



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
Terry Holliday



July 19, 2013

## There is danger looming

I am constantly amazed at the terrific job that Kentucky educators are doing. In spite of numerous budget cuts and dwindling resources, Kentucky educators are leading the nation in the focus on improving student college- and career-ready rates.

This week, I had the pleasure to attend a meeting in Seattle, Washington that was sponsored by the Gates Foundation. This convening was a cross-state collaboration of Louisiana, Kentucky, and Colorado. State representatives from Tennessee and New York were also in attendance. Kentucky educators were highlighted in numerous sessions. Boone County teacher Chris Crouch helped kickoff a general session that focused on implementation of common core standards. Numerous Kentucky Department of Education staff presented on the great work of our Unbridled Learning strategic plan. Kentucky was well represented by several superintendents, principals, teachers, the Kentucky Education Association and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

It was very rewarding to hear about great progress in other states and refreshing to hear that other states also are facing challenges. This convening reinforced for me how important it is that educators have time for sharing and learning with other educators. Whether it is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) at the school level or a national convening, learning from other educators is critically important if we are to improve student learning outcomes.

I am thankful to be in Kentucky during a time of great progress in focusing on student learning. Another highlight recently was the huge success of the Blitz to 96 campaign. As of this writing, more than 100 districts have raised the dropout age to 18.

The eyes of the nation are certainly on Kentucky; however, there is danger looming. Without additional funding and resources, our educators in Kentucky will soon burn out and student learning will suffer. As we get ready for the 2014 General Assembly, my number one priority is to share this concern with legislators. At a minimum, I will be pushing for restoration of funding to 2008 levels. Our children and educators deserve this investment.

Our results are striking; the more our education outcomes improve, the more our economy in Kentucky can grow. I hope readers will join me in this push to restore education funding to 2008 levels or higher.

Terry Holliday, Ph.D.  
Kentucky Education Commissioner