



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDE)  
TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL (TAC)  
SUMMARY

SEPT. 12, 2024

**Members Present:** Melanie Callahan, Chad Davidson, Erica Deal, Byron Wilson, Kevin Dailey, Carla Criswell, Kristen Morgan, Corey Burns, Sarah Lizer, Casey Page, Brooke Leffingwell, Megan Hall, Joseph Stivers, Emmanuel Anama-Green, Wendy Young, Nick Shoffner, Jessica Hobson, Shane Baker, Scot Bratcher

**Members Absent:** Kennita Ballard, Rosa Cubero-Hurley, Carla Lawson, Mandy Perez

**Agenda Item: Welcome**

**Presenter:** Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Commissioner Fletcher provided an update on current events within the Commonwealth and the impact on education, his appreciation for educators and their hard work year-round, along with his mantra and how teachers can be "All In."

**Agenda Item: Approve Agenda**

**Presenter:** Melanie Callahan, Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) Chairperson, Laurel County

**Summary of Discussion:** Emmanuel Anama-Green made a motion to approve the agenda. Kristen Morgan made a second. Members verbally expressed agreement.

**Agenda Item: Approve Summary from Last Meeting**

**Presenter:** Melanie Callahan, Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) Chairperson, Laurel County

**Summary of Discussion:** Joseph Stivers made a motion to approve the summary minutes from the June 2024 meeting. Megan Hall made a second. Members verbally expressed agreement.

**Agenda Item: Chronic Absenteeism**

**Presenter:** Florence Chang, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, Jennifer Ginn and Leslie McKinney, Office of the Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Chang opened by sharing data on chronic absenteeism and acknowledged the issue was not only troubling in Kentucky but nationally and internationally as well. Kentucky defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10% or more of the enrolled academic year for any reason (excused and unexcused). She shared a graphic that illustrated the huge increase in chronic absenteeism before and after the pandemic. Data indicates chronic absenteeism is an issue for all grades and student groups.

Data presented by McKinney, a strategic data analyst in the KDE Division of Strategic Planning and Research, shows that while school districts have been dealing with chronic absenteeism for years, the problem spiked following the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2018, 5% of schools were considered to have high or extreme levels of chronic absenteeism; in 2023, that percentage was 77%.

To address the issue, the KDE has implemented several initiatives. A statewide campaign to bring awareness to the issue kicked off in August and a webpage of resources has been developed to provide support to schools/districts. Ginn, KDE's director of communications, discussed the department's public messaging campaign to raise awareness of the issue. Part of the campaign includes ads on television, radio and billboards across the Commonwealth emphasizing that attendance matters.

KDE representatives asked TAC members for suggestions on mid-year campaign ideas.

Additional comments from council members included using initiatives with their students and families to reward them for attending classes, making sure new educators have the resources and support they need to build those healthy relationships, and keeping educator attendance in mind.

KDE representatives encouraged TAC members to review the additional resources on the [Chronic Absenteeism](#) webpage for schools, families and communities.

**Feedback:** Megan Hall, Letcher County, pointed out the issue of devastating flooding affecting absenteeism in her region. She requested additional review of the data be examined with that lens in mind. Joseph Stivers, Jefferson County, emphasized the importance of school clubs as a connector for students and school. However, he acknowledged the need for resources to compensate teachers for additional time to support after-school clubs and activities.

Additional comments from council members included using initiatives with their students and families to reward them for attending classes, making sure new educators have the resources and support they need to build those healthy relationships, and keeping educator attendance in mind.

**Agenda Item:** Family Partnership Council's Recommendations to the Kentucky Department of Education

**Presenter:** Marsha VanHook, Office of Continuous Improvement and Support, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Marsha VanHook, the full-service community schools manager in the KDE Office of Continuous Improvement and Support and the chair of the Family Partnership Council, shared the Family Partnerships Council's recommendations to the Kentucky Department of Education. The council serves in an advisory role to the KDE and provides input regarding topics of interest to families, such as ways that families and communities can assist schools in ensuring that the achievement level of all students is increased.

VanHook shared overview information about the Family Partnership Council's purpose, role, resources and recent recommendations to increase the relationship and communication between the school and family/community. One such recommendation highlighted during the session was the call for Success Stories. TAC members were encouraged to fill out a form that collects success stories about school/family/community partnerships.

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Kentucky Educator Mentor Program

**Presenter:** Todd Davis, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

**Summary of Discussion:** Davis, division director in the KDE Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness, discussed [Senate Bill 265](#). More information about the impact of recent legislation can be found on the [KDE Legislative Guidance webpage](#).

**Feedback:** None

**Agenda Item:** Adjournment

**Presenter:** Melanie Callahan, TAC Chairperson, Laurel County Schools

**Summary of Discussion:** Wendy Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shane Baker made a second motion to adjourn. Members noted agreement in the chat.