



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **PRUITT UNVEILS FIVE POINT PLAN AIMED AT BOLSTERING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, CAREER READINESS**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – At the Kentucky Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt outlined his plan for moving Kentucky education forward. The plan includes five focal points for the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE's) future work:

- **K-3 Literacy** – Renew the commitment to and focus on primary literacy that takes a holistic and comprehensive approach and incorporates student interests and applied learning. Pruitt said KDE would leverage grant resources and its collaborative partnerships with regional education cooperatives to assist in the effort. He acknowledged the effort would present challenges, most notably around funding, teacher training and raising expectations, but he said it would pay off by raising student achievement and reducing the achievement gap between different groups of students.
- **Individual Instruction and Assessment** – Rethink learning and assessment so that it becomes more individualized and allows students to progress as they gain mastery of skills and knowledge. Students' career interests would be connected to their courses and assessments. This effort also would include a move to online assessments and a revamp of the student Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to make it more useful
- **Diploma Requirements** – Strengthen state high school graduation requirements so that the diploma a student earns accurately reflects the learning required to be successful after high school. Additionally, the requirements would allow more flexibility in the way students learn. "We want to give more opportunities for kids to take content in areas they enjoy and have a curiosity in and that don't hem them into specific courses," Pruitt said. "It's time we flipped the script on the future. It is time we say everything we're doing leads to a career." Pruitt cautioned that the change may lead to a drop in graduation rates, at least temporarily, but that long term it will align graduation rates and college and career readiness, and will mean that when Kentucky students graduate high school, they will be ready to pursue their desired career path.
- **Student Success in Postsecondary** – Provide more opportunities to for high school students to pursue dual credit, industry certification, apprenticeships, and International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses.
- **Social and Emotional Help** – Create a real focus on social and emotional wellbeing of students. Pruitt said more needs to be done to provide support to students, educators and schools, and also raise awareness about the importance of social and emotional wellbeing.

Pruitt said when you take the first letter of all the plan points and put them together, it spells KIDS(S) – the focus of KDE's work. "It will be hard to do these things, but if we do there will be great benefits," Pruitt said. Some of those benefits, he said, mean Kentucky will:

- lead the nation in closing the achievement gap in reading as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 4th-grade reading assessment
  - lead the nation in increasing the percentage of students earning industry certifications
  - improve its national ranking on the ACT college entrance exam from 14th to 5th
  - increase the state's Gross Domestic Product from \$4-8 billion, based on all students staying in state
  - close the achievement gap by 50 percent in next 13 years
- (more)

Page 2 – Pruitt outlines vision at KBE meeting

Several board members commended Pruitt for his vision.

“The ideas the commissioner just articulated are critical for Kentucky. They are critical for our young people to have a real opportunity to compete in an increasingly competitive global economy,” said Robert King, president of the Kentucky Council of Postsecondary Education who serves as an ex officio board member.

Board advisor Kathy Gornik stressed the importance of including increased parental involvement and engagement in the work.

“The more empowered they are, the more active they are going to be in the care and learning of their children,” she said.

Pruitt agreed that parental engagement would be part of the work as well as larger community engagement and buy in.

“We need them to see the sense of urgency. One of the biggest tasks ahead of us is getting Kentuckians across the board to understand this is a big deal. This is going to be a big cultural change,” he said.

Board chair Mary Gwen Wheeler opened the meeting with a moment of silence for Marshall County. Last month, the community endured great tragedy with a shooting at the high school that left two students dead, several wounded and many others suffering emotionally. Board members wore ribbons in the school’s colors with the words Marshall Strong in remembrance.

During the meeting, the board also approved:

- amendments to 703 KAR 5:270, Kentucky’s Accountability System, to comply with the United States Department of Education’s review of Kentucky’s Consolidated State Plan
- 703 KAR 5:191, Repeal of 703 KAR 5:190, Assistance to low-achieving schools and Repeal of 703 KAR 5:260, Intervention in priority schools
- 703 KAR 5:280, School improvement procedures
- 703 KAR 5:225, Continuous improvement process for schools and districts
- The 2018-2024 KETS Master Plan (701 KAR 5:110, Use of local monies to reduce unmet technology need)
- a district facility plan for the Burgin Independent School District
- district facility plan amendments for Hardin County and Montgomery County school districts
- a request for an Alternative Model of School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) from Adair County High School

The board also reviewed Kentucky’s minimum high school graduation requirements.

During the meeting, the board received updates on:

- the 2018-20 executive budget recommendation regarding P-12 education
- a new competency-based education and assessment pilot
- the KDE strategic plan
- the 2018 legislative session
- state management in Breathitt and Menifee Counties

(more)

Visit the board portal at <http://portal.ksba.org/public/Agency.aspx?PublicAgencyID=4388&AgencyTypeID=1> to access the full agenda and supporting materials online. The next regular meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education is scheduled for April 11 in Frankfort.

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