



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Education Continuation Task Force

SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: AUGUST 10, 2020

ATTENDANCE: Jon Akers, Casey Allen, Tina Bojanowski, Rhonda Caldwell, Eddie Campbell, Jacqueline Coleman, Tonya Crum, Jason Detre, Jim Flynn, Donna House, Nancy Hutchinson, David Johnson, Eric Kennedy, Stephanie Little, Brian Lovell, Brent McKim, Leon Mooneyhan, Amy Razor, Susan Rieber, Mary Ruble, Julian Tackett, Gretchen Wetzel, Benjamin Wilcox, Wayne Young

SUMMARY:

Agenda Item: Welcome

Presenters: Kevin C. Brown, interim commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)
Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman, secretary, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Summary of Discussion:

Brown welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. Coleman expressed her appreciation for the task force members' input, which helps the governor formulate steps moving forward.

Feedback:

None.

Follow-up Required:

None.

Agenda Item: Library Guidance

Presenters: James Allen, library media consultant KDE Office of Education Technology
Marty Park, chief digital officer, KDE Office of Education Technology

Summary of Discussion:

Allen discussed the [Library Media Center guidance document](#) that was released on Aug. 10. Partnerships between Kentucky Educational Television (KET) and the Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) were highlighted as ways for library media specialists to locate and share quality instructional resources to enhance virtual learning. KET's resources are free and KYVL is a paid annual membership for individual districts, with many districts already subscribed. Educators are encouraged to reach out to their school librarians for assistance in locating quality resources and integrating technology into instruction.

Feedback:

None.

Follow-up Required:

None.

Agenda Item: Virtual Learning and Class Size

Presenters: Kelly Foster, associate commissioner, KDE Office of Continuous Improvement and Support

Marty Park

Summary of Discussion:

Foster reviewed [guidance](#) on class sizes in virtual programs and courses. Maximum class sizes are defined in statute, though site-based decision-making (SBDM) councils have the authority to waive class size limits defined in statute. Local school board policies should also be reviewed to see if there are board policies around class size. Schools governed by SBDM councils are not required to request state waivers, as SBDM councils may grant class size waivers for virtual or in-person learning. Schools without a SBDM council must email [Kelly Foster](#) to request an exemption form and KDE will provide temporary class size waivers.

Park outlined best practices to keep in mind for virtual learning and class size. When determining class sizes, districts should consider influencers such as the availability of additional content coaches and facilitators as well as teacher capacity and student-centered interactions.

Feedback:

None.

Follow-up Required:

None.

Agenda Item: Suspending Evaluations

Presenter: Todd Davis, division director, KDE Office of Licensure and Effectiveness

Summary of Discussion:

Davis outlined the current statutes on certified teacher evaluations and asked task force members for input regarding the possibility of evaluations during the pandemic. Districts are currently required to inform teachers of any changes in the evaluation system within 30 days of employment, which creates an immediate challenge.

Feedback:

- Evaluations will be extremely challenging for teachers and administrators in a virtual learning environment.
- Virtual teaching will look very different from in-person teaching and may need a different set of standards. A lot of thought must go into what those standards would be and how teachers and administrators would apply them.
- It may be helpful to suspend summative evaluation activities and focus on formative evaluations during the fall semester, since teachers across the state are new to virtual instruction. Legislative action may be necessary later in the school year.
- Some components of certified evaluation plans, such as growth and work ethic, may be more informative than others in a virtual learning environment.
- Principals will need a lot of support in knowing what to look for and providing feedback when evaluating teachers during virtual instruction.
- A teacher self-evaluation tool may be helpful so that they can help guide the conversation and the progress they are making. This could help with the ability to understand the work occurring and progress made by each teacher.

Follow-up Required:

None.

Agenda Item: Follow-up Items from the Last Meeting

Presenters: Karen Dodd, chief performance officer, KDE Office of the Commissioner

Summary of Discussion:

Dodd informed task force members about next steps regarding topics that were requested during the July 27 task force meeting. The discussion around using classified staff effectively during virtual instruction will be facilitated by KDE leadership during educational cooperative meetings. The topic of compulsory education and educational neglect is under discussion and will be addressed in forthcoming task force meetings.

Feedback:

None.

Follow-up Required:

None.

Agenda Item: Updates from the Department for Public Health

Presenters: Dr. Connie White, deputy commissioner

Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH)

Emily Messerli, DPH branch manager

Summary of Discussion:

Brown discussed recent questions regarding in-person staff training and meetings. He reminded task force members to maintain the Healthy at Work guidelines and remember that the governor still encourages teleworking when possible, as lessening the number of people present in buildings increases space between people and reduces the risk of spreading the virus.

White addressed questions she has received regarding contact tracing and why it looks different across the state. She explained that contact tracing is complex and involves several factors, so seemingly similar cases may be far different. White also reviewed the updates to the Healthy at Schools guidance, which now states that plexiglass dividers may be used in schools if they are properly affixed and do not have sharp edges. She reminded the group that shower curtains are not permitted due to toxic fumes and any physical barriers should allow proper egress during emergencies.

White discussed the fact that while the number of positive cases went down, the positivity rate has increased, which is a troublesome reminder that Kentuckians must continue mitigation efforts.

Feedback:

None.

Follow-up Required:

Regarding a question around positivity rates in states where schools have reopened, White agreed to bring examples to share during the Aug. 24 task force meeting.

Agenda Item: Review and Adjournment

Presenter: Kevin Brown

Summary of Discussion:

Brown thanked everyone for their participation on this task force and for their work to support their groups. He reminded task force members to contact [Karen Dodd](#) if they need to share a topic during upcoming task force meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for Aug. 24, 2020, 1 p.m.-3 p.m. ET. Group members should send feedback or questions to [Brown](#) or [Karen Dodd](#).