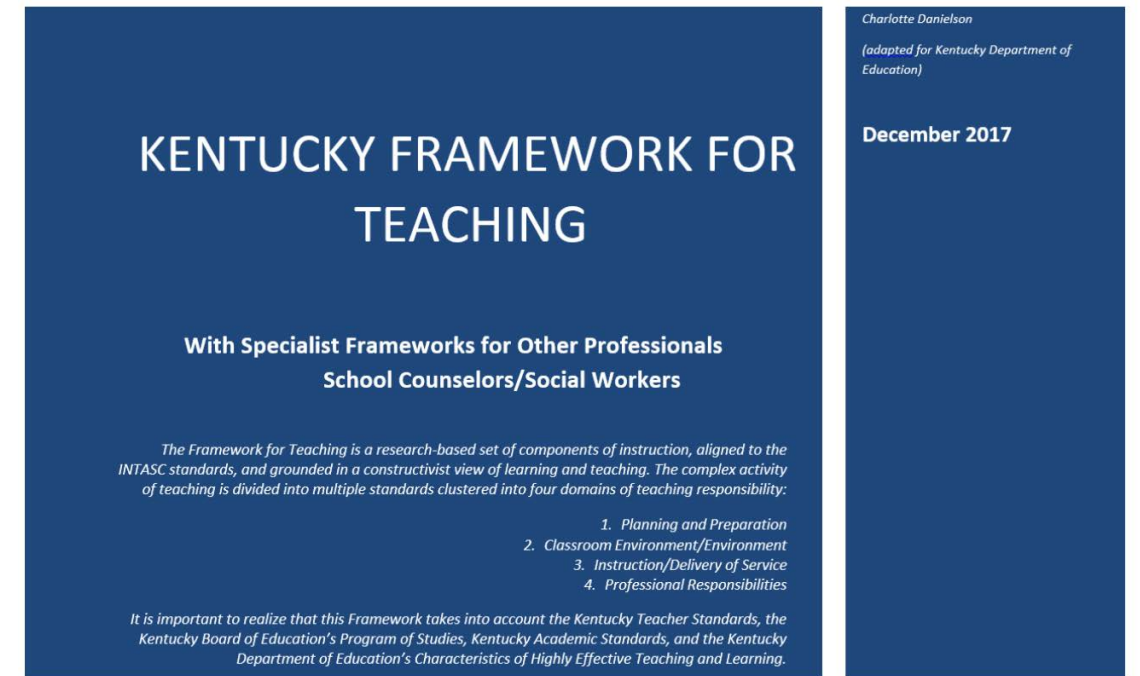
Similar: recommend, prescribe, commend, advise, favor, support, back, uphold, champion, stand up for, speak for, urge, promote, espouse, endorse, sanction, plug, push



# Common Language and Common Understanding for Role Criteria

704 KAR 3:370 Kentucky Framework  
for Personnel Evaluation, Section 8,  
subsection 2:

Criteria for School Counselors is the  
***Kentucky Specialist Frameworks for  
Other Professionals***



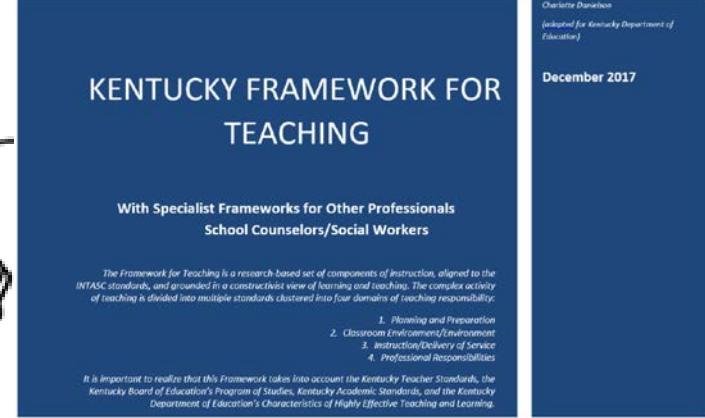
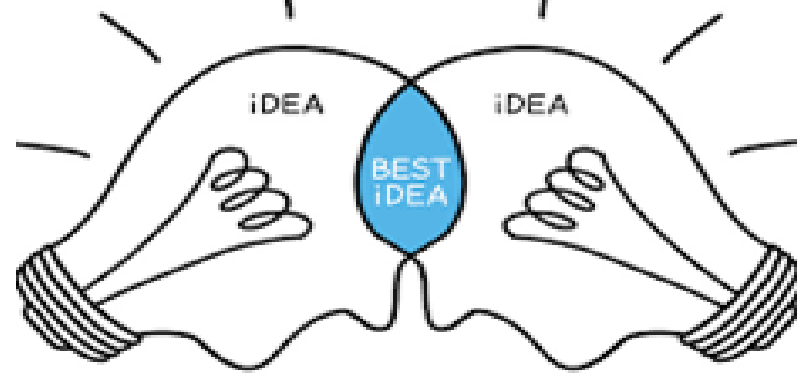
# Principal: “I didn’t know that our School Counselor didn’t have to do \_\_\_\_\_”

## Possible LIFTS:

- Master scheduling
- Awards ceremonies
- Building assessment coordinator responsibilities
- Transcript reviews
- Etc.

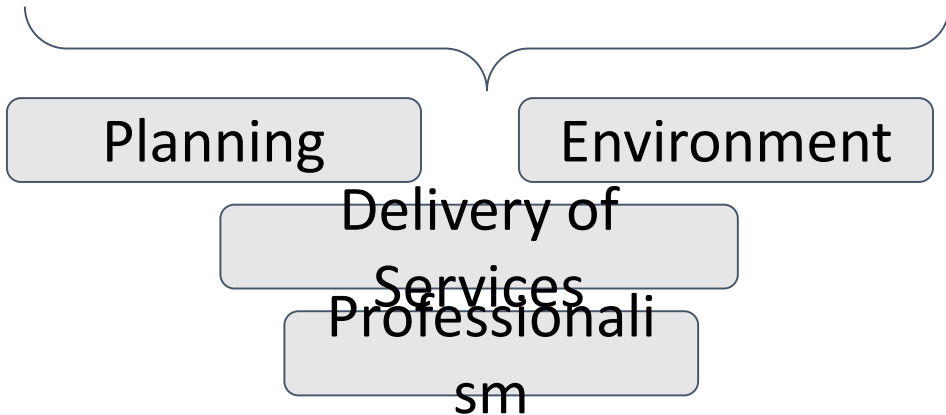
## Aligns with Framework:

- Triage and make referrals to clinical mental health providers
- Collaborate with teachers and admin team to create learning environments that promote educational equity and student success
- Offer individual, small group, and large group (classroom) counseling programs
- Facilitate advisory council for the Comprehensive School Counseling Program
- Etc.



## Professional Growth Plan

- Development
- Feedback
- Self-Reflection
- Monitor Growth



## Aligns with Framework:

- Triage and make referrals to clinical mental health providers
- Collaborate with teachers and admin team to create learning environments that promote educational equity and student success
- Offer individual, small group, and large group (classroom) counseling programs
- Facilitate advisory council for the Comprehensive School Counseling Program
- Etc.



# Best Practices & The Framework

**Academic Development** – implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student’s ability to learn.

**Career Development** –help students 1) understand the connection between school and the world of work and 2) plan for and make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work and from job to job across the lifespan.

**Social/Emotional Development** – help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills.

- Triage and make referrals to clinical mental health providers
- Collaborate with teachers and admin team to create learning environments that promote educational equity and student success
- Offer individual, small group, and large group (classroom) counseling programs
- Facilitate advisory council for the Comprehensive School Counseling Program
- Etc.

# School Counselor Advocacy

Jenny Ray, Office of Educational Licensure and Effectiveness

Revisiting the Guiding Question:

*How might school counselors advocate for their roles with their principals?*

***Feedback Question: With the focus on your role, what do you wish principals knew?***