



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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KENTUCKIANS STRONGLY SUPPORT CURRENT ACADEMIC STANDARDS

(Frankfort, KY) – 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 that the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) released today.

From August 2014 through April 2015, KDE provided an online platform for anyone in the state to read the standards and provide specific feedback on how the standards 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, which was widely publicized by the department and education partners, as well as in the media. Almost 50 percent of those who weighed in on the standards were teachers or retired teachers, about 20 percent were parents, eight percent were administrators or school district staff, and about eight 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 such review was conducted in 2006, prior to the passage of Senate Bill 1 (2009) that called for new, more rigorous academic standards in all content areas. KRS 158.6453 (2) (b) specifically stated the new standards shall:

- focus on critical knowledge, skills and capacities needed for success in the global economy

(more)

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- result in fewer but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning
- communicate expectations more clearly and concisely to teachers, parents, students and citizens
- be based on evidence-based research
- consider international benchmarks
- ensure that the standards are aligned from elementary to high school to postsecondary education so that students can be successful at each education level

Teams of content experts, teachers from K-12 and postsecondary, and education stakeholders are working with agency staff to review all of the feedback collected as part of the challenge and propose revisions that have merit for improving the overall quality and appropriateness of the standards to promote college/career readiness for all students. Proposed changes will be shared with educators for clarity before going to the Kentucky Board of Education for consideration. Any changes to the standards would not be implemented until the 2016-17 school year or later.

The Kentucky Academic Standards in English/language arts and mathematics 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, as well as a listing of the specific feedback collected on each standard through the online platform, visit the Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge [webpage](#) on the Kentucky Department of Education website.

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