



Commissioner's Comments

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Kentucky Commissioner of Education

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Our Children, Our Commonwealth

I have now been in my position for six months. I cannot believe how quickly time flies when you are having fun. This has been the greatest six months of my professional life. I am looking forward to the future.

This past week, we had our first Town Hall Meeting in Shelbyville. It was a great start. We had almost 300 people come to the meeting to discuss what we value in Kentucky schools. I was very impressed and excited with the discussion and passion of our shareholders. Guess what we heard? Of course there were a lot of different ideas. But, I heard clearly two things, our new accountability system is about Our Children, Our Commonwealth.

As we move forward in education, I think we need to focus and take ownership for our students' education. We will establish equity, achievement and integrity as the pillars of our work. But we should remember why these matter. Yes, accountability has as its measure, schools and districts. But what really matters are the students in those schools. Education is about our students. That sounds like such an obvious statement, but oddly enough it gets lost sometimes – especially when we discuss accountability. We have accountability to ensure a quality education for students, but it can become about the adults.

Our Children

No one will debate that our schools and education should be about students. All educators went into education to help shape future generations. We have to do more than acknowledge this; we must own it. These are the children of the Commonwealth, our children. In saying they are our children, we move past acknowledgement and into accepting responsibility for our children's education. It's a must. They are not someone else's children, but ours. When we embrace this, it gives us a new sense of urgency. This has been what has driven Kentucky's education improvements for 25 years. I am calling on us to do this once again.

Our Commonwealth

Improving education must be done collaboratively. We need all shareholders working together to improve the lives of our students. We need to rally around the idea that we possess the ability to affect the future of our state. The preparation of OUR children will impact the future of OUR Commonwealth. Interesting word, Commonwealth. To me, it means working together for the common good. Focusing on our children is the single most important thing we can do for them, for our state, for the common good. Together, the shareholders of education in the Commonwealth will move us forward and improve the lives of our citizens.

We will be in Campbellsville next week. I hope to see you there. Our children need your voice and your values.

As always, I continue to be proud to serve Our Children, Our Commonwealth.

