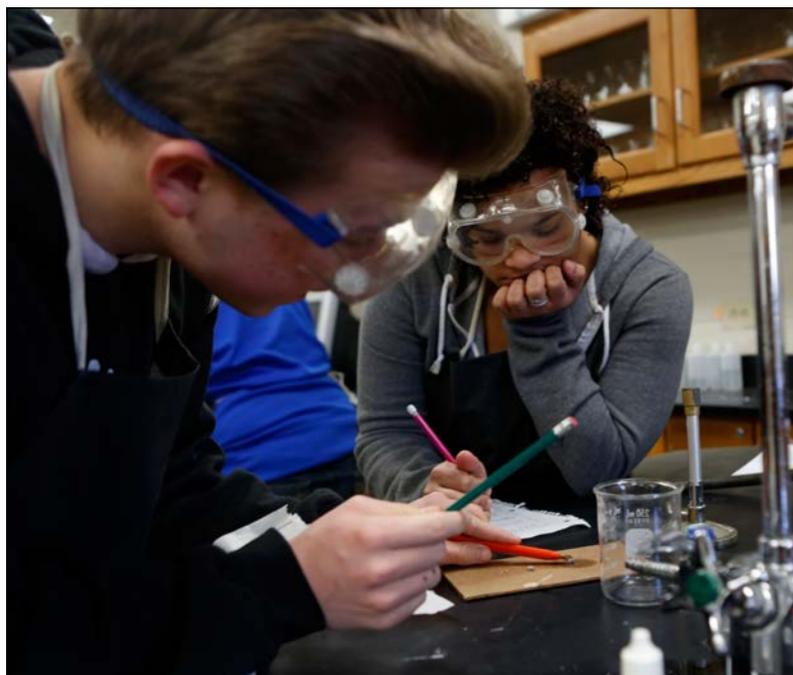


ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

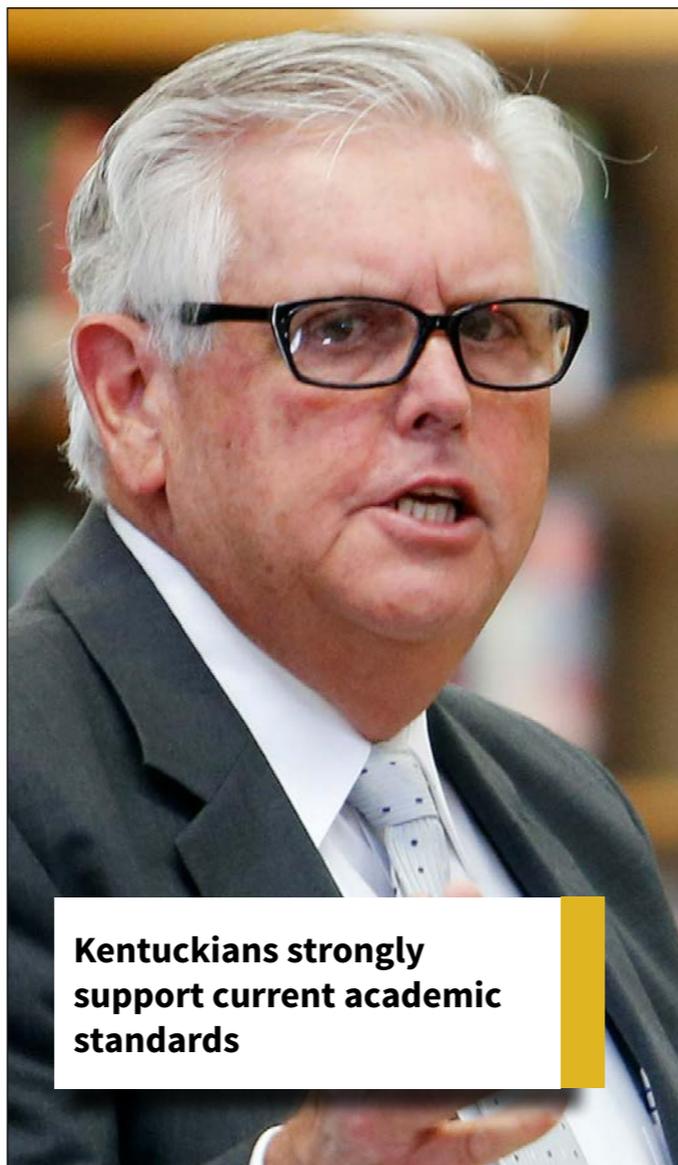
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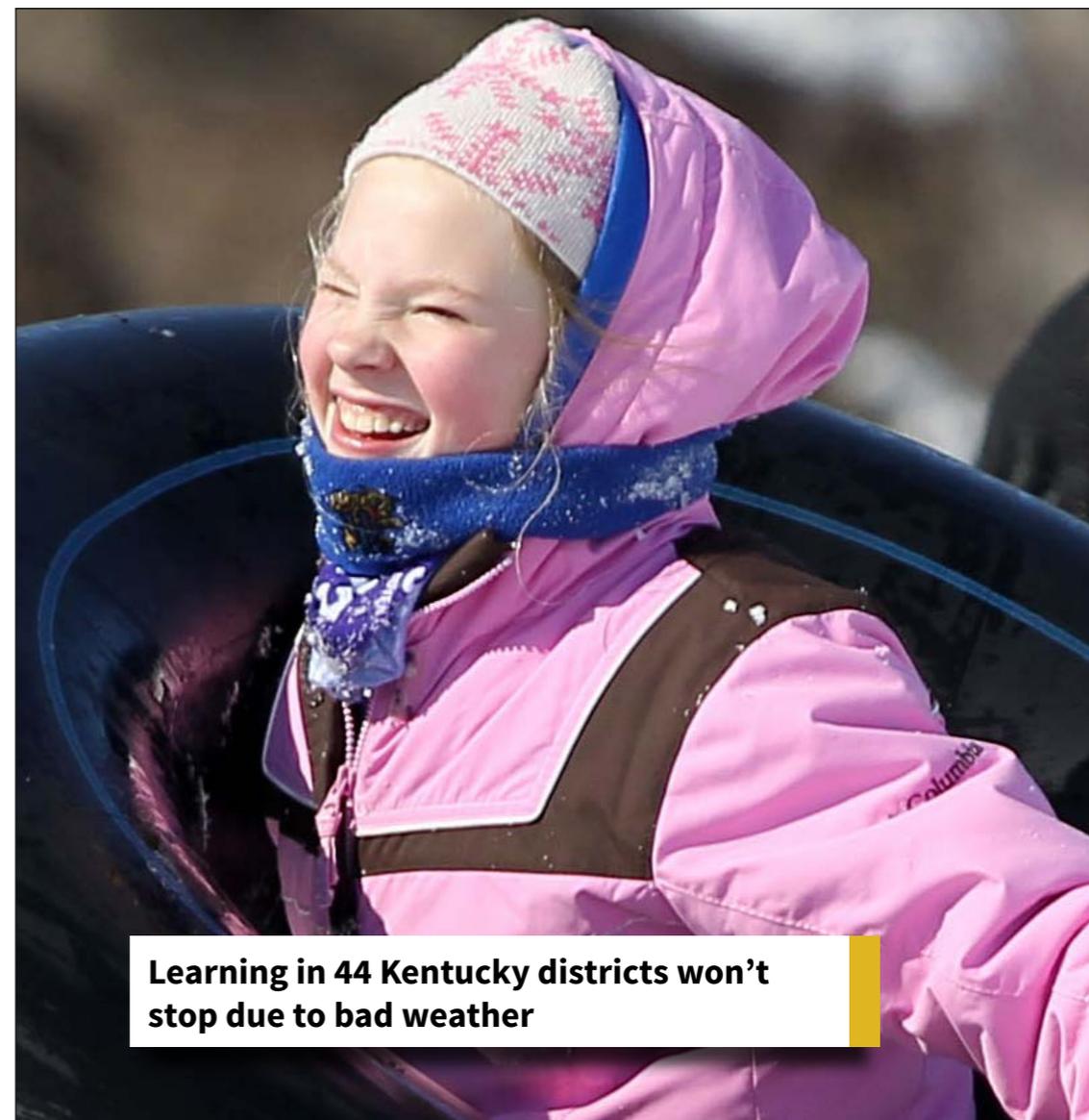
Links:

[Kentucky Board of Education wins national award for state innovation](#)

[Kentuckians recognized for math, science teaching](#)



Kentuckians strongly support current academic standards



Learning in 44 Kentucky districts won't stop due to bad weather



All photos by Amy Wallot unless otherwise noted

Additional content:

- Every hero has a story – find yours this summer
- Come have a Super Saturday at KET
- Summer events across the Commonwealth



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.

Learning in 44 Kentucky districts won't stop due to bad weather

In the upcoming school year, when bad weather hits Kentucky, students in 44 school districts will continue learning even if they aren't at school.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has approved waivers that allow the districts' use of virtual or other nontraditional means of instruction when school is cancelled because of weather or another emergency. In most cases, students will participate in lessons online.

Under the provisions of the waiver, a district may count up to 10 nontraditional instruction days as regular attendance days in its school calendar and not have to make them up.

"As we have been reminded in the last couple of years, weather is unpredictable and when harsh weather hits, it creates a significant hardship for both teachers and students alike," said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. "For the last two years many of our districts were forced to close for several days or weeks at a time due to snow and cold, which not only disrupted instruction but also extended the school year for many. While we hope that this winter will not be as bad, now students in the approved districts will be able to carry on with learning – even when inclement weather keeps them out of the classroom."

The districts that qualified for the non-traditional instruction waivers are: Barren Co., Boyle Co., Clinton Co., Cloverport Ind., Corbin Ind., Elliott Co., Gallatin Co., Garrard Co., Grant Co., Graves Co., Green Co., Harlan Co., Harlan Ind., Hopkins Co., Jessamine Co., Johnson Co., Knott Co., Knox Co., Lawrence Co., Leslie Co., Livingston Co., Logan Co., Madison Co., Marion Co., Martin Co., Mason Co., Meade Co., Mercer Co., Metcalfe Co., Monroe Co., Montgomery Co., Nelson Co., Owsley Co.,

Pike Co., Pulaski Co., Russell Co., Russell Ind., Shelby Co., Taylor Co., Todd Co., Washington Co., Webster Co., Wolfe Co. and Woodford Co.

The 44 districts that received nontraditional instruction waivers for the 2015-16 school year had to submit applications that described their plans for learning while school was not in session. The applications were scored on a rubric that evaluated teaching methods, equal access to the lessons for students without Internet access, staff deployment, community engagement and assessment of student learning.



provisions of the waiver. During the 2014-15 school year, 13 districts participated in the program. Each was ultimately approved for between four to 10 nontraditional instructional days. Each is participating in the program again this year, along with 31 districts new to the program.

For more information on the nontraditional instruction program go to <http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Pages/Non-Traditional-Instruction.aspx>

All 173 school districts were eligible to apply for the nontraditional instruction waivers. House Bill 211 (2014) revised KRS 158.070(9) to allow the education commissioner to grant up to 10 student attendance days to districts that had an approved alternative instruction plan. The law also requires the district to prove how teaching and learning would not be negatively impacted.

Previously, only districts that missed more than 20 school days were eligible. In the spring, districts approved for waivers will submit documentation of student and faculty participation and measurements of student learning for the missed days.

KDE then will determine the number of regular attendance days granted to the district under the

Kentuckians strongly support current academic standards

Kentuckians overwhelmingly support the state's current academic standards in English/language arts and mathematics, according to data from the Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge.

During the challenge, which ran from August 2014 through April 2015, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) provided an online platform for anyone in the state to read the standards and provide specific feedback on how they could be improved.

Academic standards define what Kentucky students are expected to learn at each grade level in order to graduate ready for success in college and career. How the standards are taught – the curriculum or methods and materials used – is decided at the local level, as it was with previous standards.

Overall, 88 percent of the respondents gave the standards a “thumbs up” and did not indicate any changes were needed. About 12 percent of respondents indicated they would like to see some sort of change in one or more of the standards. Of those who wanted to see a change, 71 percent wanted to see one or more of the standards

moved to a different grade level, 32 percent suggested a rewrite of a standard and about 8 percent wanted to see a current standard broken into two or more standards. Respondents could suggest more than one change to the standards.

Nearly 4,000 people took part in the challenge, with almost 50 percent of those who weighed in identifying themselves as teachers or retired teachers. About 20 percent of those who participated were parents, 8 percent were administrators or school district staff, and about 8 percent represented business or the community at large. The remainder were students, professors and state agency partners.

“Our goal is to make Kentucky’s academic standards the best that they can be, so that more students graduate college/career-ready with the knowledge and critical skills they need for success,” said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. “We are grateful to everyone who took the time to participate in the challenge and provide feedback. We were especially pleased that so many teachers took part since they know Kentucky’s standards better than anyone else.”

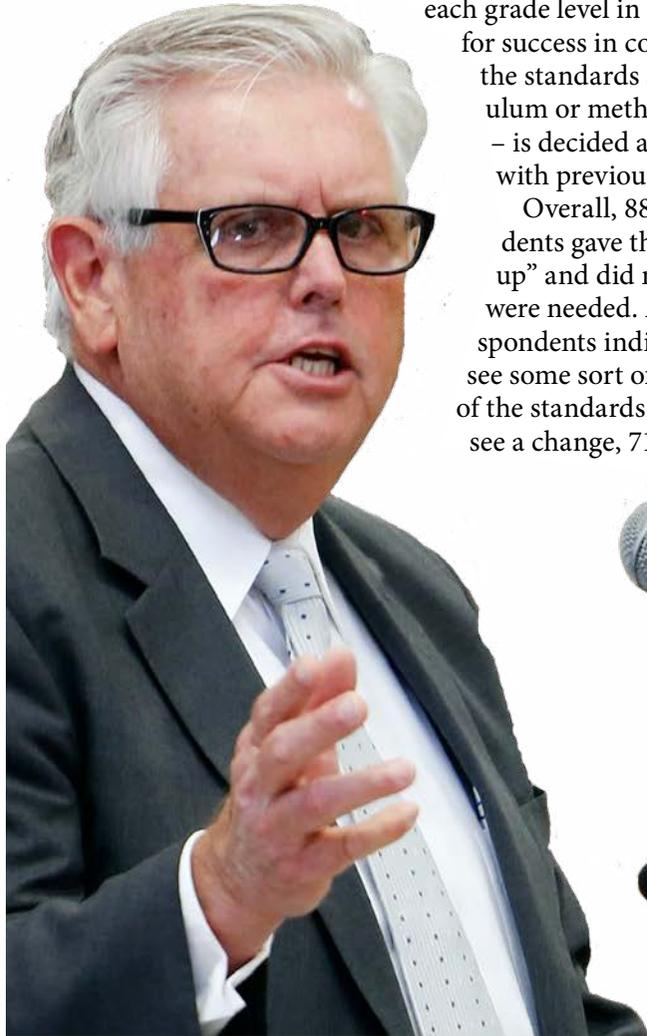
The challenge was part of the department’s regular review of the academic standards taught in Kentucky classrooms. The last review was in 2006, prior to the passage of Senate Bill 1 (2009), which called for new, more rigorous academic standards in all content areas.

Teams of content experts, teachers from K-12 and postsecondary, and education stakeholders are now working with KDE staff to review the feedback and propose revisions that could improve the overall quality and appropriateness of the standards. Proposed changes will be shared with educators before being considered by the Kentucky Board of Education. Any changes would not be implemented until the 2016-17 school year or later.

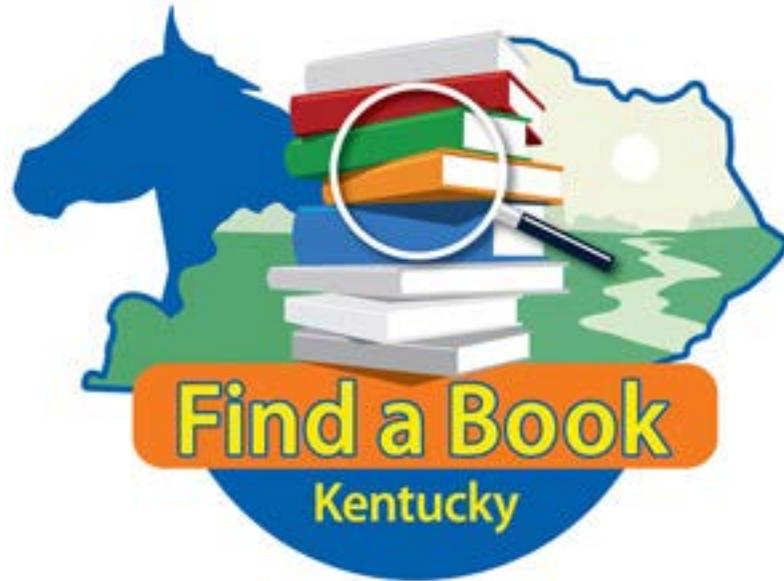
The standards have been taught in Kentucky classrooms since the 2011-12 school year. Since then, the percentage of Kentucky students who are ready for college/career has grown dramatically to 62.5 percent, and the state’s graduation rate has increased to 87.5 percent – among the highest in the nation.

For more information, visit the [Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge webpage](#).

Commissioner of Education Terry Holliday announces the Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge in August 2014 during a press conference at Woodford County High School.



Every hero has a story – find yours this summer



Keep your children learning this summer by participating in Kentucky's Summer Reading Programs at your local public library. Click [here](#) to find out more about programs sponsored by a library in your area.

Before heading to the library to choose a book, visit "Find a Book, Kentucky" to build custom reading lists. "Find a Book, Kentucky" is an easy-to-use tool to help students find books to match their reading ability (Lexile measure) and interests. While on the website, be sure to submit your "Pledge to Read" for summer 2015. The pledge window is May 1-Aug. 31.

"Find a Book" also now has a mobile app for Android mobile phones. "Find a Book" Mobile Beta allows you to search for books based on reading ability, personal interests, keywords and more. Download the app [here](#).

Come have a Super Saturday at KET!

KET will hold Super Saturday, sponsored by the Junior League of Lexington, on Aug. 8 at KET at 600 Cooper Drive in Lexington. The day will include free, fun educational activities – including songs with Mr. Steve – for children ages 2 to 8 and their families. Super Why and the Cat in the Hat also will make appearances, and free healthy snacks will be available. Sign up [here](#).



Summer events across the Commonwealth

Looking for something fun and educational to do with your kids before summer is over?
Check out these events across Kentucky.



Revolutionary Kids Day

Woodford County, noon to 5 p.m., July 18, Jack Jouett House Historic Site Grounds. Free.

Experience life in Revolutionary America with an afternoon of fun children's activities, crafts, games and period demonstrations by Revolutionary War-era costumed re-enactors. Meet Revolutionary War soldiers. Visit colonial tradespeople. Watch musket demonstrations. Spend time socializing with friends at a children's tea party. Special children's historic house tours, pony rides, and a petting zoo will also be available.

<http://www.jouetthouse.org/>

Geology Day

Jefferson County, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., July 18, The Parklands of Floyd's Fork. Free.

[The Falls of the Ohio State Park](#) is bringing Geology Day to The Parklands. Stop by the [PNC Achievement Center for Education and Interpretation in Beckley Creek Park](#) to participate in hands-on activities that will educate you on the geological character of Kentucky. View mineral displays, build a crinoid and hunt for fossils in the gravel bar where park visitors have been known to uncover Brachiopods from the Ordovician Period. Bring rocks from your own collections to be identified by interpretive experts. <http://www.theparklands.org/Events/910/Geology-Day>



“James Harrod: The Battle for Kentucky” outdoor drama

Mercer County, 8:30-10:30 p.m., July 18, 23, 24, 25, 30 and 31, Aug. 1, Old Fort Harrod State Park.

The Ragged Edge Community Theater produces this play in the James Harrod Amphitheater. The play centers around Harrodsburg’s founder, frontiersman James Harrod, and his group of men that came to what is today Kentucky in 1774 to start a new life. They battled the elements, other settlers and each other but mostly the Natives to survive in the wilderness. <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/fort-harrod/>

Storytelling and corn husk dolls

Ballard County, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., July 18, Wickliffe Mounds State Historic Site, \$5 adults, \$4 children, \$2 season pass holders. Cost includes tour of museum, mounds and trails.

Lively storytelling for children and families interwoven with making a corn husk doll (or action hero) to take home. For more information call the park office at 270-335-3681. <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/wickliffe-mounds/>

Hearth cooking demonstrations

Madison County, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., July 18, Aug. 15 and Sept. 19, White Hall State Historic Site. Free.

Guides will discuss and demonstrate cooking practices of the 18th and 19th centuries in White Hall’s historic stone kitchen. This event is demonstration only, with no food provided to guests.

River Heritage Day

Henderson County, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., July 18.

Popular activities returning include interactive storytelling, a hands-on lock and dam system, animals, casting lessons/competition, kids’ fishing tournament and water and electric safety displays. One of the new activities this year will be a towboat race on the Ohio River. <http://www.kentuckytourism.com/outdoor-adventure/events/details/river-heritage-day/60758/>

Living history: re-enactment of the Union encampment in 1862 Bardstown

Nelson County, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., July 18, Old Bardstown Village, Bardstown. \$5 adults; \$3 children or free with full \$10/\$5 museum admission ticket.

www.civil-war-museum.org

Mississippian Field Day

Ballard County, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., July 25, Wickliffe Mounds State Historic Site. \$5 adults, \$4 children, free for season pass holders.

A great way for kiddos to burn off some extra energy before returning to school. We will have activities set up around the park as well as a Chunkey (a Native American game) tournament starting at 11 a.m.

<http://parks.ky.gov/calendar/details/mississippian-field-day/54632/>

The Great American Campout

Jefferson County, 2 p.m.-11:45 p.m., July 25, E.P “Tom” Sawyer State Park, registration required.

A chance to experience camping and nature. Park staff will lead activities including; hikes, archery, nature themed crafts, field games, and more. The Great American Campout is part of the National Wildlife Federation’s effort to get more children to spend quality time outdoors. Click [here](#) for a registration form. Registration deadline July 21.

Pioneer Life Week

Carter County, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. July 20-26, Carter Caves State Resort Park.

A week dedicated to the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the settlement of lands around the Ohio River, re-enactors, musical entertainment and many historical programs. County Fair Day on Saturday includes displays of flint knapping, old time machinery, woodcarving, an 18th-century naturalist and pioneer food. The pioneer camp is open from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday - Saturday and 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Sunday. <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/carter-caves/>

