



Doc H's Blog

**Kentucky Education Commissioner
Terry Holliday**



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Partnerships are Critical

This week, I wanted to give a “shout out” to one of our university partners. On Monday, I had the pleasure of speaking to a group of K-12 and higher education educators at the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Education P20 Innovation Lab meeting.

UK College of Education Dean Mary John O’Hair started the [P20 Innovation Lab](#) several years ago when she came to Kentucky from Oklahoma where she started a similar program with much success. When Dr. O’Hair first approached me about a possible partnership and sharing a position, I thought it was a great idea since, at the time, Kentucky was working with the Council of Chief State School Officers through the Innovation Lab Network of states and we were developing digital guidelines for schools.

The Kentucky P20 Innovation Lab, hosted by the UK College of Education, is leading the way to help schools in Kentucky transform education to deliver next generation learning and, ultimately, increase the number of students who are ready to succeed in college and career.

After four years of work, the P20 Lab has worked with more than 25 percent of the school districts in Kentucky. The P20 Lab provides training for school administrators and school teams to stretch their thinking in designing teaching and learning experiences. The results have been pretty amazing. Not only has the lab served more than a quarter of our school districts, the vast majority of our Districts of Innovation proposals have come from districts who have gone through the P20 training.

At the meeting this week, it was exciting to see an agenda that shows Kentucky is leading the nation with innovation.

Former Kentucky Commissioner of Education, Gene Wilhoit talked about the exciting work going on at the [National Center for Innovation in Education](#) (another shout out to Dean O’Hair for bringing that center to Kentucky).

Professor John Nash, who Dean O’Hair added to the team from Stanford University, gave a talk on [design thinking](#). Design thinking is utilized in many major corporations and is certainly cutting edge stuff in the business and non-profit worlds.

While we have numerous districts who are implementing innovation, we have seen Danville Independent featured on PBS and NPR and Eminence Independent featured in numerous state and national contexts and it was great to see them working with other districts to present their best practices at the meeting this week.

In addition, Taylor County has received many visitors from other states to look at its competency-based model and Jefferson County made news with its community proposals to design a new school for the District of Innovation model.

Kentucky is committed to leading innovation in education. This partnership between higher education and the K-12 system is producing exciting results for students. In addition to the UK P20 Lab, we have many other innovative efforts underway in Kentucky.

We started the [Fund for Transforming Education in Kentucky](#) to financially support those innovative ideas coming from schools and districts. In the coming weeks, the Fund will announce awards to teachers, schools and districts in its first round of [innovation funding](#).

What I am most excited about is that we are all working together in innovative ways to help more students reach college- and career-readiness and prepare for a successful life.

Should readers want to know more about our innovation and partnership strategy, please contact David Cook by [e-mail](#) or by phone at (502) 564-4201, ext. 4832.

Terry Holliday, Ph.D.
Education Commissioner