

# ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

April 30, 2016



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## Twitter chat

Parents: Want to chat with educators? A parent/teacher Twitter chat takes place at 9 p.m. every Wednesday. To participate or just follow the conversation, use the hashtag #PTchat.

# Nominate your child's teacher for 2017 Kentucky teacher awards



Nominations are now open for the 2017 Kentucky Teacher Awards, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education and [Valvoline](#), a business unit of [Ashland Inc.](#)

Nominations may be submitted electronically by visiting the 2017 Kentucky Teacher of the Year website at [kentuckytoy.com](#). The deadline for nominations is May 15. Any full-time public school teacher in the state with at least three years of experience is eligible. Additional qualifications are cited on the [application](#). Teachers may be nominated by students, parents, teaching peers, principals, superintendents or anyone from the community who has an interest in honoring an outstanding educator.

All nominated teachers are required to complete a formal application, which must be submitted by June 30. Judging will take place in August by a blue ribbon panel of education professionals from around the state; up to 24 Valvoline Teacher Achievement Award winners will be announced in September. Following site visits with nine semifinalists in September and personal interviews with the top three candidates, the Kentucky Teacher of the Year will be announced in Frankfort.

At that time, all 24 teachers will be honored with cash awards and other mementos. Teacher Achievement Award winners will receive a cash

gift of \$500; two of the three finalists will receive a cash gift of \$3,000; and the Teacher of the Year will receive a cash prize of \$10,000, along with an exciting sabbatical opportunity. The Kentucky Teacher of the Year then will represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year competition.

Now in its 16th year, the Kentucky Teacher Awards program is an innovative collaboration between private industry and public education.

## Thank a teacher

Your child's teacher has given so much over the school year, a boost of confidence, extra help when he or she is struggling, being a welcoming presence when everything else seems out of control.

Take a moment during [National Teacher Appreciation Week](#), May 2-6, to share your appreciation for the special educators your child's life. [National Teacher Appreciation Day](#) is May 3.

The National Education Association and the [National PTA](#) offer these ideas to say thank you to teachers using social media:

- A picture of yourself with your favorite teacher, past or present;
- A picture of your child with his or her teacher;
- A picture of yourself holding a piece of paper with a simple message saying "Thank You" to a teacher and why you're thanking him or her.

Be sure to use the hashtag [#ThankaKyTeacher](#) when sharing. You can also share [this graphic](#) to spread the word.



# Board of Education discusses new accountability system

At its April meeting in Frankfort, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) discussed the development of a new accountability system for public schools under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

“Our goal is to develop a system that is fair, reliable, easier to understand and more meaningful for kids,” said Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt. “If we don’t come out with an accountability system focused on students, then we’ve failed. It can’t be about what’s easiest for adults. The system needs to promote what’s best for students.”

The Kentucky Department of Education recently held 11 Town Hall meetings across the state to gather public input on what educators, parents and other shareholders would like to see in the system. Shareholders also may submit thoughts through a special email, [KyEdListens@education.ky.gov](mailto:KyEdListens@education.ky.gov).

“This isn’t an attempt to throw the baby out with the bath water, but to develop a system that is truly reflective of Kentucky values,” Pruitt said.

The commissioner will soon name a steering committee representing all shareholder groups, including legislators, to work with the public feedback and ESSA requirements to develop Kentucky’s new accountability system. Another committee will be formed to anticipate and try to head off any unintended consequences from the proposed system. The ESSA requires the system to be in place by the 2017-18 school year.

At its meeting, the board also heard an update on AdvanceKentucky. The program expands access to and participation and success in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, particularly among student populations traditionally underrepresented in these courses. Since AdvanceKentucky began in 2008, the number of students taking AP courses and earning qualifying scores has

more than doubled. Data show that students who participate in AdvanceKentucky are significantly more likely than their counterparts to be prepared for and go to college, earn higher GPAs and graduate in four years. In addition, more AdvanceKentucky minority and low-income students go to college and significantly fewer enroll in one or more remedial courses.

AdvanceKentucky Executive Director Joanne Lang also announced the ninth cohort of high schools that will participate in the program:

- Boyd Co.
- Campbellsville Independent
- Central (Jefferson Co.)
- Elizabethtown Independent
- Fleming Co.
- Mason Co.
- Nelson Co.
- Thomas Nelson (Nelson Co.)

AdvanceKentucky now reaches students in 109 high schools in 79 of the state’s 173 districts. Lang estimates that by the time current schools are in the seventh year of the program, students will earn qualifying scores and college credits in math, science and English alone that equate to \$10 million in tuition savings every year, based on the average tuition for regional universities.

The board also heard updates on Teach for America, the 2016-18 biennial budget and



education legislation from the 2016 session of the General Assembly. Kentucky Department of Education staff provided a status update on state assistance in Fleming and Robertson Counties and Caverna Independent, as well as an update on state management in Breathitt and Menifee Counties. All districts were reported to be making progress.

At its meeting, the board named Boone County, Corbin Independent and Metcalfe County school districts as new Districts of Innovation and approved select waivers for each district. [KRS 156.108](#) and [160.107](#) provide Kentucky public school districts the opportunity to apply to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) for an exemption from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions, as well as seek waivers of local board policy, in an effort to improve the learning of students.

The agenda for the meeting and supporting materials are available on the [board’s online portal](#). The next regular board meeting is scheduled for June 8 in Frankfort.

# K-PREP testing coming in May

As part of the requirements of Senate Bill 1 (2009), a new public school assessment program beginning in the 2011-12 school year was required. These assessments, taken by students in grades 3-8, are collectively named the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) tests.

This year's testing window is the last 14 instructional days of a district's calendar. Be sure to check with your child's school for the specific testing dates.

For more information on K-PREP tests and reference sheets is available [here](#).

High school students may take other tests including end-of-course exams and AP tests.

State tests, such as the K-PREP tests, are given to measure how well students have learned content based on academic standards. Results from these tests are used to determine where students may need help or accelerated learning opportunities and also are used for school and district accountability.

Test results will be available near the beginning of the next school year and reported to parents. Parents will receive an individual report on the achievement of their child compared to school, state and national results, including information that identifies strengths and academic deficiencies.



## Tips for Test Success

- Know when tests are scheduled and keep up with results.
- Don't schedule appointments, trips or other interruptions during testing.
- Encourage your child to review beforehand and do his/her best on testing day.
- Remind your child of the importance of reading directions carefully and not rushing through a test.
- Review results with your child. Praise success and talk about what can be done for areas in need of improvement
- Remind your child about the importance of test scores now and the impact they can have on his or her future.

## Girls STEM event coming to Frankfort

Tech Savvy, a program of AAUW, introduces girls in 6th through 9th grades to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and teaches "savvy skills" such as negotiation and public speaking.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to attend the Tech Savvy one-day program for adults. Adults receive information on how to help girls get on a path to a college education and a career in STEM.

The day will feature fun and intriguing sessions led by women who work in STEM fields at Toyota USA, Alltech, Kentucky State University, the University of Kentucky and more.

Tech Savvy from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. May 21 at Kentucky State University in Frankfort inside the Hill Student Center.

There is a \$5 registration fee for each student and an additional \$5 fee for each accompanying adult. Please note that all registration fees are

nonrefundable. Cash and check will be accepted at the door.

AAUW-Bluegrass Central Branch is partnering with Kentucky State University to present the event.

For more information and to register, click [here](#).



## Kentucky residents have chance to win an iPad in KHEAA drawing

Kentucky residents have a chance to win a new iPad from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) in a sweepstakes being held through Facebook in May. The contest runs from midnight on May 1 through midnight on June 1.

To enter, a Kentuckian must visit the KHEAA Facebook page, click on the orange graduate icon and answer one question about college. KHEAA will not share or sell any personal information to a third party.

Only Kentucky residents are eligible. Employees of KHEAA or its sister agency, the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation and their immediate family members are not eligible. Prior winners are also not eligible.

The drawing will be held in early June and the winner will be notified by email. The winner must respond by email within three calendar days to receive the iPad with Retina display. If no response is received within three days, another winner will be drawn.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES), need-based grants and other programs to help students pay their higher education expenses.



## Flyer gives 8th-graders tips about high school success

Kentucky 8th-graders headed for high school in the fall might find “High School Basics,” a four-page flyer, helpful. The free flyer can be ordered from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

“High School Basics” has sections about:

- Credits and graduation requirements.
- Calculating a GPA.
- Reading a high school transcript.
- The Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES).
- Earning college credit while in high school.

Free copies are available by emailing [publications@kheaa.com](mailto:publications@kheaa.com). Please remember to include a mailing address. KHEAA is the state agency that administers KEES, need-based grants and other programs to help students pay their higher education expenses. For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit [www.kheaa.com](http://www.kheaa.com).

## Kentucky Speedway sponsors STEM-related essay contest

Kentucky Speedway is sponsoring a STEM-related essay contest for high school students as part of its Racing to Excellence school program.

Students in grades 9-12 can submit an essay researching and describing how one or more STEM fields are represented in NASCAR racing. Winners will be invited to be honorary pit crew members for a NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race team on tech day, July 6, at the speedway and will be invited to attend the qualifying and race July 7.

The submission deadline is May 30. Click [here](#) for more information.

