



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
Terry Holliday



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## Social Media and Use by Commissioner of Education

In the past, I have received some criticism for using Twitter and Facebook during the work day. While some folks use Twitter and Facebook for personal reasons, my primary use of both is business. I like to visit schools and districts and take photos of exciting things happening and then tweet the photos. I also enjoy sharing articles that I get from Twitter links that highlight interesting issues in education. Facebook serves pretty much the same purpose, so I have been utilizing Twitter much more than Facebook in recent months.

For example, I recently connected with a major study that was interesting and has implications for Kentucky education. A research study was highlighted this week from the Consortium for Policy Research in Education. This report identified seven major trends and changes shaping the teaching profession in the United States. You can see the study at <http://cpre.org/seven-trends-transformation-teaching-force-0>.

The seven trends are:

1. The profession is becoming larger – teachers are the largest occupational group in the nation and have increased by 48 percent during the 1987-2008 period, while student enrollment increased 19 percent.
2. The profession is becoming grayer.
3. The profession is becoming greener; the distribution of teachers is becoming bimodal – the numbers with 25-plus years of experience are increasing, and those with less than five years are increasing, while those in between are decreasing
4. The teaching profession has become increasingly more female.
5. There is a gap between the percentage of minority students and minority teachers, and the rates at which minority teachers leave schools are considerably higher than that of white teachers.
6. Students who become teachers have lower SAT scores than those who do not go into teaching.
7. The profession is becoming less stable with increasing turnover rates.

This study has implications for recruitment, training, hiring, professional learning, retention and retirement issues connected to our Kentucky teaching force. Superintendents and deans of education would be well served by connecting to this research.

All in all, I think Twitter and other social media software have more advantages to disadvantages, and as one user, I gain a great deal of information in a fast and useable method through the use of social media. We at the Kentucky Department of Education believe that these tools are an excellent way to not only get information, but also to communicate information about Kentucky education. Visit me on Twitter @kycommissioner and check out the Department of Education's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/kydeptofed>.

Terry Holliday, Ph.D.