



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COMMISSIONER'S STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
SUMMARY
NOV. 22, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: (22 members present) Hunter Combs, Joud Dahleh, Arnav Dharmagadda, Justin Dunning, Raima Dutt, Peter M. Jefferson, Shraman Kar, Vijaykumar Karthikeyan, Loren Little, Ella Luking, Kalli Oblander, Anastasia Panaretos, Alexandra Perry, Spandana Pavuluri, Tanvi Rakesh, Chloe Ralston, Sophia Retone, Amy Roblero-Perez, Luke Taylor, Malley Taylor, Sarah Umbarger, Bentley White

ABSENT: (6 members absent) Gavin Breunig, Charleigh Browning, Delaney Daugherty, Ollie Fegenbush, Nyla Johnson, Sarah Yu

SUMMARY

Agenda Item: Welcome

Presenter: Jason E. Glass, Education Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education; Toni Konz Tatman, Chief Communications Officer, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Glass opened the virtual meeting and noted that several schools have been closed recently due to illnesses. Konz Tatman called roll.

Feedback: None

Agenda Item: Approve Summary from Last Meeting and Communications Opportunities for Students

Presenter: Toni Konz Tatman, Chief Communications Officer, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: The council approved the [Oct. 13, 2022, Commissioner's Student Advisory Council meeting summary](#). Motion made by Peter Jefferson and seconded by Joud Dahleh.

Konz Tatman shared several communications updates. The [Kentucky United We Learn Council](#), which includes a few members of the Commissioner's Student Advisory Council, will hold its first meeting Nov. 29-30. Students are encouraged to [nominate deserving teachers for the 2024](#)

[Kentucky Teacher of the Year award](#). Konz Tatman also announced that several scholarship opportunities are posted on the [Student Advisory Council's Twitter account](#).

Feedback: None

Agenda Item: Roundtable Discussion – School Counselors

Presenter: Heather Bushelman, Program Coordinator for Comprehensive School Counseling, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Bushelman discussed the role and challenges facing school counselors and invited students to share their perceptions of school counselor services. “Your feedback will drive my work with counselors in our state,” Bushelman said, noting that students’ feedback will be shared with the [School Counselor Advisory Council](#).

Feedback: Several council members noted limits to school counselor availability. Justin Dunning said that in his small school, the counselor takes on additional roles including scheduling and duties of an assistant principal. Members from larger school districts noted that there is regular high demand and not enough availability to meet with school counselors. Raima Dutt said wait times for counseling services can range from a day to a month.

Chloe Ralston said it is hard for students to build strong relationships with school counselors due to recurring turnover. Sophia Retone said that this was the first year she saw a counselor in-person due to school distancing measures the past few years.

Peter Jefferson said that he has had positive experiences with school counselors who provide strong supports for students’ college and career-readiness as well as mental health. Joud Dahleh said that getting in contact with counselors at her schools is easy through use of a Google scheduling form.

Agenda Item: Student School Safety Project Discussion and Breakout Groups

Presenter: Meredith Brewer, Director of Education Policy; Brian Perry, Director of Government Relations; and Christina Weeter, Director of Student Success, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Brewer shared guiding questions and recommendations for students to consider as they broke into smaller groups to edit the current draft of their school safety recommendations policy brief. The project, which began at the council’s May 31, 2022, meeting in response to the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, includes student-driven policy suggestions to Kentucky legislators and other education stakeholders. It is a consensus-driven product of the Student Advisory Council, with the opportunity for input and approval from all members.

Feedback: None.

Follow-up: Brewer noted that brief draft is due Dec. 1. After ensuring consistent citations, Brewer’s office will share the document with the council for final feedback and approval. She shared that Perry would review the final document with council members and discuss how it may be received by state legislators and other audiences.

Agenda Item: Update on Kentucky Department of Education’s Portrait of a Learner

Presenter: Lu S. Young, Chair, Kentucky Board of Education

Summary of Discussion: Young discussed the statewide Portrait of a Learner approved Oct. 11 by the Kentucky Board of Education. The movement, she said, builds on previous work to identify the durable, lifelong knowledge, skills and dispositions all Kentucky learners need to ensure success after high school. The approved portrait includes the following skills and dispositions: critical thinker, effective communicator, empowered learner, productive collaborator, engaged citizen and creative contributor.

Young said that one of the [Kentucky Board of Education’s goals](#) is to promote the creation and implementation of a statewide profile of a learner/graduate. “Kids are more than test scores. Learning is more than content. Not throwing it out, but rebalancing what we expect all of our Kentucky learners to know, to be able to do and to be like,” she said.

Feedback: The council divided into two groups to discuss Kentucky’s Portrait of a Learner. Glass summarized his group’s discussion, noting that students liked the critical thinking aspects and support for arts education. Students wanted to see job skills such as interviewing more closely embedded into the portrait; a greater emphasis on the importance of civics education; and questioned how to measure evidence of the dispositions, he added.

Agenda Item: Feedback and Discussion on 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Presenter: Stephanie Bunge, School Health Consultant, Division of Support Services; Jim Tackett, Healthy Schools Project Director, Division of Support Services; and Angela Stark, Division of Support Services, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Bunge presented findings from the [2021 Kentucky Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#) and invited council feedback on the results. The 2021 Kentucky YRBS, conducted as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor students’ health-risk behaviors in six priority areas. These six areas include injury and violence; alcohol and drug use; tobacco use; nutrition; physical activity; and sexual risk behaviors.

The 2021 Kentucky YRBS was completed by 2,178 students in 52 public high schools and 1,367 students in 39 public middle schools. Bunge said the 2021 YRBS results could be impacted by COVID-19.

“We are encouraging people to understand this is a snapshot of the data of fall 2021,” said Bunge.

Kentucky has been administering the YRBS since 1997.

Feedback: “A lot of the numbers did surprise me,” said Luke Taylor. “The biggest one that surprised me was that over 45 percent of high school students said they tried an electronic vapor product. I knew it would probably be the higher-20 percent, lower-30 percent, but not nearly half of the population.” According to the 2021 YRBS, 45.1% of Kentucky high school students surveyed had used an electronic vapor product before.

Retone said she was surprised with the percentage for attempted suicide rate. The 2021 YRBS data showed 9.8% of Kentucky high school student survey responders had reported attempting suicide.

“It made me think about what my school does for suicide prevention and the importance of doing that,” she said.

Hunter Combs felt it was important to share this information with students across the state. “This can help students not feel alone and see that a lot of their peers are going through the same thing they are,” he said. “Seeing those statistics could be really useful.”

Agenda Item: Deeper Learning Activity

Presenter: Jason E. Glass, Education Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion: Due to a scheduling conflict, Glass announced that this activity would be moved to a future meeting.

Feedback: None

The meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m. ET.

The next Commissioner’s Student Advisory Council meeting is scheduled to take place virtually Dec. 13 at 9:00 a.m. ET.