

ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

September 30, 2015



Pruitt offered education commissioner post



GSA application accepted beginning Oct. 1



**Got a 4th-grader?
Get to a park**

Links:

- Kentucky awarded grant for gifted and talented
- 2015 Kentucky Winner's Circle schools recognized



Wildlife conservation writing and art contest seeks entries

Additional content:

- Female high school students invited to two leadership conferences
- UK hosting math event for high school girls



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.



All photos by Amy Wallot unless otherwise noted

Pruitt offered education commissioner post



Photo provided

great decision for public education in Kentucky – for our educators and students alike.”

In discussing their impressions of Pruitt, board members cited his outstanding communication skills, academic experience, in-depth understanding of education issues, emphasis on collaboration, ability to build relationships, proven track record of building coalitions and partnerships, approachability and his enthusiasm – especially for Kentucky and the future of Kentucky.

Pruitt’s prior experience includes chief of staff, associate state superintendent, director of academic standards, and science and mathematics program manager with the Georgia Department of Education; and high school chemistry teacher in Fayetteville and

The Kentucky Board of Education voted last week to extend an offer of employment to Stephen L. Pruitt to become Kentucky’s sixth commissioner of education. Pruitt is currently senior vice president at Achieve Inc., an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization based in Washington, D.C.

The Kentucky Board of Education took the action at a special-called meeting in Frankfort. Chairman Roger Marcum said the board had done its due diligence and that the board’s decision was unanimous.

“We are extremely proud to have someone of Dr. Pruitt’s caliber to consider for the position,” Marcum said. “We feel like this is a

Tyrone, Ga. He earned a bachelor’s degree from North Georgia College and State University, a master’s from the University of West Georgia and a doctorate from Auburn University.

Pruitt is 47. He and his wife have two children. Their son is in college at the University of Colorado-Boulder and their daughter is a high school junior and will be attending a Kentucky public school.

The board plans to ratify the new commissioner’s contract at its Oct. 6 meeting. Pruitt is expected to start work Oct. 16.

“Dr. Pruitt told the board that he sees this position as the capstone of his career and that he intends to be here a long, long time as our commissioner,” Marcum said.

During the search for a new commissioner, the board and Greenwood/Asher and Associates Inc. made more than 330 contacts, reviewed detailed information on approximately 44 individuals and interviewed 13 candidates.

Pruitt replaces Terry Holliday, who retired as education commissioner last month. Associate Commissioner and General Counsel Kevin C. Brown is serving as interim commissioner until Pruitt officially begins his duties.

Pruitt’s statement to KBE:
“I am honored and excited that the board is extending an offer of employment for me to be the next Commissioner of Education for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I thank the Kentucky Board of Education for its support and confidence. I am looking forward to attending the Oct. 6 board meeting to finalize my selection and begin making plans for starting work by mid-October.”

“As a classroom teacher, a state administrator and vice president for an education nonprofit, my focus has always been on doing what is best for students and that will not change as commissioner. I anticipate collaborating immediately with our state and community leaders to empower educators and parents, and provide every Kentucky student with an education that prepares them for success in the 21st century.”



Got a 4th-grader? Get to a park



Did you know that you own millions of acres of national parks, historic structures, cultural artifacts, ancient forests, snow-capped mountains and clear blue lakes? Federal public lands and waters belong to all Americans and are waiting to be explored.

To help engage and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters and advocates, the White House, in partnership with the Federal Land Management agencies, this fall launched the Every Kid in a Park initiative. The immediate goal is to provide an

opportunity for each and every 4th-grade student across the country to experience their federal public lands and waters in person throughout the 2015-16 school year.

All kids in the fourth grade now have access to their own Every Kid in a Park pass at www.everykidinapark.gov. This pass provides free access to national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges and more until Aug. 31, 2016.

While exploring Yosemite or the Grand Canyon might be out of reach for some families, there are several federal public lands right here in Kentucky.

Kentucky's federal parks include:

- [Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park](#)
- [Cumberland Gap National Historical Park](#)
- [Mammoth Cave National Park](#)



Photo provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior

Female high school students invited to two leadership conferences

The Young Women LEAD Conference will be held at two Kentucky locations next month. The free, one-day leadership conferences are designed to inspire young women to believe in their qualities and strengths, and to challenge them to believe in a higher level of personal growth and development.

The conferences, presented by Toyota and in partnership with SOAR, are being held at Northern Kentucky University and Ashland Community and Technical College.

The northern Kentucky event will be 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Oct. 13 at Northern Kentucky

University's James C. and Rachel M. Votruba Student Union in Highland Heights.

The Ashland event will be held two days to give more women an opportunity to attend. The conferences will be 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. on Oct. 13 and Oct. 14 at the Rocky Adkins Pavilion at Ashland Community and Technical College in Ashland.

The Oct. 13 event is open to students at Paul G. Blazer, Fairview, Greenup, Raceland, Rose Hill and Russell and Lewis County high schools. The Oct. 14 event is open to students at Boyd County, East Carter County, Elliott

County, Lawrence County, West Carter County, Rowan County and Belfry High School in Pike County.

Registration is limited to the first 600 attendees. For more information and to register visit: <http://www.youngwomenlead.com>.



Wildlife conservation writing and art contest seeks entries



The annual Conservation Writing and art contests encourage Kentucky's finest young writers and artists to create and submit short essays and artistic entries that promote best practices for wildlife conservation efforts across the state.

This year's competition, featuring the 71st annual Writing Contest for grades 6-12 and the 41st annual Jim Claypool Conservation Art Contest for grades 1-5, focuses on wildlife conservation.

Students are challenged to examine the environment around them and promote efforts they and others can take to help preserve the

UK hosting math event for high school girls



High School Mathematics Day for Women will be Nov. 7 on the University of Kentucky campus in Lexington. This free event is designed to introduce female high school students to the options available to those who study mathematics and to introduce them to mathematics outside the standard high school curriculum.

The event is open to girls in grades 9-12, as well as their teachers – both male and female – and parents. It will

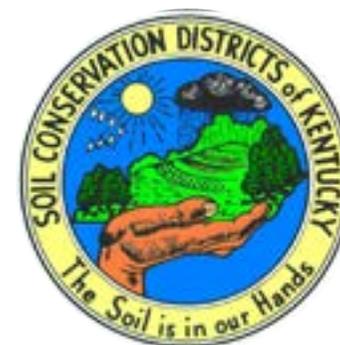
feature a program of hands-on activities, games and discussions. There also will be an optional problem-solving competition, with prizes for the top finishers. Lunch will be provided.

The event will be 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Advance registration for individuals or school groups is requested; the registration deadline is Oct. 16. Click [here](#) for more information, including links to the schedule and registration form.

wildlife that inhabits it. Participants are tasked to share their ideas through short essays and artwork, persuading their readers and viewers to take action toward wildlife conservation efforts.

Contest resource materials – including a guide and official entry form – are available as a downloadable PDF at [here](#). Entries must be received at the student's local conservation district office by Dec. 1.

Each county-level winner will receive a \$25 check for his or her entry. Regional winners are awarded a \$50 prize, and the overall state winners collect \$250 for first place, \$150 for second place and \$50 for third place. The state awards will be presented during a special event in February at the Capitol Annex in Frankfort.



GSA application accepted beginning Oct. 1

Students interested in attending The Kentucky Center Governor's School for the Arts (GSA) can apply for ArtShops and GSA summer program auditions beginning Oct. 1.

Rising juniors and seniors may attend GSA, a three-week summer program. GSA is tuition free, but students must apply and audition for admittance.

ArtShops, which are daylong workshops at which master artists can help students prepare for their auditions. Scheduled dates include:

- Nov. 7, McCracken County High School, Paducah
- Nov. 14, Centre College, Danville
- Nov. 14, Morehead State University, Morehead
- Nov. 21, Bowling Green High School, Bowling Green
- Nov. 21, Louisville Collegiate School, Louisville

The summer program audition dates are:

- March 4, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green
 - March 11-12, Murray State University, Murray
 - March 18-19, Centre College, Danville
 - April 1-2, Morehead State University, Morehead
 - April 8-9, Louisville Collegiate School, Louisville
- Click [here](#) for more information or [here](#) for a brochure.

