



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kerri Richardson
502.564.2611
502.330.6633

Terry Sebastian
502.564.2611
502.229.6130

Nancy Rodriguez
502.564.2000

School Districts Set Blistering Pace in Adopting New ‘Graduate Kentucky’ Attendance Standard – 75 in First Week

*New policy requires students to attend school until 18th birthdays;
policy becomes statewide mandate once 21 more districts make the change*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 28, 2013) – Kentucky school districts are racing to adopt the new ‘Graduate Kentucky’ standard to keep students attending school through age 18 or until they earn a high school diploma. Since Tuesday, the first day for school boards to adopt the policy, 75 districts have updated the antiquated compulsory attendance standard of age 16.

Governor Steve Beshear, First Lady Jane Beshear and Education Commissioner Terry Holliday commended the districts for their speed in changing their policies.

“We knew there would be a groundswell of support for keeping students in school to obtain their high school diplomas, but this rush to vote by the school boards has exceeded our already lofty expectations,” said Gov. Beshear. “Districts of all sizes and across the state are looking at this common-sense policy and are making the wise decision to move fast to adopt it. They’re saying loud and clear that they want to be a part of building a better future for all Kentucky students, and I applaud them for their effort and energy.”

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97), known as the “Graduate Kentucky” bill, passed this year and phases in an increase in the compulsory school attendance age from 16 to 18, amending the school attendance law created in 1934.

The adoption of SB 97 is voluntary until 55 percent of the state’s school districts adopt the policy.

Earlier in the week, the leaders launched ‘Blitz to 96’ – an effort to get 96 school districts to vote on the compulsory attendance age. Once 96 districts have approved the change, the remaining school districts must adopt and implement the policy within four years. By Friday afternoon, the race to 96 districts was better than 75 percent complete.

“By voting to keep students in school, these districts are giving these students a better shot at life – better jobs, better health outcomes, and better stability for their families,” said Mrs. Beshear. “I congratulate to these school boards for putting faith in their students and placing a high value on education.”

“The number of districts that have moved forward with the ‘Graduate Kentucky’ bill in the past few days is incredible,” Commissioner Holliday said. “Clearly, these districts recognize the importance of education to a student and a community, and made a commitment to both by agreeing to educate all students and prepare them for life after high school.”

The first districts to adopt the policy in the ‘Blitz to 96’ will be invited to Frankfort for a special news conference with the Governor and Commissioner to recognize them for their swift action.

The Kentucky Department of Education is providing \$10,000 planning grants to school districts that adopt the new attendance age policy in the 2013-14 school year. The funds are designed to be used to plan for full implementation in the 2015-16 school year.

Research shows that high school graduates live longer, are less likely to be teen parents, and are more likely to raise healthier, better-educated children. High school graduates are also less likely to commit crimes, rely on government healthcare or use other public services.

More information about Graduate Kentucky, the Blitz to 96, and resources available to school districts is available at www.graduate.ky.gov.

A list of school districts which have adopted the new compulsory attendance age follows, as reported to the Kentucky Dept. of Education as of 2:48 p.m. today.

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| 1. Adair County | 26. Floyd County Schools | 51. Menifee County Schools |
| 2. Augusta Independent | 27. Fulton County Schools | 52. Mercer County Schools |
| 3. Barren County Schools | 28. Fulton Independent | 53. Metcalfe County Schools |
| 4. Bath County | 39. Garrard County Schools | 54. Monroe County Schools |
| 5. Bell County Schools | 30. Graves County | 55. Montgomery County Schools |
| 6. Bellevue Independent | 41. Green County Schools | 56. Morgan County Schools |
| 7. Bourbon County | 32. Hancock County | 57. Murray Independent |
| 8. Bowling Green Independent | 33. Hardin County Schools | 58. Nicholas County Schools |
| 9. Boyd County Schools | 34. Harrison County High School | 59. Owensboro Independent |

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| 10. Boyle County Schools | 35. Hart County Schools | 60. Owsley County Schools |
| 11. Breathitt County Schools | 36. Hazard Independent | 61. Paducah Independent |
| 12. Bullitt County Schools | 37. Henry County Schools | 62. Paris Independent |
| 13. Burgin independent | 38. Hopkins County Schools | 63. Powell County Schools |
| 14. Campbellsville Independent | 39. Jackson Independent | 64. Pulaski County Schools |
| 15. Christian County Public Schools | 40. Johnson County Schools | 65. Rowan County Schools |
| 16. Corbin Independent | 41. LaRue County Schools | 66. Russell Independent |
| 17. Covington Independent | 42. Lawrence County Schools | 67. Simpson County Schools |
| 18. Danville Independent | 43. Leslie County Schools | 68. Somerset Independent |
| 19. Dawson Springs Independent | 44. Lincoln County | 69. Taylor County Schools |
| 20. Dayton Independent | 45. Livingston County | 70. Trigg County |
| 21. Elizabethtown Independent | 46. Logan County Schools | 71. Union County Schools |
| 22. Elliot County Schools | 47. Marion County Public Schools | 72. Warren County Schools |
| 23. Eminence Independent | 48. Marshall County Schools | 73. Washington County Schools |
| 24. Erlanger-Elsmere Schools | 49. Mayfield Independent Schools | 74. Williamsburg Independent |
| 25. Estill County | 50. McCracken County Schools | 75. Wolfe County Schools |

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