



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
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## Getting Ready for the Numbers

The work done over the past three years by legislators, staff at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), teachers, administrators, school staff, students, parents, community members and education partners will start to bear fruit soon. Next week at the Kentucky Board of Education meeting, I'll share some estimates of state-level performance connected to the Unbridled Learning assessment and accountability system. School districts are reviewing their data closely, and in a few weeks, district- and school-level data related to the system will be released publicly.

This work began before I accepted the post of commissioner of education, with the passage of 2009's Senate Bill 1. From the very earliest discussions and plans for a new system, a primary goal was to involve as many groups and individuals as possible and to communicate the work broadly. I believe these efforts have been very successful.

Although it's a challenge to communicate information about new test scores and accountability categories before we have data in hand, we've engaged in a series of activities over the past 12 months to reach out to the audiences that will be impacted by and interested in the data.

I and other KDE staff have visited the state's educational cooperatives and presented information on the upcoming data release. We've produced parent-friendly brochures and FAQs on the system and shared those widely. KDE's flagship publication, [Kentucky Teacher](#), has featured assessment and accountability in many stories. Our advisory groups have included discussion about the new system on their agendas. I recently hosted a webcast targeted at reporters and editors who will be covering the results of the new system.

Behind the scenes, KDE staff are involved in projects like designing the new School Report Card, which will be our primary vehicle for sharing the new data. Cross-agency teams are ensuring that staff in each office is kept up to date on the latest developments related to Unbridled Learning. We're even redesigning the agency's website to make it easier for visitors to find information.

We realized early on that KDE could not communicate about this ongoing work without the help of our partners, who have contributed their time, staff and energy to sharing information.

The Prichard Committee's [ReadyKentucky](#) initiative, the [Kentucky Chamber of Commerce's](#) summer speaking tour, the chamber's Business Leader Champions for Education [initiative](#), the discussions at the state's educational cooperative meetings, the Kentucky School Boards Association's (KSBA's) [video](#) on how to talk to the media about test scores and accountability, and the work in our school districts to prepare local communities and media outlets for the coming data release have been vital to spreading the word about the Unbridled Learning system.

All of this is in preparation for what will be the start of a new era in Kentucky public education; a time during which we will focus on the ultimate goal of college and career readiness for all students. These data are crucial to planning and improvement – for our schools, districts and this agency – and providing information about what it all will mean is a shared effort.

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