



# ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

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From left, Kentucky Department of Education's David Wickersham, Amanda Ellis, Felicia Cumings Smith and Robin Chandler discuss proposed changes to PGES with the Kentucky Board of Education recently in Frankfort.

## State board reviews PGES model; innovative districts honored

Plans for a statewide evaluation system for Kentucky certified educators culminated in a discussion before the Kentucky Board of Education at its meeting in Frankfort. The board is considering repealing current regulations governing teacher and principal evaluation and replacing them with a single regulation, [704 KAR 3:370](#), based on the proposed statewide Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES) [model](#).

The goal is for your child to be taught by an effective teacher; your child's school to be led by an effective principal; and your child's district to be run by an effective superintendent. Multiple systems are being used across the state with no consistency or meaningful difference in performance levels or support.

"This is a game changer for teachers and students in Kentucky," state board member Brigitte Ramsey said. "A new system is absolutely necessary if we are to continue moving forward."

Over the past four years, two steering committees and KDE staff have developed a model for teachers and one for principals that focus on professional growth and continuous improvement. They include elements of both formative and summative evaluation. Feedback from participants in a field test, statewide pilot and other stakeholders have helped shape the system. A similar system for superintendents is currently in development.

See **BOARD MEETING, Page 2**

## State's lowest performing schools making gains

Kentucky's lowest-performing schools are making promising progress on increasing student achievement, the Kentucky Board of Education learned at its meeting recently.

Based on 2012-13 Unbridled Learning Assessment and Accountability System results, of the 41 schools named as Priority or Persistently Low-Achieving Schools:

- six schools scored in the Distinguished category, the highest of all performance categories
- eight schools scored in the Proficient category
- 19 schools were categorized as Progressing (met annual measurable objective, student participation rate and graduation rate)

Other highlights include:

- 11 of the 41 schools had overall scores above state average
- 36 of 41 schools met their Annual Measureable Objective
- 21 of 41 schools achieved their College- and Career-Readiness (CCR) targets
- Leslie County High School progressed out of Priority status.

"The results show it is possible to turnaround low-achieving schools," Commissioner Terry Holliday said. "These schools are focused on doing what is best for kids and ensuring their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be college- and career-ready. The improvement we're seeing is a testament to the outstanding leadership and diligent work of teachers, principals, students and parents."

### **BOARD MEETING, from Page 1**

Under PGES, teachers and principals will be evaluated in two main areas: professional practice and student growth trends. All evaluators and observers must be trained and tested before conducting evaluations.

For teachers, the professional practice rating will be determined by observations, a student voice survey, professional growth plans and self-reflection. Four domains: planning and preparation; classroom environment; instruction; and professional responsibilities will be key factors in the process. Peer reviews, which were once a measure of effectiveness, only will be used to provide supportive feedback a teacher can use to improve his or her professional practice.

The performance criteria for principals and assistant principals will fall into the following categories: instructional leadership, school climate, human resources management, organizational management, communication and community relations and professionalism.

Educators will receive a professional practice rating of ineffective, developing, accomplished or exemplary.

The student growth trend rating of high, expected or low will be based on professional judgment and three years of data - student growth percentiles on state tests or locally determined student growth goals, developed collaboratively between the teacher and evaluator.

An educator's professional practice rating and student growth trend rating will determine the educator's overall growth or improvement plan and whether it will: be directed or self-directed, run one or three years, and include both ongoing and comparative reviews that target improvement.

The professional practice rating and student growth trend ratings also will combine for an overall performance category of exemplary, accomplished, developing or ineffective. No individual performance ratings will be made public, but they will be reported by each performance category and will be used in determining the Next-Generation Professionals component of school and district accountability starting in the 2015-16 school year. Additionally, PGES will not be used to make personnel decisions until 2015-16.

In other business, Commissioner Terry Holliday provided state board members with an update on the World Language Program Review. Eleven districts participated in a pilot last fall and have provided recommendations to support implementation moving forward.

Also at its February meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education approved three districts – Owensboro Independent, Owsley County and Trigg County as [Districts of Innovation](#). The status relieves districts of certain administrative regulations and statutory (no jump or end of sentence) provisions as well as the ability to waive local board policy in an effort to improve student learning and educational performance.

The next regular meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education is scheduled for April 9 in Frankfort on the first floor of the Capital Plaza Tower building.



## New ACT report highlights STEM student interest

### Kentucky students have high interest in medical field

In a first-of-its-kind report released by ACT, [The Condition of STEM 2013](#) details achievement levels for students interested in pursuing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. It includes both national and state reports. Research from this report shows that:

- Interest in STEM is high.
- Achievement levels in mathematics and science are highest when expressed and measured interests match.
- More female than male students are interested in STEM, although the opposite is true among higher-achieving students.
- The academic achievement gap that exists in general for ethnically diverse students is even more pronounced among those interested in the STEM fields.
- Students interested in STEM have higher educational aspirations, and their parents are more likely to have attended college than those not interested in STEM.

More students than first thought are interested in STEM majors and occupations. Identifying those students earlier and working to keep them highly engaged in STEM-related curricula will increase the chances that these students follow an educational path that leads to STEM-related careers. Early intervention will ultimately improve the STEM pipeline and help to alleviate the shortage of highly qualified workers who many U.S. employers are currently hiring.

Results from the [Kentucky report](#) show that the most popular career paths for ACT students are nursing, pre-medicine, physical therapy, general engineering and athletic training.

## STEM opportunity for middle school girls

The Bluegrass Central branch of the American Association of University Women will host one of 10 national Tech Savvy programs, the association's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) program for young women.

The hands-on workshop for middle school girls in grades 6-9 and their parents will be May 17 at Kentucky State University in Frankfort.

The program is designed for experiencing opportunities and career prospects in STEM areas through hands-on sessions led by women in STEM fields. The program also includes a track for parents, family members and teachers.

More information and registration are available at [www.Bluegrass-ky.aauw.net](http://www.Bluegrass-ky.aauw.net). Those interested in serving as volunteers for the event should contact [Ramona Griffin](#).

## 2014 Kentucky PTA leadership convention

The 2014 Kentucky PTA Convention on Leadership is scheduled for July 18-19 in Fort Knox.

Each school should send at least one person from their respective board, but more are welcome to attend.

PTA basics workshops and networking with Kentucky PTA Board of Directors are incentives to attend the convention. National PTA President, Otha Thornton, also will be attending.

For more information, e-mail [kypta.oservices@gmail.com](mailto:kypta.oservices@gmail.com) or call (502) 226-6607.

## Summer food service program sponsors sought

Sponsors are being sought and training has been set for the 2014 [Summer Food Service](#) Program (SFSP), and parents of Kentucky students are being asked to spread the word.

The SFSP provides nutritious meals to children – without regard to race, color, national origin, age (within statutory limits), sex or disability – from May until September when schools are not in session. Meals and snacks are served to children in such places as churches, parks, playgrounds and schools.

Public or private non-profit schools; units of local, municipal, county or state governments; and public or private non-profit agencies may qualify as sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program. Residential summer camps whose enrollment includes needy children may also act as program sponsors.

Qualified sponsors are reimbursed for program operating and administrative expenses based on the number of eligible meals served. To be eligible, sponsors must:

- provide continuing service to the community
- serve meals on a regular schedule to children or provide meals as a part of an organized program for enrolled children at camps
- show they are financially and administratively capable of operating the program

Three training sessions for the 2014 SFSP are scheduled for new and private non-profit sponsors.

### Sessions for traditional sponsors

**March 4** – The Corbin Center for Technology and Community Activities

**March 6** – Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green

**March 11, 13** – Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort

### Sessions for camps and colleges

**Feb. 26** – Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort

### Online training for returning sponsors (March 2014) –

Interested participants may pre-register for the live trainings by going to: <https://cnips.education.ky.gov/cnips/>. Find “Training Registration” on the left side of the page.

In addition to the Traditional Summer Food Service Program, school districts currently participating in the National School Lunch Program have the option to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), an alternative to the traditional summer program that relieves many of the administrative burdens for experienced school districts. School districts interested in the Seamless Summer Option should contact [Deanna Tackett](#) at (502) 564-5625.



## Students urged to eat breakfast at school

Students who eat breakfast show improved academic performance - including a general increase in mathematics and reading scores; yet many Kentucky students don't take advantage of the opportunity to eat breakfast at school.

So recently, the Kentucky Board of Education passed a resolution promoting participation in the school breakfast program and kicking off the Kentucky Breakfast Challenge.

While more than half of the state's 650,000 public school students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, only 39 percent of Kentucky students participate in the school breakfast program.

As part of the Kentucky Breakfast Challenge, the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of School and Community Nutrition is partnering with the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association (SUDIA) to work with districts on innovative ways to increase breakfast participation and encourage districts to consider alternative service options such as grab-and-go bags, in-class meals and meals served after the first class period. Grants to support this work will be funded by SUDIA as will cash prizes for winning districts in the Kentucky Breakfast Challenge.

The Division of School and Community Nutrition plans to highlight districts' breakfast best practices during the School Nutrition Association's National School Breakfast Week on March 3-7.

## Students wanted for anniversary march to capitol

On March 5, students have a unique opportunity to participate in a historic and educational event, the 50th anniversary celebration of the March on Frankfort.

In celebration of the 1964 march that featured Martin Luther King Jr., other civil rights leaders and roughly 10,000 participants in a peaceful effort to end segregation, thousands will gather once again in Frankfort. The commemorative march and rally will be from 10 a.m. to noon (EST).

Participants are asked to meet at the corner of Second St. and Capitol Ave. at 9:30 a.m. to proceed to the State Capitol. For more information, contact Mary Ann Taylor of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights toll-free at (800) 292-5566.

High school students and young adults are encouraged to participate in a recreation of the march and will be positioned in the front sections.

As part of the Governor's Mansion Centennial Celebration, the Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) is sponsoring a multimedia exhibit in the Capitol Education Center next door to the Governor's Mansion. This is free and open to the public.

The Capital City Museum has developed an exhibition that will open to the public March 4 and close Aug. 31.

### **New KY MEdia Bank showcases march**

The "Civil Rights Movement in Kentucky" is the first in a series of intriguing topics that teachers can address in their classrooms through [KY MEdia Bank](#), a new online "public scrapbook." The Kentucky Historical Society created the website as both an innovative teaching tool for K-12 students and as a place where



The public may capture, share and archive stories about the people and events that made an impact on Kentucky's communities and ultimately helped shape the state.

KY MEdia Bank promises to be another valuable tool for helping students and others learn about and understand the 1964 March on Frankfort by directly engaging with their own families, friends and communities.

KY MEdia Bank presents the topic then a class will provide the narrative by uploading images, audio recordings, video recordings or short stories that offer insight, knowledge, awareness of - and perhaps even a new perspective on - the subject.

The online format also allows a class to take what it has created beyond the classroom walls by inviting parents and others - to visit the site and read classroom contributions.

For classroom ideas, go to [www.kymediabank.com](http://www.kymediabank.com). For more information, contact [Sarah Milligan](#) or call (502) 564-1792, ext. 4434.

## Final public review of new National Arts Standards ends Feb. 28

The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) has scheduled a final public review of the draft Pre-K through grade 12 arts standards in dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts.

The review will close Feb. 28. A draft of the revised standards is at <http://nccas.wikispaces.com>.

NCCAS is the coalition of national arts and education organizations and media arts representatives that are developing the 2014 National Core Arts Standards.

There will be a rolling "first-glance" version of the final standards available in March. This document will

showcase the fundamental structure and content of the arts standards in order to give teachers, decision makers and the public a better understanding of what will be included and how they will inform teaching and learning.

The new, voluntary grade-by-grade web-based standards are intended to affirm the place of arts education in a balanced core curriculum, support 21st-century needs of students and teachers and help ensure all students are college- and career-ready.

To find out how to participate in the February review process and to view all public documents related to the arts standards, visit <http://nccas.wikispaces.com/>.