

# ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

January 2015

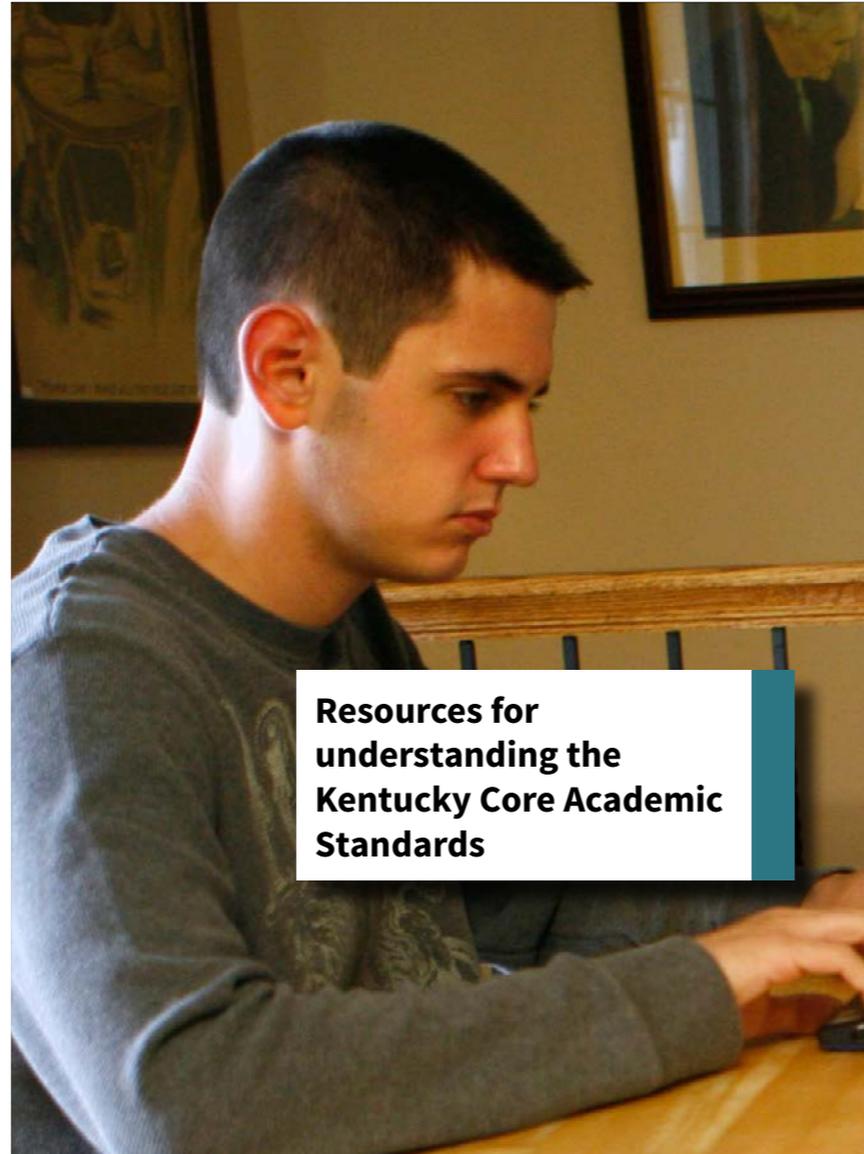


## Links:

- [Kentucky among state leaders in effective data use](#)
- [Career and Tech Data now available in student report card](#)



All photos by Amy Wallot unless otherwise noted



Resources for understanding the Kentucky Core Academic Standards

## Additional content:

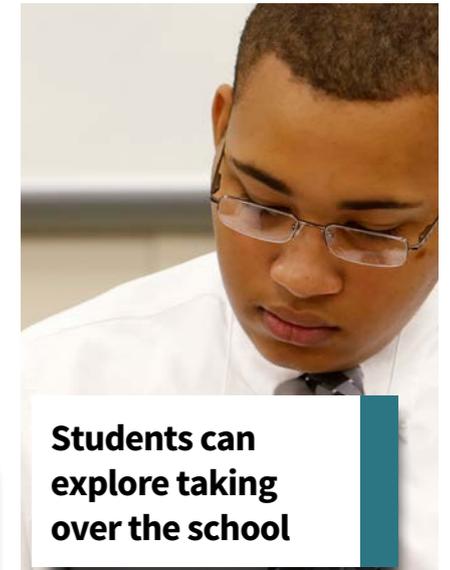
- Pay attention to financial aid deadlines



Agriculture Poster and Essay Contest open to students



Learn about the state's natural diversity



Students can explore taking over the school



Nominations open for Kentucky History Teacher of the Year



## 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.

# Resources for understanding the Kentucky Core Academic Standards

As Kentucky's students continue learning under the Kentucky Core Academic Standards, many parents may find themselves struggling to help their children with homework, particularly in mathematics. Under the standards, students are taught several ways of solving a problem and are required not just to know the answer, but to be able to explain how they arrived at the answer.

The Kentucky Department of Education and several other organizations have tools available to help:

- **Kentucky Core Academic Standards:** The minimum required standards that all Kentucky students should have the opportunity to learn before graduating from Kentucky high schools. The standards address what is to be learned, but do not address how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used.
- **Parents' Guides to Student Success from the National PTA:** A grade-by-grade guide explaining key items children should be learning in English and math, featuring at-home activities and questions parents

can ask their child's teacher.

- **Parents' Guides to Assessments in Kentucky:** Includes testing timelines, sample test questions, impacts on students, new accountability systems and ways for parents to get involved and support their child's learning at home.
- **Common Core Video Series:** Designed to educate parents on the Common Core State Standards and empower them to support the transition at school and at home. The video series includes a [video on math and the Common Core](#).
- **Parent Road Maps:** Detailed information about the expectations of the Common Core in Mathematics. These road maps include examples of grade-level focus in the content area using parent-friendly language, sample progressions of learning across three grade levels in the Common Core, and tips to parents on communicating with teachers about their child's work and how to support student learning at home.



# Agriculture Poster and Essay Contest open to students

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture is seeking entries for its 2015 Poster and Essay Contest. This year's theme is "Kentucky Agriculture: Growing the Next Generation of Farmers."

The contest is open to students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Students may submit either a poster, an essay or a digital image based on the theme.

"Kentucky's young people are our future farmers, consumers and citizens," Agriculture Commissioner James Comer said. "It's important for them to know where their food comes from and understand the effort, skill, and care it takes to produce it. This contest helps raise awareness of agriculture's important role in our everyday lives, and it may even inspire some participating students to join the next generation of farmers."

Statewide poster and essay winners from each grade will be chosen, and an overall digital image winner will be selected. Winners will receive cash prizes to be presented in March at the Kentucky Agriculture Day Celebration, and their work will be displayed at the 2015 Kentucky State Fair.

Entries must be postmarked by Jan. 27, and a completed entry form must be taped or glued to the back of each entry. The name of the student's teacher and school must also accompany each entry.

For more information or an entry form, visit [this](#) website, or contact Jordan L. Spalding at (502) 782-4125 or [jordan.spalding@ky.gov](mailto:jordan.spalding@ky.gov).



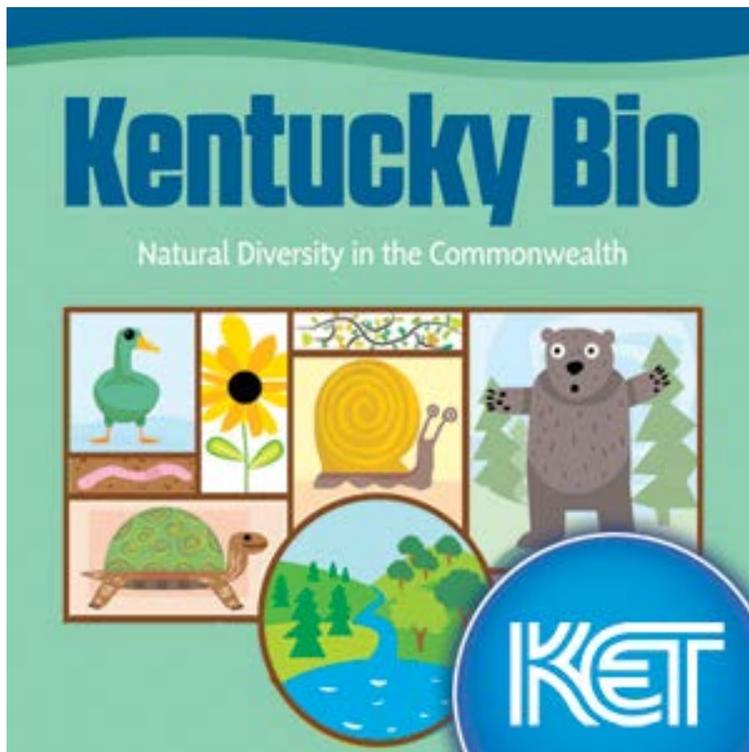
The 2014 poster winners with Deputy Agriculture Commissioner Steve Kelly and Jamie Guffey, executive director of the Kentucky Poultry Federation and secretary-treasurer of Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom Inc., from left: front row — Addison Carmack, Yaslynn Ponce, Miriam Moore, Raven King, and Lexi Tucker; back row — Courtney Hardin, Jason McCormick, Eliza Kate Moore and Morgan Johnson. (Kentucky Department of Agriculture photo)

## New eBook teaches about natural diversity in the commonwealth

From the Appalachian mountains in the east to the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers in the west, Kentucky's varied and wondrous landscape is home to some of the most unusual organisms in the world. "Kentucky Bio: Natural Diversity in the Commonwealth" introduces students to the natural world around them, why it matters, and the ways in which they can make an impact. KET developed this eBook through a grant from The Ryan Fund of the Green River Area Community Foundation and The Pentair Foundation.

The book, designed for students in grades 4-6, available as an epub file in the [Kentucky Bio collection on PBS LearningMedia](#). There is also a link to download the full iBook file.

Also, check out [Kentucky Bio collection on iTunes U](#) to download a sample of the eBook. From there, you can access a link to download the full iBook file to your iPad or Mac computer.



## Students can explore taking over the school for writing contest

What would your child do if he or she were principal for a day? Students can explore the possibility by participating in the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's 2015 creative writing contest. Students must write an essay, short story, poem or play describing what they would do as the boss of their school for a day. Would they change the lunch menu or the food prices? Or would they change the course requirements or build a whole new high-tech building with a game room and widescreen TV? This is their chance to dream.

To get students thinking creatively, see:

- <http://teaching.about.com/od/admin/a/Characteristics-Of-A-Principal.htm>
- [http://rapidcityjournal.com/lifestyles/principal-for-a-day-student-learns-that-job-goes-beyond/article\\_e2e03a90-f582-11de-99b7-001cc4c002e0.html](http://rapidcityjournal.com/lifestyles/principal-for-a-day-student-learns-that-job-goes-beyond/article_e2e03a90-f582-11de-99b7-001cc4c002e0.html)

The contest is open to 11th- and 12th-grade students attending schools in the Fourth Federal Reserve District: Ohio, western Pennsylvania, eastern Kentucky, and the northern panhandle of West Virginia. The eligible counties in Kentucky are listed [here](#). An economics background is not required. Each entrant must be under the supervision and direction of a teacher. Submissions are due by March 2.



## Nominations open for 2015 Kentucky History Teacher of the Year

Does your child's teacher make history come alive in the classroom and show how the knowledge of history factors into making wise choices today? The History Teacher of the Year award is a way to make sure they are recognized for going above and beyond.

Presented by the Kentucky Historical Society, the award alternates between elementary and middle/high school teachers. Only elementary school teachers (K-6) will be considered for the 2015 award.

Nominators must provide contact information for themselves and information about their nominee, including a short, optional statement about why they are nominating the teacher. Nominations can be made by a parent, student, colleague, principal or other administrator familiar with the teacher's work. All nominations must be submitted online via the [Gilder Lehrman website](#).

A teacher can be nominated at any point during the year but must be nominated by Feb. 1 to be considered for the current year's award. For more information, contact Tim Talbott at [tim.talbott@ky.gov](mailto:tim.talbott@ky.gov) or (502) 564-1792, ext. 4428.



Student teacher Kevin Presnell and 2014 Kentucky History Teacher of the Year Sharon Graves pass out cocoa powder during her 8th-grade social studies class at Clark-Moores Middle School (Madison County). The students were learning about the exchange of cultures after Christopher Columbus landed in the Americas.



## Pay attention to deadlines for financial aid

High school seniors and their parents should keep track of deadlines for applying for college financial aid. Here are some tips from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA):

- Check with the financial aid offices of the schools to which you've applied to determine whether they require any financial aid forms other than the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Familiarize yourself with the FAFSA. Unless you are starting college before July 1, you cannot file the FAFSA until after the first of the year. But you should still take a look at the information it requires and make plans to attend a College Goal Kentucky session near you. Guidance counselors should have information about College Goal Kentucky.
- Look for scholarships using KHEAA's "Affording Higher Education" and a free online scholarship search. You can find a link to a free search site under the "Paying for College" tab on [www.kheaa.com](http://www.kheaa.com).
- Attend any college fairs and financial aid seminars offered at your high school or in your area. If a company charges a fee for helping with applications, remember that you can do that yourself for free. If you decide to pay for help, make sure the company is reputable by checking with the state attorney general's office or Better Business Bureau in your area, as well as the area where the company is located.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers Kentucky's student financial aid programs, including the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES).

For links to other useful websites, go to [www.gotocollege.ky.gov](http://www.gotocollege.ky.gov). For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit [www.kheaa.com](http://www.kheaa.com); write KHEAA, P.O. Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call (800) 928-8926, ext. 6-7372.