



Kentucky Department of Education
Local School Board Members Advisory Council (LSBMAC)
Meeting Summary
February 29, 2024

PRESENT: David Webster, Simpson County; Joanna Hinton; LaRue County; Venita Murphy; Webster County; Julia Fischer, Bellevue Independent; Brenda Rose, Whitley County; Brandon Rutherford, Madison County; Larry Dodson, Oldham County; Diane Berry, Nelson County; Joanna Freels, Shelby County; Carl Wicklund, Kenton County

ABSENT: Ruschelle Hamilton, Breathitt County; Linda Duncan, Jefferson County; Felix Akojie; Paducah Independent

SUMMARY:

I. Agenda Item: Roll Call and Welcome

Presenter: David Cook, Facilitator, Director of Innovative Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Cook asked members to confirm their continued service on the council. All members present, both in-person and virtual, stated their intent to continue. Members not present will be contacted about their decision.

II. Agenda Item: Interim Commissioner's Update, Open Discussion and Feedback

Presenter: Robin Kinney, Interim Commissioner of Education, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Kinney began by expressing gratitude towards Cook for his dedicated work on behalf of the Kentucky Department of Education. She conveyed sadness about his departure, acknowledging the bittersweet nature of his retirement.

Kinney highlighted Cook's significant contributions to the agency, particularly his exemplary work with local school boards and his efforts in fostering innovation to support school districts.

Kinney provided an update on the commissioner search process for the Kentucky Department of Education. She mentioned that they had gathered feedback from various advisory groups, stakeholders, educators and members of the General Assembly regarding the desired qualities for the next commissioner. The application period for the commissioner position closed on Feb. 16, with 15 applications received and she emphasized the importance of quality over quantity in the selection process. Next steps include the first round of interviews scheduled for March 7 and 8, conducted by a subset of the Kentucky Board of Education serving as the

interview committee. Finalists will then be interviewed by the full Kentucky Board of Education on March 18 and 19. Kinney highlighted the aggressive timeline to ensure confirmation by the Kentucky Senate before April 15, the last day of the General Assembly's session. She encouraged stakeholders to stay updated on the process through the Kentucky Department of Education's website, specifically the 2023-2024 commissioner search web page. Anyone can stay informed about the progress of the commissioner search through the Kentucky Department of Education's website.

Kinney also provided an update on the ongoing General Assembly session, which is two-thirds completed. She emphasized the increased workload during this period, with a need for detailed attention to legislative matters. Staff at the Department of Education are busy reviewing bills and assessing their potential impact on local school districts and the department itself.

Brian Perry was introduced to provide a legislative update and walk through some of the bills under consideration. She encouraged members to stay informed about legislative developments affecting education through updates provided by Perry and the Department of Education.

Kinney acknowledged the presence of Marty Park and expressed appreciation for his participation on the agenda. She highlighted ongoing discussions within the department regarding the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on both local school districts and the operations of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). The department is actively learning about AI alongside the attendees.

Park and his team from KDE's Office of Educational Technology (OET) are conducting educational sessions with the department, focusing on the theme of "Work Smarter, Not Harder." These sessions aim to explore the world of AI, its potential advantages for KDE staff, and its application in classrooms for teachers and staff.

Kinney provided an update on Career and Technical Education (CTE) initiatives and celebrations throughout the month, emphasizing its significance in the Commonwealth. She mentioned various events and achievements, including a showcase during the Kentucky Board of Education meeting, showcasing performance-based work and hands-on learning in CTE. Kinney said that according to the Office of Career and Technical Education, there was an 11% increase in enrollment during the school year 2022-2023 compared to the previous year, reflecting the flourishing of CTE in Kentucky. Kinney highlighted the evolution of CTE, noting the shift from pathways to blended learning opportunities where students engage in both academic and technical education. She also mentioned significant milestones such as internships, apprenticeships and postsecondary credentialing for CTE students. Upcoming events include student organization competitions such as DECA, SkillsUSA, FBLA, FFA, HOSA and Education Rising, where students showcase their skills and accomplishments. The Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) event is scheduled for March 27 at Rupp Arena.

In addition to David Cook, Kinney announced the retirement of David Couch, associate commissioner in the Office of Education Technology. They expressed regret at losing two valued members of the team simultaneously. David Couch's retirement marks the end of a long and distinguished career with the Kentucky Department of Education, spanning 32 years. During his tenure, he has led his organization within the department to become a leading entity across the country, leaving a legacy on KDE and local school districts.

Kinney encouraged attendees, particularly members of local school boards, to support the Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) students and their participation in the statewide competition. She emphasized the

significance of the event as a celebration of student achievements in hands-on learning and problem-solving. Information regarding the STLP conference would be shared following the event for those unable to attend. The floor was then opened for questions, with the speaker welcoming inquiries.

Larry Dodson, Oldham County, stated that there are three literacy programs to choose from, but the cost of implementation would range between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000. He questioned if the county could develop its own literacy program to save that 800,000 to \$1,000,000 to earmark the money towards teacher salaries because this is more like an unfunded mandate. Kinney suggested that the question be directed to Micki Ray, the chief academic officer at the Kentucky Department of Education. Kinney acknowledged the importance of addressing the inquiry but emphasized the need for clarity on the specific program being referenced. She noted that without precise information on the program in question, it would be challenging to provide a comprehensive answer. Kinney speculated that the program might be related to literacy initiatives, such as "Read to Achieve," but highlighted the importance of understanding whether the funding is specific to Oldham County or applicable statewide.

III. Agenda Item: Guidance Implications with using Artificial Intelligence as a Learning Partner

Presenter: Marty Park, Chief Digital Officer, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Park introduced the topic of artificial intelligence and its relevance in the education sector. He emphasized that AI serves as a valuable partner in decision-making and learning processes, offering assistance in tasks such as creating, designing and problem-solving. He referenced the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) Master Plan, which prioritizes the safe, secure and responsible use of artificial intelligence in education. This emphasis aligns with the goal of empowering educators and students while ensuring human oversight remains central to the educational process. The discussion started with the recognition that everyone, including teachers and students, should be seen as leaders when it comes to adopting and understanding artificial intelligence in education. The importance of staying engaged and not simply relying on AI to work autonomously without intervention was emphasized. A guidance brief on AI in education was mentioned, developed in partnership with school district leaders and education technology experts, focusing on safe, secure and responsible use of AI.

Various approaches to AI policy in education were discussed, including prohibiting use, wide-open usage, restricted use, requested use, and curated and safe exploration of AI tools. Considerations for using AI in education were outlined, including avoiding the feeding of sensitive data into AI tools, ensuring the tool is part of an enterprise ecosystem, being cautious about giving permissions to AI tools, and considering the ethics of AI-generated products. Examples of AI tools already in use in education were provided, such as grammar suggestions, data visualization, email translation, transcription and image recognition. Participants engaged in a game to distinguish between real and AI-generated images, highlighting the increasing difficulty in discerning between the two. The importance of professional development for teachers in learning to leverage AI tools effectively was stressed, with a focus on the coaching model and the role of digital learning coaches.

The potential of AI to assist teachers in managing their workload and providing personalized tutoring for students was discussed, with an emphasis on evidence-based implementation strategies and the importance of the human element in education technology adoption. The need for students to be educated in using AI

tools effectively to prepare them for future employment opportunities was highlighted, with an example of a missed opportunity for AI education in a greenhouse business context.

The discussion concluded with a recognition of the importance of equipping both educators and students with the skills and knowledge to leverage AI effectively while emphasizing the human-centered approach to education technology implementation. The discussion focused on concerns regarding the impact of AI from a board standpoint. It was noted that AI will require a significant shift in thinking and thought processes, as it demands forward thinking in real time, which is not currently a common practice. There was agreement among members that this change might lead to complacency, with individuals relying on AI to do the work for them rather than engaging in critical thinking. It was emphasized that this could potentially make students and adults lazy. The importance of learning design was highlighted, emphasizing the need to ask meaningful questions that promote critical thinking rather than simply regurgitating information.

IV. Agenda Item: 2024 Legislative Update

Presenter: Brian Perry, Governmental Relations, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Perry said that today marked Day 41 of the 60-day legislative session. With a little over two-thirds of the session completed, it was noted that they will continue to be in session almost every day until the end of March. Following the conclusion of the regular session, they will enter into what is known as veto days, during which the governor will have the opportunity to take action on any bills that have been passed by the legislature and have reached his desk.

The General Assembly will reconvene for the final two days of the session on Friday, April 12 and Monday, April 15. This year, there's a calendar quirk for the final two days where they will primarily focus on overriding any vetoes issued by the governor with a simple majority vote in each chamber. Legislation can still be sent to the governor during these days, but if vetoed, there won't be enough time to overturn it. This process is largely symbolic and doesn't occur frequently.

For those interested, links for the session calendar are available. Committee meetings, particularly those regarding education and A&R, are often streamed on the KETS website, and occasionally on the LRC YouTube page, especially towards the end of the session. Currently, numerous committees are meeting simultaneously, and the budget process has become quite irregular. This trend has persisted for the last two sessions. In 2022, the House introduced House Bill 1 as the budget bill, which was unusual, and they did so before the governor presented his proposal in mid-January, which was also atypical. This year, the governor attempted to preempt the House by unveiling his budget proposal via a late December Facebook event, filed as House Bill 114, which likely won't advance. The House's version, House Bill 6, is now in the Senate. It's uncertain when the Senate will introduce its version, possibly not until mid-March, suggesting there's no rush in this regard. Perry highlighted that once the Senate passes the budget, it will proceed to a conference committee, potentially even a free conference committee, to finalize the version that will be sent to the governor. Whatever version reaches the governor will become the final budget, as any veto can be overturned by a simple majority vote. While the governor possesses line-item veto power in the budget, these can also be overridden.

Notably, yesterday marked the last day for new bills in the Senate, while Monday was the deadline for new bills in the House. With over 1,200 bills filed and approximately 250 tracked by the office of Government

relations there's a significant volume of legislation, particularly in the realm of education. Given the extensive list, tonight's discussion will focus on hitting some highlights. It was discussed that there is a high likelihood of a constitutional amendment concerning education funding being included on the November ballot. Currently, the constitution imposes strict limitations on such matters, with past attempts to pass funding initiatives or introduce vouchers and charters being consistently rejected. To address this, the proposal involves introducing a constitutional amendment that would allow funds to be allocated to non-traditional public education entities.

There also are several other constitutional amendments under consideration, potentially totaling four on the ballot simultaneously. These additional amendments primarily focus on property taxes. While there are no immediate indications of significant impacts on districts, it is recommended to remain vigilant and informed about these developments.

Perry discussed multiple Senate bills of interest including: school safety and mental health; the election rather than appointment of members of the KBE; amend KRS 610.345 to require notice to schools prior to filing of a public offense petition against a child in certain cases; changes to school bus specs.; free feminine hygiene products for elementary and secondary students; Kentucky Proud School Match Program; AI in education; concealed deadly weapons; diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging; transportation of students via passenger vehicles; require public schools to provide reasonable accommodations to a lactating student; modify the types of school facilities where weapons are prohibited; prohibit a public agency from using public funds for lobbying activity or to employ or enter into a contract with a lobbyist; vaccine requirements; remove requirements for using a Social Security number as an identifier; establish a process to recall a member of a local board of education; local boards of education membership, removal of a superintendent by a local board; CTE funding distribution; nonresident enrollment; option 7 changes; allow members of the Teachers' Retirement System to recover up to 10 unpaid days that were missed to observe religious holidays; CROWN Act, vaccinations; direct school districts and public schools to act to protect Jewish students from credible threats of violence or violence motivated by antisemitism; Kentucky Women's Bill of Rights; direct each local board of education to designate a traceable communication system that shall be the exclusive means for school district personnel to communicate electronically with students; constitutional amendment related to educational funding; automatic enrollment in an Advanced Placement (AP) courses; local board of education cannot appoint the superintendent as secretary to the board; constitutional amendment on education funding; remove the requirement for medical oversight of an automated external defibrillators (AED) program which passed House 87-0 and is assigned to Senate Education; moment of silence and reflection at the start of the school day which passed House 79-17 but is not assigned in Senate; allow participation in a public school interscholastic extracurricular activity by an at-home private school student; numeracy; constitutional amendment related to school funding; education clean-up bill; provide a merger process for contiguous school districts; remove expected family income from the selection criteria for the teacher scholarship; teacher misconduct which passed House 95-0 but has not been assigned in Senate; process and procedures for receiving and processing a complaint against a certificate holder; parental rights; require a school district to adopt health curricula that includes human growth and development instruction that meets specific criteria; relating to educational cooperatives; teacher recruitment and retention; substitute teacher certification; require local school boards to adopt a transportation services policy; transportation via passenger vehicles; codify; allow the use of military orders as proof of residency for enrollment or course registration in a school and prohibit in-person enrollment or course registration when prevented due to official military duties; CTE funding distribution; access to the records and meetings of public agencies; tax credit for qualified education

expenses; teacher professional development; truancy, anti three-cueing system; one-time payments to school district employees; establishing the Adaptive Kindergarten Readiness pilot project; PE graduation requirement; support systems for English language learners; delete outdated language for the calculation of average daily attendance; internet safety instruction for children; allow for alternative teacher certification through a state-approved local training program provided by a local district; group of districts or educational cooperative; process for creation of an independent school district; require KDE to post school district employee salary information on the department's website annually; audit of KDE; direct school districts and public schools to act to protect Jewish students from credible threats of violence or violence motivated by antisemitism; teacher certification; new teacher mentoring program; political spending by public school districts; and allow school property to be utilized for teacher and employee housing.

Perry highlighted House resolutions including a resolution to reestablish the Early Childhood Education Task Force; autism in Education Task Force which directs the task force to study autism supports and services provided to K-12 students by Kentucky public schools; Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) Task Force; Efficient and Effective School District Governance Task; establishing the Teacher Red Tape Reduction Task Force; establishing the School District Consolidation Task Force; establishing the DEI Economic Impact Task Force; and establishing the Homeschool Task Force.

Perry briefly discussed the board concerns with the bill that would allow those with a high school diploma to be a substitute teacher.

V. Adjournment

Summary of Discussion:

David Cook thanked attendees for their presence at the meeting. It was noted that Kinney has conveyed her appreciation for the group's commitment. The decision to align these meetings with regular ones was praised as beneficial, leading to improved attendance. There is anticipation for the ongoing efforts of the group. Cook mentioned that they will observe from the sidelines, while emphasizing that members can still convey important matters directly to the commissioner. This approach will remain unchanged even with the transition to a new commissioner.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. ET.

Next Meeting: KSBA Summer Leadership Conference

Location: Sloan Convention Center
Bowling Green, KY

Date: July 18, 2024

Time: 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. CST