



# Issues Update

June 30, 2017

*Issues Update* is a report from the Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) written by Executive Director Michael R. Stone and presented on its website, [www.kacteonline.org](http://www.kacteonline.org). As needed, *Issues Update* will report on state and federal Career and Technical Education (CTE) policy and legislative developments. KACTE and Stone can be reached at [kmstone1951@gmail.com](mailto:kmstone1951@gmail.com) or 502-223-1823.

## State Board Seeks New Accountability System

The Kentucky State Board of Education heard the first reading of the proposed new accountability system for public schools at its June meeting. The second and final reading before adoption will take place at the August meeting. Schools will be given a rating of one-five stars based on strength of performance on school-level measures and indicators.

According to a Department of Education summary, "The proposed system is based on standards instead of normative comparison of schools. It no longer matters to the individual school's rating how other schools performed. Kentuckians will determine, in a standard setting process, the performance required to be classified in each school rating."

There are measures for elementary, middle school and high schools in six indicators: proficiency, growth (elementary and middle only), transition readiness (high school only), achievement gap closure, opportunity and access, and local measure (for districts and public charter schools only).

**TRANSITION READY** at the high school level will be measured by the percent of students transition ready. Requirements to be transition ready are graduation (diploma earned); foundational essential skills demonstrated with work-based learning experience, service learning or community service, and attendance; and readiness of academic, technical or military.

Academic ready meets benchmarks on college admission exam or approved dual credit or advanced coursework with test benchmark. Technical ready meets benchmarks on industry certificates or a Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (KOSSA) approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovations Board and approved dual credit or two credits in a high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study. Military ready meets benchmark score on the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and military enlistment.

The proposed accountability system will replace the *Unbridled Learning: College and Career Readiness for All* system and meets the requirements of the new federal elementary and secondary education *Every Student Succeeds Act*. The goals are:

### Commentary: Invest in CTE

A study from the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce indicating that 56.7 percent of Kentucky citizens between 16-64 years of age participate in the workforce gained publicity in early June in the *Owensboro Messenger* and the *Frankfort State Journal*. Kentucky's workforce participation rate is the fourth lowest in the nation, trailing only Alabama, Mississippi and West Virginia. The state needs 165,000 more people in the workforce to reach the national average.

The *Owensboro Messenger* article cited Chamber President David Adkisson explaining some measures to address the situation are underway, noting the General Assembly's passage of felony expungement legislation, criminal justice reform, and addressing the drug problem. He also mentioned strengthening workforce development with employer-engagement programs like the Kentucky Foundation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KyFAME).

Adkisson added in the May 2017 issue of the *Kentucky Chamber News*: "If we want Kentucky to be strong and successful in the future, we must prepare today's young people for the workforce."

The *Frankfort State Journal* editorial concluded the effort to increase workforce participation must include "educating today's school children for tomorrow's jobs." It noted the state's graduation rate of 89 percent exceeds the 81 percent national average.

If Kentucky wishes to pursue an increase in the workforce participation rate, in addition to those items cited above, it should look at a solution that works: Career and Technical Education (CTE). CTE preparatory students achieved a statewide graduation rate of 98 percent in the last school year. Engage students in something they want to learn and they will graduate and take their place in the workforce. The evidence is clear. Investing in CTE is a logical, wise step toward the goal.

**-Michael R. Stone, KACTE Executive Director**

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# State Board Seeks New Accountability System

- Promote higher levels of student learning and achievement;
- Reduce achievement gaps and ensure equity;
- Establish opportunity and access for students to receive a quality education;
- Build a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement; and
- Communicate a clear and honest understanding of the strengths and opportunities for improvement in schools and districts.

## KDE Strategic Plan

As the State Board of Education considers the new accountability system, it also is considering an updated strategic plan for the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) through 2022. The Board in February approved the vision statement: Each and every student empowered and equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to pursue a successful future. There are four state-level goals:

- Ready by the end of third grade;
- Ready for middle school;
- Ready for high school; and
- Ready for success.

In a commissioner's message, Stephen Pruitt, Ph.D., wrote, "Our vision values innovation, collaboration, and putting traditional academia and career technical education on equal footing as both prepare students for their futures." The plan envisions two goals, each with a set of implementation strategies:

1. KDE will foster the conditions for all schools and districts to achieve equitable and comprehensive success for all students.
2. KDE will create a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement.

**AT THE JUNE MEETING**, the State Board adopted a revised *Kentucky TECH Policies and Procedures Manual*. Maintained through contract with the Kentucky School Board Association, the changes align with legislation passed in the 2017 Kentucky General Assembly session.

## Kentucky Legislation Enacted

In June, laws passed during the 2017 Kentucky General Assembly became effective. Several affect education; some important to Career and Technical Education (CTE).

The most sweeping legislation is **Senate Bill (SB) 1**, which is reported in more detail in previous *Issues Updates*. Among the general public education overhaul items included in the bill, it eliminates program reviews and program audits for practical living and career studies, removes WorkKeys assessments, and requires a new accountability system.

KDE must provide guidelines for programs that incorporate academic standards in practical living and career studies. Postsecondary readiness for each high school student will be measured by meeting the college readiness benchmark or achieving a number of elements formerly identified as career readiness measures.

**SB50** establishes a school district calendar committee and allows a variable instructional year for districts that adopt a calendar with the first student attendance day no earlier than the Monday closest to Aug. 26.

**SB117** defines provisional or professional certificates and college or university work of graduate grade. A veteran with a bachelor's degree may get a provisional teaching certificate with passage of the Graduate Records Examination.

**SB159** requires all public high school students to pass a civics test to graduate.

**House Bill (HB) 113** requires administrative bodies to issue professional licenses or certificates to military members or veterans within two years of honorable discharge if military training provides necessary skills and experience.

**HB195** allows Kentucky Adult Education Program to align with College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, leading to a high school equivalency diploma.

**HB206** establishes the Dual Credit Scholarship Program and allows Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships to fund students enrolled in registered apprenticeship programs.

**HB312** ends Best in Class for Teachers loan forgiveness program. Teacher scholarship recipients who teach dual credit courses may receive two semesters promissory note cancellation for each semester teaching.

**HB471** allows school funding to be carried forward and provides charter school financing language.

**HB520** authorizes public charter schools; sets the parameters for operation; prohibits virtual charter schools.

## Federal Perkins Developments

The U.S. House of Representatives passed by voice vote on June 22 **HR2353**, the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*, which reauthorizes the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*. The bill moves to the U.S. Senate, which did not act on *Perkins* reauthorization in the previous session.

Although Congress level funded *Perkins Act* programs for the current fiscal year, President Trump's budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2018 cuts *Perkins* funding by \$168 million. The Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KACTE) contacted each congressional office advocating for *Perkins Act* funding. KACTE received generally positive responses from the the staff of all six Kentucky representatives and Senator McConnell.