



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Nancy Rodriguez

**Office:** (502) 564-2000, ext. 4610 | **Cell:** (502) 330-5063 | **E-mail:** [nancy.rodriguez@education.ky.gov](mailto:nancy.rodriguez@education.ky.gov)

## **KENTUCKY CORE ACADEMIC STANDARDS CHALLENGE ISSUED**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Today, the Kentucky Department of Education, in cooperation with education advocacy groups across the state, kicked off the [Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge](#), a process for collecting feedback on the English/language arts and mathematics standards implemented in 2011. The standards represent what K-12 public school students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

“We hear a lot about the standards, but rarely hear specifics on how they could be made better,” Commissioner Terry Holliday said. “We are conducting the Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge to raise awareness of what the standards actually require students to learn and to solicit specific feedback in order to inform the Kentucky Department of Education’s regular review process of the standards that are being taught in our classrooms.”

Holliday emphasized that this is not a referendum on the standards and only those recommendations on how to change a particular standard will be considered in the department’s review process, which typically occurs every four to six years.

“The Kentucky Board of Education, Council on Postsecondary Education and Education Professional Standards Board have adopted these as Kentucky’s standards and teachers have worked hard over the past five years implementing them,” Holliday said. “We want to honor that work by reviewing the standards and tweaking them to make them stronger so that all Kentucky students will graduate with the knowledge and skills they need for college and career.”

Woodford County 4th- and 5th-grade teacher Brad Clark said over the past three years, he has seen students challenged by the standards to think more and apply what they learn. “Are the standards perfect? No, none are,” he said. “But as an educator, I appreciate the opportunity to provide input on how we can make the standards better to meet our students’ learning needs. It’s really about how can we best prepare our students for success. I would encourage my fellow teachers to take advantage of the KCAS Challenge based on their experience with the standards over the past few years.”

(more)

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Between now and April 30, 2015, P-12 teachers, higher education, parents, students and others who are interested can go to <http://kentucky.statestandards.org> to read the grade level standards in English/language arts and mathematics and provide their response to them. The standards are searchable by subject, grade level and key word. Participants may make suggestions on moving the standard to another grade level, splitting the standard, creating a new standard or rewriting the standard as it currently exists.

Once the challenge ends, the feedback provided will be posted online and a team of Kentucky educators, from all levels specializing in the specific content areas will review the suggestions and make recommendations on any changes to the Kentucky Board of Education for its consideration, most likely in fall of 2015.

During the news conference, Holliday reiterated that the standards prescribe only the minimum of what students should be learning, and do not dictate either how they are taught or the curriculum and instructional materials used. Those are local decisions best made by the district, school and classroom teacher, Holliday said.

Council on Postsecondary Education Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer Aaron Thompson said the standards have served us well to date and reflect a better alignment to college expectations than those of the past.

“We’re seeing fewer of our incoming students have to take remedial course work,” Thompson said. “That means they are more likely to stay in school and graduate, which was the entire impetus for Senate Bill 1 in 2009.”

The legislation called for new, more rigorous standards in all academic subjects.

“Thanks to the foresight of our legislature, the dedication of our teachers and the support of our partners, Kentucky is no longer at the bottom of the education barrel,” Commissioner Holliday said. “We appreciate them all recognizing the importance of doing what is right for Kentucky’s children.”

Among those Kentucky partners who have endorsed the Kentucky Core Academic Challenge are AdvanceEd, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, the Hope Street Group, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the Kentucky Education Association, the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

Kentucky worked with Academic Benchmarks to develop the online tool for displaying the standards and collecting feedback on them. Academic Benchmarks is the leading standards data management solution to K-12 education providers.

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*NOTE: A video of today’s announcement is available at: <http://mediaportal.education.ky.gov/next-generation-schools-and-districts/2014/08/kentucky-core-academic-standards-challenge/>*

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