



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **KENTUCKY SCHOOL DISTRICTS PLEDGE IMPROVEMENT**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – All P-12 public school district superintendents and local boards of education have signed a pledge to improve college and career readiness in their high schools by 2015.

In early February, Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday asked superintendents and board of education chairs to pledge to increase the rates of college and career readiness in their high schools by 50 percent by 2015. The “Commonwealth Commitment to College and Career Readiness” pledge includes a goal statement designed to be tailored to each school district.

By early April, all of the state’s 169 P-12 school districts had signed the pledge. (In Kentucky, five public school districts do not contain high schools.) At its April 13 meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education issued a resolution commending local school officials for signing the pledge.

“Kentucky’s school districts recognize that preparing students for life after high school is not a new concept,” said Holliday. “What’s different now is the focus of educators, business and government on universal success for all children, rather than just providing access to opportunities.

“Kentucky has about 50,000 8th graders in its public school system,” he said. “If we don’t do something different, about 25 percent of those 8th graders will not graduate from high school in 2015. That is more than 12,000 students who will not graduate and will be competing for about 8 percent of the jobs available -- and those jobs will most likely not pay a living wage.”

Based on data collected in the 2009-10 school year, 34 percent of Kentucky’s public high school students are considered ready for college and careers.

With the passage of Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) in 2009, legislative leaders indicated their keen awareness for progress in this area. SB 1 requires that P-12 and postsecondary education leaders produce a plan to reduce remediation of high school graduates entering college by 50 percent. The plan includes acceleration, interventions, advising and supports for persistence to graduation.

(more)

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In September 2010, campus presidents from Kentucky's colleges and universities signed a [resolution](#) pledging their commitment to be full partners with the Kentucky Department of Education in preparing high school graduates to be college- and career-ready.

SB 1 also mandates a new state accountability system for public schools that will include a college and career readiness measure to emphasize the importance of schools focusing on marked improvement in this area.

KDE will share statewide strategies to help districts deliver on this commitment and help increase college and career readiness across the Commonwealth. KDE also tracked the responses to the pledge and provided a map indicating which districts had signed.

Information about each school district's college and career readiness status is available at <http://openhouse.education.ky.gov/HighSchoolGraduates.aspx>.

See the attached documents for the pledge and the Kentucky Board of Education's resolution.

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