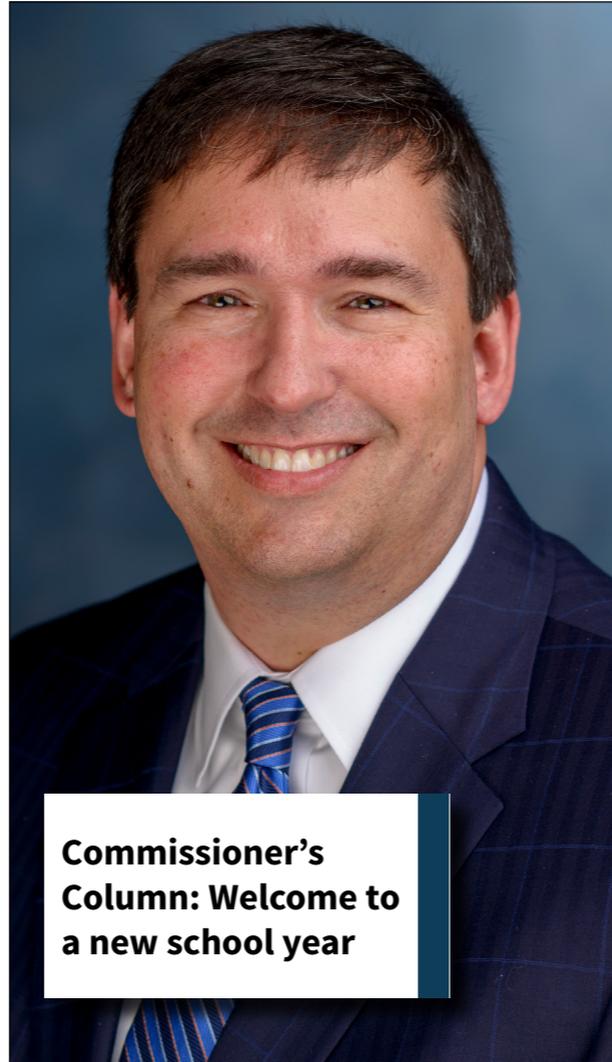
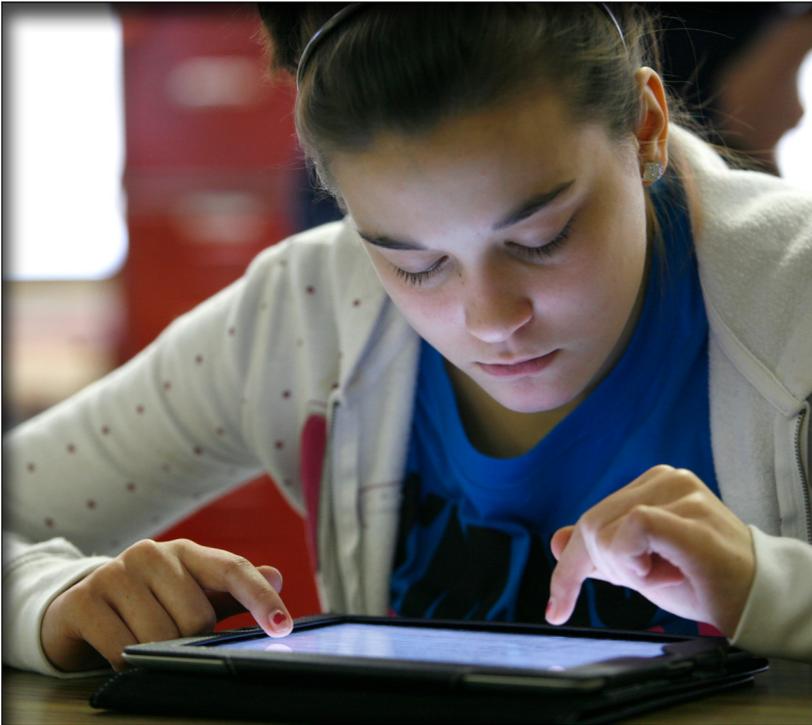


ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

August 15, 2016



Commissioner's Column: Welcome to a new school year



Come visit KDE at the Kentucky State Fair



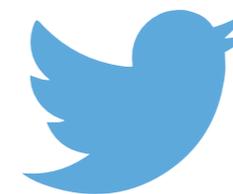
Kentucky Board of Education elects new officers



All photos by KDE unless otherwise noted

Additional content:

- Board approves changes in program reviews
- Two business leaders receive Joseph W. Kelly Award
- KHEAA representatives the Kentucky State Fair
- Kentucky residents have chance to win an iPad in KHEAA drawing



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.

Commissioner Stephen Pruitt: Welcome to a new school year

I liken the start of the school year with a great musical, “Kiss Me Kate.” In the opening song, “Another Op’nin, Another Show,” eager actors and stagehands warmly greet each other while rushing to get ready for the next big production. The singers lament how they practice for weeks and don’t think they’ll ever be ready, then all of sudden, it’s the opening night.

The excitement you feel watching that opening act is palpable and it’s similar to the feelings I had as a science teacher. I remember the excitement I felt just before a new school year started, rushing to get the classroom ready, greeting colleagues, wondering if you’d ever be able to get everything ready in time. Then all of a sudden, it’s opening day and the students are pouring into your classroom to kick off another school year.

We’ve reached the opening day on another school year and I feel just as much excitement now as I did back in my classroom. But this isn’t just another year. We have the chance to create something great in Kentucky and I want all of you – especially parents – to be involved. Here’s why.

In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal law governing P-12 public education. Now known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the measure replaces No Child Left Behind and creates a long-term policy that gives states additional flexibility and provides more state and local control over the accountability process.

Because of ESSA, we now have the opportunity reimagine what the Commonwealth’s accountability system should look like. We all know that the current system is too confusing and does little to help parents understand whether their child’s school is succeeding or failing.

I like to say that an accountability system should be able to be explained to anyone in the time it takes to wait in line at the express checkout at your local grocery store. With the system we now have in place, you need to be in the regular line, behind three people with full carts who all are using two-party, post-dated checks to pay for their groceries!

We have the opportunity now to change all of that.

There are many people already hard at work re-envisioning what Kentucky’s accountability system should look like. We’ve already kicked off the first meetings of the [Commissioner’s Accountability Steering Committee](#) and the accountability work groups. The work groups have been tasked with designing various elements of the new school accountability system.

The work groups will focus on:

- Assessment – how Kentucky’s new accountability system should measure academic achievement for all students.
- College- and Career-Readiness – how college- and career-readiness should be defined and measured in Kentucky’s new accountability model.
- Educational Innovations – what new and innovative approaches could be integrated into Kentucky’s new accountability model?
- Opportunity and Access – how Kentucky’s new accountability model can measure equal opportunity for all students to a well-rounded education.
- School Improvement – how our new accountability model can incentivize continuous improvement for all schools.

Each work group will make recommendations to the Accountability Steering Committee, which will in turn make recommendations on the overall system to me. The tentative plan is to have the proposed system ready for public



Stephen Pruitt

feedback in November. That’s where you come in.

I want as much public feedback as possible when the new proposed accountability system is unveiled later this fall. I want as many people as possible to look at the new system, see if it makes sense, and consider whether it could accurately capture what we mean by a successful school in the Commonwealth.

Your input is important because ultimately, these aren’t my schools and they aren’t the legislature’s schools. This new accountability system will be the tool used to measure how well your schools – the ones you entrust your children to every day – are serving you, your children and your community. That

Welcome to a new school year *continued to page 3*

Welcome to a new school year *continued from page 2*

responsibility to educate your children and give them the skills they will need to succeed in life is one of the most important responsibilities I can think of and we must get this system right.

We'll be sending out information in many ways to make sure you stay on top of all the developments of the accountability system. Be sure to check out the Kentucky Department of Education's [webpage on ESSA](#) frequently, where you will find the latest information about the law, proposed federal regulations and links to the steering committee and the work groups meetings where you can read about what they are up to.

Also with the beginning of the school year, I want to remind you to keep an eye out for the big yellow school buses that are returning to the streets every morning. It's important for all of us who share the road with buses to remember that stopping for a school bus with the red stop sign arm extended and lights flashing isn't just a suggestion, it's the law. While stopping for a school bus might be a minor inconvenience for drivers, it could be a matter of life or death for a child. To reinforce that message, some 45 billboards will be placed across the state warning drivers of the dangers of passing a stopped school bus.

The billboards are part of a back to school campaign on bus safety in Kentucky. Resources to raise awareness of bus safety among drivers, parents and students are available on the KDE [website](#).

It is paramount that our children arrive at school and back home safely each day, so I call on all Kentuckians to be especially cautious around school buses, not just at the beginning of the school year, but anytime they approach one of the big yellow vehicles. Our children's lives depend on it.

Click [here](#) to see a welcome back message from Commissioner Stephen Pruitt.

Board approves changes in program reviews

Kentucky schools this year will change the way they report academic progress in five areas not covered under state assessments. At its recent meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approved revisions to the Program Review process.

A Program Review is a method of analyzing a school instructional program and is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students, provide equitable access to quality programs and afford students a way to demonstrate learning beyond a paper and pencil test.

Program Reviews are required by statute, part of the current accountability system and

are conducted in Arts and Humanities; Global Competency; K-3 programs; Practical Living/ Career Studies and Writing.

For 2016-17, the Program Review process will be greatly streamlined. The assessment has been reduced from up to 56 pages to 8-10 pages and instead of five, two programs will be scored each year.

The requirements to submit evidence, written rationales and next steps to the Kentucky Department of Education have been eliminated. Instead, the principal, school-based decision making council and superintendent will sign assurances ensuring support for providing quality programs and to expand

opportunities for all students.

"I'm not going to tell you this is going to cure all the ills or address all of the validity concerns with Program Reviews," Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt told the board. "Hopefully it will improve the process and help shift the focus from compliance to doing what is right for our kids."

The changes are based on input from practicing educators who served on the Commissioner's Task Force on Program Reviews, which was charged with providing solutions to the major issues schools and districts had raised about Program Reviews.

Kentucky Board of Education elects new officers

At its August meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education chose new officers for the upcoming school year. Members unanimously elected Bill Twyman as chair and Mary Gwen Wheeler as vice-chair. Twyman takes over for Roger Marcum, who had reached his term limit as chair. Twyman is the first African-American chair since the board was reconstituted under the Kentucky Education Reform Act in 1990.

"I look forward to working with the board and thank the board for having trust in me," Twyman said as he accepted the role. "I will try to do my best for the children of Kentucky – all children."



Bill Twyman (middle) assumes his seat as board chair

Two business leaders receive Joseph W. Kelly Award

The Kentucky Board of Education recently presented the 16th annual Joseph W. Kelly Award to two business leaders who are actively engaged in making a difference in their local schools: Brent Cooper, president of C-Forward Information Technologies of Covington, and Audwin Helton, president and chief executive officer of Spatial Data Integrations Inc. of Louisville.

“Kentucky is fortunate to have the involvement of the business community in P-12 public education,” said Kentucky Board of Education Chair Bill Twyman. “The support provided, as evidenced by these two individuals, is invaluable in helping Kentucky reach its educational goals.”

The Kelly award is given to businesspeople who offer outstanding leadership and service toward promoting school improvement and equitable educational opportunities for all Kentucky children.

In a letter nominating Cooper, Boone County Superintendent Randy Poe noted Cooper’s commitment to education as a driver of economic development.

“Brent believes an education system that prepares the next generation to become its workforce is the single biggest economic development tool a region can have,” Poe wrote.

Northern Kentucky Education Council (NKYEC) Executive Director Polly Page stated, “Brent understands the interplay between business and education. From the very beginning, he has served as a liaison between the business community and education and understands how that relates to policy and funding.” Cooper has been an NKYEC board member since the inception of the council.

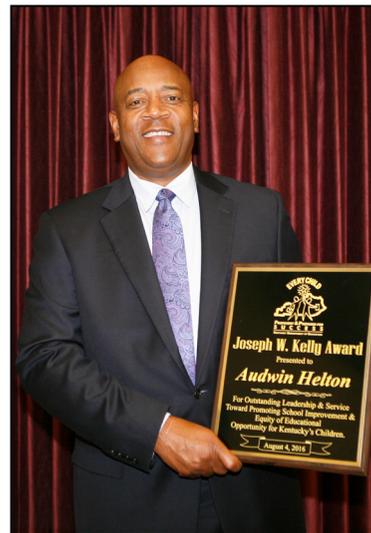
As a member of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce board of directors, Cooper chairs the Education and Workforce Committee. He also serves as co-chair of the Greater Cincinnati Read On! campaign and as a math tutor for the Fort Thomas Independent schools. His company has a business engagement partnership with Covington Independent schools’ early childhood education center and participates in a mentoring program with John G. Carlisle Elementary School.

In a letter nominating Helton, Jefferson County Public Education Foundation (JCPEF) Executive Director Sam Corbett noted Helton’s tireless efforts to improve public education.

“For many years, he has contributed outstanding leadership and service toward promoting school improvement and equity of education opportunity for all Kentucky children,” Corbett wrote. “It is staggering how the efforts of one person can truly make a difference in the lives

of so many students.”

Helton has served on the JCPEF board since 1997 and contributed time, expertise and resources to the Jefferson County schools for many years. He serves on the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce



Audwin Helton



Brent Cooper

Business Leader Champions for Education group, which supports educators and students who are working to improve Kentucky’s schools. In addition, he sponsors the Audwin & Rae Helton Award, which recognizes a member of the Greater Louisville Alliance of Black School Educators as part of the Hilliard Lyons Teacher Excellence Awards.

Helton served as chairman of a task force recommending changes that led to the development of the 5-Star Schools model in Jefferson County high schools in which schools offer courses in an array of professional career themes. He also was instrumental in forming geographic information systems career and technical education pathways at five Jefferson County high schools (Central, Doss, Eastern, Fairdale and Jeffersontown).

He helped Doss High School establish a Men of Quality mentoring program and other programs impacting minority students, has presented in classrooms throughout Jefferson County and has assisted with freshman report card conferences.

The Kelly Award is given in honor of Joseph W. Kelly, a respected business person and chair of the Kentucky Board of Education from 1991 to 1998. Kelly’s efforts and expertise were crucial to the implementation and nurturing of Kentucky’s school improvement efforts.

Come visit KDE at the Kentucky State Fair



Kentuckians attending the 2016 Kentucky State Fair Aug. 18-28 in Louisville are invited to visit the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) booth in the Main Street Kentucky section of the South Wing of the Kentucky Exposition Center.

KDE will feature subject-area themed days, including mathematics, science, arts & humanities, social studies, global competency/world languages, library media, early childhood learners and English/language arts. There also will be days spotlighting the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville and Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville.

The schedule follows:

- Friday, Aug. 19: Global competency/world languages
- Saturday, Aug. 20: Mathematics

- Sunday, Aug. 21: Arts & humanities
- Monday, Aug. 22: Science
- Tuesday, Aug. 23: Kentucky School for the Deaf
- Wednesday, Aug. 24: English/language arts
- Thursday, Aug. 25: Early childhood
- Friday, Aug. 26: Kentucky School for the Blind
- Saturday, Aug. 27: Library media
- Sunday, Aug. 28: Social studies

Visitors to KDE's booth also can pick up free pens, bags and take photos using props to represent the many career pathways available to Kentucky students. The KDE Office of Career and Technical Education also will have staff available to answer questions related to career and technical education.

For more information on the Kentucky State Fair, visit the fair [website](#).

KHEAA representatives the Kentucky State Fair



When visiting the Kentucky State Fair Aug. 18-28 in Louisville, pick up free student financial aid information at the College Info Road Show booth in the South Wing of the Kentucky Exposition Center.

The College Info Road Show is a mobile classroom sponsored by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

At the fair, students and parents can find free college planning and financial aid materials and resources, including information about the new Oct. 1 opening date for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). They can also register to win a \$1,000 college savings account. KHEAA outreach staff will be on hand to answer questions from students, parents, school counselors and other college access providers.

Visitors to KHEAA's booth will find helpful free guides such as "The College Circuit," "Surviving College," "Getting In" and "Adults Returning to School." Students and families can also learn how to request a free copy of "Getting the

Facts," a personalized report that helps students estimate how much financial aid they may receive at the schools they want to attend.

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.

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 August. The contest runs from midnight Aug. 1 through midnight Sept. 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 September, 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.

For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit www.kheaa.com; write KHEAA, P.O. Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call 800-928-8926, ext. 6-7214.