

# KENTUCKY SCHOOL ADVOCATE

A publication of the Kentucky School Boards Association ■ November 2010

## Focus on freshmen

College- and career-readiness strategies

SHAKY ECONOMY,  
STEADY FUTURE TEACHERS

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**FEATURES**

**AT RANDOM**

The state education department is tweaking the district comprehensive improvement process, adding a new twist: it will send a team to verify whether randomly-selected districts are carrying out the steps outlined in their plan ... Page 8

**STILL GOING STRONG**

Teaching always has been thought of as a “safe” profession, insulated from general economic conditions. That assumption has been turned on its head during this Great Recession, but it doesn’t seem to be impacting the number of students who are entering the state’s colleges of education ... Page 10

**PREPARATION PIONEERS**

Fifteen Kentucky school districts know it’s lonely at the top. They are the districts in which more than 50 percent of students are college and career ready – bright spots in an otherwise dismal statewide picture. How did they do it? ... Page 12

**FIRST PERSON**

School board teams attending this year’s KSBA Fall Regional Meetings aren’t just getting facts and figures about the dropout rate and how to reduce it: They are hearing firsthand from former and would-be dropouts about what helped them stay on track. The meetings also saw the election of four new faces to the KSBA Board of Directors ... Page 16

**FRESHMAN FIX**

Leaders at Henry County High School knew their freshmen were struggling, but how to help them? The school created a learning community with a core group of teachers working together to help students make a successful transition to freshman year and beyond ... Page 18



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**On the cover**



Henry County High School financial literacy teacher Dee Colvin reviews a worksheet with freshman Emily Dixie. As part of the school’s Freshman Learning Community, first-year students can sample four of five electives to get a feel for what they may be interested in during the rest of their time in high school ... Article on Page 18.

## TAKE NOTE

### Kentucky School Boards Association

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#### Race to the other grants

Kentucky school districts and education cooperatives cleaned up in the 2010 rounds of three major federal grant programs.

A chunk of \$115.3 million for improving the quality of teaching American history went to three co-ops and two individual school districts. Teaching American History grants went to Kentucky Educational Development Cooperative, \$999,978; Covington Independent Schools, \$499,974; Knott County Schools, \$475,366; West Kentucky Educational Cooperative, \$997,072; and Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative, \$998,739. The grants are for a three-year period.

The program is aimed at enhancing teachers' understanding of American history through intensive professional development, including study trips to historic sites and mentoring with professional historians and other experts.

Meanwhile, six districts and one co-op will benefit from federal Emergency Management Grants to help strengthen their emergency management plans. The list of Kentucky grantees comprises: Breathitt County Schools, \$150,000; Covington Independent, \$298,394; Grant County Schools, \$149,860; Green River Region Education Cooperative, \$346,576; Perry County Schools, \$147,500; Pulaski County Schools, \$165,895; and Wolfe County Schools, \$150,000.

Finally, Clinton and Fayette county school districts were the only Kentucky systems to receive a 2010 federal Elementary and Secondary School

Counseling Grant. The U.S. Department of Education program awarded 42 grants this year to help school districts hire mental health professionals and support counseling programs. Clinton County Schools received \$334,500 and Fayette County Schools received a \$379,881 grant.

#### Safe appointment

Floyd County Board of Education Chairman Jeff Stumbo has been appointed to the Kentucky Center for School Safety Board of Directors. Stumbo, who also represents the East Kentucky South Region on the KSBA Board of Directors, has been a school board member since 1999. He was appointed to the safe schools board by Gov. Steve Beshear.



#### Blue-chip schools

This year's National Blue Ribbon School list includes five Kentucky elementaries. Nearly 300 schools nationwide were honored by the U.S. Department of Education for helping students achieve at high levels and for making significant progress in closing achievement gaps. The Kentucky honorees were Donald E. Cline Elementary in Campbell County, William H. Natcher Elementary in Cloverport Independent, Dixie Elementary Magnet in Fayette County, Sedalia Elementary in Graves County and Ezel Elementary in Morgan County. ☞

#### Health hero

The Daviess County school board has been named a Health Policy Hero by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky. The award, accepted by Superintendent Tom Shelton at right, recognizes the board's commitment to healthy nutrition and physical activity in schools, which includes providing walking trails at all elementary schools, posting school menu nutrition information on the district's website, putting healthy food choices in vending machines and milk machines in all schools, having a healthy food a la carte policy for concession stands and meeting sites throughout the district, along with policies covering the food needs of students with diabetes and food allergies.

The program also recognized a business, a health department and a city. Each recipient received \$1,000.



Photo provided by the Foundation for a Healthy Ky.

# Charter schools for Kentucky require specifics, not just intentions, hopes

**D**uring this year's KSBA Fall Regional Meetings, I was impressed by the messages of some outstanding, yet "at risk" young people. Their stories were part of our focus on finding ways to reduce high school dropout numbers in our state. In each of these presentations we clearly heard of the impact of quality alternative programs and committed people helping these young men and women turn their lives around.

I reflected on their words during the KSBA Board of Directors' meeting while discussing the Legislative Agenda for the upcoming 2011 General Assembly. One of the issues we are asked to take a position on is charter schools. As I thought about these kids and the charter issue, I wondered to myself, "What would become of these students who had chosen to withdraw or had received the label 'problem child' if they were in a charter school? Would charters devote the time and resources to ensure that all children have the opportunity for a successful future?" I would certainly hope so, but I must admit that I'm not convinced.

On some issues, for KSBA to take a position is a no-brainer. Reducing dropouts? Yes. Unfunded mandates. No. More instructional days. Yes. Balancing the state's revenue shortfalls on our schools? No. But the subject of charter schools is one we have no history with in Kentucky, and it has a very divided and debated history across the nation. That history, pro and con, known and unknown, is reflected on the webpages of the Center for Public Education.

The center is a creation of the National School Boards Association. NSBA has members in every state, so it includes states with charters and those without. Its members include Democrats, Republicans and Independents, liberals, moderates and conservatives. So when NSBA creates an initiative such as the center, it must play right down the middle with its information, perhaps more than most other research entities.

If you visit the center's website, you'll find a broad array of information about the issue of charter schools, various studies on them and school models in different states. You won't find



**Delmar Mahan**

KSBA President and  
Whitley County Board of  
Education member

a blanket "Charters are evil" or a "Charters are the salvation" assessment. But you will find some questions we in Kentucky must ask those who are pressing charters as a necessary next step in improving education:

- Charter schools are free from regulations. What regulations are charters free from that enable them to improve academic achievement? If charters excel free of those rules, shouldn't they be lifted from public schools, too?

- What effects do different state governance models have on positive charter school outcomes?

- What are charter schools' effects on local school districts in terms of funding, governance, logistics and accountability, as well as performance?

- What lessons could traditional public schools apply from local or multistate charter school organizations about school size, instruction, staffing and collective bargaining?

Charter advocates promise all sorts of improved educational opportunities – for all children – if Kentucky leaders will just permit the charter experience to be initiated in our state. So far, I've seen tremendous evidence of a sales job on the charter concept, but little in the way of direct and specific answers to tough questions.

Senate Bill 1 does more than set goals for improving education in the state. It sets specific expectations and mandates for measurements. Any Kentucky charter school legislation must have no less a set of specifics, along with public answers to the valid questions above and others.

I encourage all Kentucky school board members and superintendents – and all other Kentuckians who care about our efforts to improve teaching and learning across the state – to learn more about charter schools. Much more than promises, aspirations and "trust us" assurances are needed as we approach the 2011 legislative session – because students like those at-risk youth we heard from are trusting in us. ☞

— Go to [www.centerforpubliceducation.org](http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org) and click on learn about "charter schools" below the logo.

Quotes on education from Kentucky and elsewhere



**“There’s a moment when it clicks and starts to make sense. It’s no longer a mystical force.”** Brian Lashbrook, lead computer technician for the Owensboro Public Schools,

on building teachers’ confidence to make full use of district-provided laptops, part of a \$5 million technology initiative. From the *Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer*.

**“If a baseball player strikes out, grounds out or pops out seven times out of ten, he’s still the guy you want at the plate at the bottom of the ninth with a tie score and the bases loaded. But with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), if you’re not batting a thousand, you’ve failed.”** Lincoln County Schools Director of Academics Pam Hart summing up the sentiments of many Kentucky educators following the release of this year’s state test scores. From the *Stanford Interior-Journal*.

**“We had one more drop out this year than last, but we had six more students in Star Academy that took longer than four years to graduate with their diploma. We get punished as though they were drop-outs (but) I’m going to keep doing it. That’s six kids that would have otherwise been drop outs that have a diploma.”** Marshall County Schools Superintendent Trent Lovett on a different measurement aspect of No Child Left Behind. From the *Benton Tribune-Courier*.

**“We don’t take the attitude that ‘We’ve done all we can do.’ They (teachers) do whatever it takes to help the kids master their curriculum. We focus on each and every kid. We all know who they all are.”** Science Hill Independent Superintendent Rick Walker on his district’s continued perfect score – all AYP targets met every year since No Child Left Behind took

effect. From the *Somerset Commonwealth-Journal*.

**“Wherever they put you, you play.”** Russell Independent High School football coach Ivan McGlone with one viewpoint about the Kentucky High School Athletics Association’s realignment of the state’s six-class district system. From the *Ashland Daily Independent*.

**“Quite honestly, we feel like we’re getting hosed. There are 1A schools with more boys than us. We’ve asked the state multiple times to change it, but it’s not going to happen.”** Matt Reinhart, coach of Bishop Brossart High School, a private school in Campbell County, with a different outlook on the KHSAA changes. From *nky.com*.

**“I might buy stock in a charter company.”** Danville Independent High School football coach Sam Harp on being placed in a district with teams located more than 100 miles away. From the *Danville Advocate-Messenger*.

**“We want to be treated equal. We handle a lot of hard work for you and we deserve the salary supplement. We do bring in the funds because of Medicaid billing.”** Speech therapist Sheila Castle to the Carter County school board on a request that she and her colleagues be given a pay stipend, similar to the salary increase she said other employees received. From the *Grayson Journal-Times*.

**“I think it makes us look foolish to accept it. I definitely think letting us know about the money last minute puts us in an unfair position. I didn’t vote for the tax increase, so it wouldn’t have made sense for me to vote for a budget that included it.”** Oldham County board member Walt Schumm on his vote against the district’s updated spending plan and the late inclusion of \$2 million in “edujobs” funding. From the *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

**“Mr. Raleigh will be referred to as Owen County Schools’ head coach who will take us to the ‘big dance.’ He will run through a tunnel**

Facebook — pros and cons

**“The student was already being pounded when the video started. We counted 26 punches and he was kicked once before the other boy was finally pulled off. Luckily, the student was on his stomach with his hands covering his head or else he could’ve been hurt worse.”** Ohio County High School Resource Officer Jerry Critchelow on a video posted on the social media site Facebook, which played a role in the arrest of a former student for assaulting a freshman at a football game. From the *Hartford Ohio County Times-News*.



**“I see it as a way for me to send out real quick, positive things because I can access Facebook from my phone as a contact.”** Campbell County Schools Superintendent Anthony Strong on one way he uses Facebook to communicate with students and the community at large. From the *Fort Mitchell Community Press & Recorder*.

made of PAWS-itive students from each of our pre-K through second-grade classes. Following him, the primary school teachers will be introduced and will run through the tunnel. The students have worked hard to develop a cheer based on our PAWS theme. Each grade level was responsible for creating movement to correspond to their part of the cheer.” Owen County Primary School Principal Sharen Hubbard describing a “super assembly” used to introduce new Superintendent David Raleigh to the community. From the *Owenton News-Herald*.

**“We pushed for (all-day kindergarten) and we got it because it was needed. All-day kindergarten, as it is now, won’t be beneficial. Some (students) won’t get one-on-one (instruction) at home; if they don’t get one-on-one at school, they will be very behind.”** Parent Shawna Jent on the Milton Elementary school council’s request for an additional kindergarten teacher to address large class sizes in the school’s first year of all-day kindergarten. From the *Bedford Trimble Banner*.

**“We wouldn’t spend that kind of money on this project. Period.”**



Henderson County Schools Superintendent Thomas Richey after recommending that the board reject bids on a central office renovation, the lowest coming in more than \$902,000 over the estimate. From the *Henderson Gleaner*.

**“We’re spending tons of money on professional development, but is it what teachers need to impact student learning? A lot of this is about checking what you are currently doing to see if it’s having an impact, and if not, what**

**needs to be done differently.”** Education Commissioner Terry Holliday on the state’s plan next spring to survey all certified employees about working conditions in Kentucky schools. From the *KSBA eNews Service*.

**“It’s not about the number of sports, but about the number of girls versus the number of boys participating in athletics, as well as the amount of money being spent.”** Webster County High School Athletics Director Matt Bell on how the federal Title IX law was a hurdle to efforts to establish a boys’ soccer program. From the *Providence Journal-Times*.

**“It does take some adjustment. When you are used to planning for 90 minutes and then you have classes that only last 50 minutes, it seems the class time runs out before you are ready. I think it makes us (teachers) a little anxious about having time to teach the content that we are expected to teach. We just keep reminding ourselves that we now have the students for the entire year instead of changing classes at mid-year.”** McLean County High School Vocational Department head Teresa Woodburn on how the shift to a modified block schedule is growing on the school’s faculty. From the *Calhoun McLean County News*.

**“It would be nice if the state funded high school textbooks; sometimes they are necessary. But we can’t let it affect us as teachers. We have to work a little harder and get a little more creative in how we are delivering the material. I try to find activities that force the students to do work and be active in their learning, rather than me just standing up at the whiteboard lecturing. I want them to leave the classroom tired from the hard work they put in.”** Campbellsville Independent High School math teacher Kevin Rafferty on how he deals with a lack of state textbook funding. From the *Campbellsville Central Kentucky News-Journal*. ☞

# Bible distribution in public schools

## POINT ...

**“The ultimate goal is to get them to restrict access to the school to school parties only. There’s no reason to allow a religious group to come into our public schools and hand out religious texts to students. A school should not serve as that type of forum.”** Rebecca Markert, an attorney for the Freedom from Religion Foundation, on her organization’s request for documents on the Laurel County school board’s decision to permit a Bible distribution.

## COUNTERPOINT...

**“There’s no law in Kentucky and there’s no case law all the way through the federal Sixth Circuit (Court of Appeals) that says that it’s not legal to offer these books to the students. There’s not been any pressure for anyone to take one; in fact, that was stressed to them: ‘It’s your decision. If you want one, take it, if you don’t, you don’t have to.’”** Laurel County Schools Superintendent David Young on the matter.

From the *London Sentinel-Echo*.

# PLAN BUT VERIFY

## Revised comprehensive planning process will include auditing element

By Madelynn Coldiron  
Staff Writer

The Kentucky Department of Education is in the process of retooling comprehensive district improvement planning, only this time the agency wants to be sure districts are walking the talk.

The planning system is being tweaked to be more efficient for school districts, said Larry Stinson, associate commissioner of Next-Generation Schools and Districts at the state education department.

However, the flip side of that will be a closer scrutiny of those plans by the education department to make sure they are “effective and having a true impact on student learning,” Stinson said.

To do this, the department will do a “desktop audit” of the records of 14 or so randomly selected districts, then assign a verification team to visit them and compare what’s going on there with what their comprehensive plan says. The department currently does not have the resources to conduct similar audits at the school level.

Some districts have been doing a very good job with their comprehensive plans, Stinson said, while “there are still some that maybe (say), ‘Well, they said we had to do it, what is the minimum we have to do to comply?’ And we certainly need to move beyond compliance on these kinds of issues and make it really purposeful and have some really positive impacts.”

Stinson said the department wants to keep the auditing process in a supportive context “and look for ways to promote the growth at the district level, at the school level with the teachers and so on. So that’s going to be more the mind-set we’re taking to it. It’s not just to say, ‘Did you do it?’ and checking a box. It’s did you make a good plan and did you implement that plan and did it have the intended results?”

He emphasized his agency doesn’t want to create a lot of extra work either for itself or for districts.



The education department currently has a team working to redesign the comprehensive planning process, with an eye toward folding in other reports so districts don’t have to enter the same boilerplate information throughout multiple forms. This could include data on migrant education, professional development and English language learners, Stinson said.

### **Motivation**

Stinson emphasized that the closer look at district comprehensive plans is being driven by student learning and growth at all levels, from students to teachers to principals.

“How do we bring that all to life and make sure that’s happening? And that’s where this comes into play: Schools and districts need to do a good job of planning to help all that happen –to look at their big picture and how all of their resources come together to support that



learning taking place in the classroom,” Stinson said.

Stu Silberman, president of the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, says it doesn't make sense to audit district improvement plans unless a district is not making progress.

“I just think to be randomly selected to be audited on your district improvement plan when you're already spending a tremendous amount of time on it is one additional thing that just doesn't need to be put on the plates of people who are doing the right thing,” he said. “Now in cases where they're not, then maybe that's a different issue.”

Silberman, who heads Fayette County Schools, said it's up to local school boards to monitor a districts' comprehensive plan.

“I think the monitoring portion of this to me is a local board issue – I don't see it as a KDE issue,” he said. “In our particular situation, our board monitors an aspect of our district improvement plan every month. I see that as more of a local issue, at least in our case because that's what we do.”

With changes in assessment and other areas, superintendents and other educators already “are feeling pretty much overwhelmed right now,” without the time required for this, Silberman added. “We need to be able to focus our time on the things that make the most difference.”

#### **The schedule**

The education department will spend the remainder of the current school year tweaking the planning process. In 2011-12, a “small number” of districts will pilot the new planning and KDE will pilot how it does the auditing, Stinson said.

By 2012-13, districts will be asked to use the revised comprehensive planning and the education department will have worked out the details of the reviewing process. Fourteen or so districts will be chosen randomly for auditing of their plans. This pattern will continue each year. The number of districts proposed for auditing is tied to the number of school districts in the state – 14 is roughly the square root of 174, and Stinson said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday has been told that formula is a good basis to use in random sampling.

The agency is “very early” in the process of developing the revised comprehensive plan and audit program, Stinson said. Among the questions yet to be answered:

- What happens to districts whose comprehensive plans are not reflected in the audit?
- How long will state personnel stay in a district to check the plan against what they find on the ground?
- What other reports will districts be able to fold into their comprehensive plans?
- Exactly how will verification districts be randomly chosen?
- Which district personnel will be chosen to provide input during development of the changes?

Stinson acknowledged that the move to verify district comprehensive plans might be viewed in the districts as intrusive at a time when frustration is running high over his agency's ability to provide services to them.

But he said he hopes that will change “once we really begin to put some wheels on it.”

“This is an effort to go the other direction from that thought,” he said. “If we can do this well, it will overcome or counteract that concern. In fact, that is a reason for doing what we're doing. We know we have fewer people, that it's difficult to serve – so how can we do it more efficiently? We're hopeful this will be more efficient.” ☞

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# Kentucky Superintendent Vacancy

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# Economy no deterrent to prospective teachers

By Madelynn Coldiron  
Staff Writer

It's not a pretty picture: Talk of teacher layoffs, pink slips at the end of the year to untenured educators and a tight job market for the newly certified.

And yet students still are flocking to education programs at Kentucky's universities.

It's all relative, says Bill Phillips, dean of Eastern Kentucky University's College of Education.

"It's very stable, secure, has benefits and it's a full-time job. There's a lot of good things about our education system and how it's set up when you look at that compared to corporate America where they're introducing all kinds of part-time labor, no benefits, no retirement," he said.

Deans report enrollment is up or stable at colleges of education, based on a spot check that included Western Kentucky University, University of Louisville, Campbellsville University and EKU. This follows the general pattern for all postsecondary education nationwide.

Overall enrollment is flat at WKU this year, which reflects a decrease in some areas, but not in students majoring in education.

"Our numbers are going up while the others are going down," said Fred Carter, director of the Office of Teacher Services & School Relations at WKU's

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

"When people don't have a job, they go back to school," summed up Blake Haselton, a former school district superintendent who is the interim dean of University of Louisville's College of Education and Human Development. "We're not hearing any negatives from students at this point in time. I think it's in the rear-view mirror as far as they're concerned."

## **Unprecedented times**

Students are enrolling in colleges of education during conditions that may be unprecedented in modern memory.

"We really have never seen a time where superintendents are giving all first-year teachers pink slips, and that's what's happening," Phillips said. "Every year, all the new teachers at the end of the year are notified they might not be hired back and that's devastating to the profession. I've never seen that before."

Even special education teachers are being laid off, he noted, while teachers aides have been "laid off in droves," further increasing the stress on teaching staff.

"The thing that we noticed this year," Haselton said, "was people getting hired much later than usual – they weren't getting hired in the spring, they were getting hired in the summer. We had some that were

hired that week right before school started.”

Brenda Priddy, dean of Campbellsville University’s School of Education, hasn’t seen a change in the university’s traditional teacher prep program. But she said there has been a drop in the university’s alternative certification program for special education. After being admitted to the program, students are provisionally allowed to teach, but Priddy said many instead are turning to the traditional route to certification because there are no teaching slots available for alternative certification participants.

The employment picture for new teachers is complicated by what’s been happening within the corps of experienced teachers: many are not retiring when they become eligible.

“A lot of teachers who are eligible for retirement are not retiring and that’s causing a shortage of spots; and a lot of people who are retiring, the districts just aren’t replacing them because of the budget situation,” WKU’s Carter said.

Haselton noted that in a normal economy, some teachers leave for private-sector jobs – but those are no longer plentiful.

#### **Advice has changed**

Several deans said job prospects for new teachers vary, depending on their content area, with math, science and middle-grades teachers having few problems landing a job. That has colleges of education advising their students a bit differently than they did in flush times.

Carter conducts annual orientation sessions for students in education or who are thinking about going into the field, and includes statistics about the job market.

“Two years ago I was saying to them the education field and the medical field are the two areas that are almost recession proof. But now we found they’re not recession proof,” he said.

Phillips said EKV is steering its freshmen education students into the high-demand fields. Those who are dead set on elementary education – the most difficult to place after graduation – are advised “to get a specialization in reading or math or a minor in Spanish to be more marketable,” Phillips said.

#### **Future uncertainties**

Carter is optimistic about the continued demand in the teaching field. “I think people who are getting certified may have to sub for a year but I think they’re going to eventually get jobs,” he said. “Our best students who are graduating are still getting jobs.”

However, he acknowledged that could change if the economy doesn’t improve. “The reality is, if (superintendents and principals) can’t pay people, they’re not going to hire people. So they’re going to be asking for exemptions to class-size numbers and that kind of thing from KDE and KDE is going to be granting them because the reality is, you’ve got to pay the people you hire.”

Haselton also sees a more mixed outlook for the job market because of the strain on district budgets.

“I think that school districts are going to have some significant personnel challenges ahead because the federal stimulus funding is one-time money and no other new, sustainable, revenue sources have been identified at either the state or federal level,” he said. “After this year, 2011-12 looks like a very challenging fiscal year, although the recent edujobs funding will help somewhat.”

However, Haselton also puts the situation in perspective, noting, “Everything is in flux right now. Tell me a profession that is not in flux right now. It’s not just education or the public sector.” ❧

“Two years ago I was saying to (education students) the education field and the medical field are the two areas that are almost recession proof. But now we found they’re not recession proof.”

— Fred Carter, director of the Office of Teacher Services & School Relations at Western Kentucky University’s College of Education and Behavioral Sciences



# LESSONS IN SUCCESS

High schools big and small  
share what makes their  
students college and  
career ready

By Jennifer Wohlleb  
Staff Writer

A school culture focused on high expectations and individual attention seems to be the fast track to college and career readiness, according to leaders from three Kentucky high schools that have been successful in preparing students. They were among just 15 statewide where more than 50 percent of students were deemed prepared for college and careers.

The readiness results are based on Kentucky students meeting ACT benchmarks set by the Kentucky Council on Post-secondary Education and on the number of students earning certification saying they are ready for work. This is the first year these results have been available in Kentucky.

"It's kind of a whole mindset," said Beechwood High School Principal Ginger Webb, whose school scored 80 percent. "And whether it's college, the military, vocational school or community college, we know that the skills that they need are the same no matter what. And 80 percent is good, but it's not everybody. We won't be content until we get everybody ready for college."

#### High expectations

At North Oldham High School, which scored 66 percent, parents and teachers not only have high expectations, but the district has tried to foster that same desire in its students, said Principal Lisa Jarrett.

"Two or three years ago, the board of education said we're



not going to have a valedictorian because too many kids were just vying for that top spot and once they realized that they couldn't be at the top, they kind of quit," she said. "So we went to the university model, the cum laude model, where you're not competing against another person, you're competing against a standard."

She compared it to a pole vaulter who isn't necessarily trying to beat one person, but is trying to clear the bar as high as he or she can.

"We put that standard up there, and as many kids who can reach it, get awarded," she said. "It's not about who's No. 1 and who's No. 2, it's about how high can you get and can you get over that bar?"

### Advanced Placement

AP classes are another cornerstone of these successful schools. With an enrollment of 330 students in grades 9 through 12, Beechwood offers 12-13 AP classes each year, for any high school student.

"We don't have stringent requirements," Webb said. "If they want to take it, we put them in there because I'd much rather a kid get a C in an AP class and be prepared for college than to get an A in another class where they're not going to be challenged."

In the last four years, North Oldham has also made a concerted effort to enroll students at all grade levels in AP classes.

"If you put it out there for them and they succeed, it makes you feel that it was well worth your time and worth the 'risk,'" Jarrett said.

### Individual attention

With graduating classes of fewer than 50 students, Paintsville High School credits its personal touch for the school's 64 percent score.

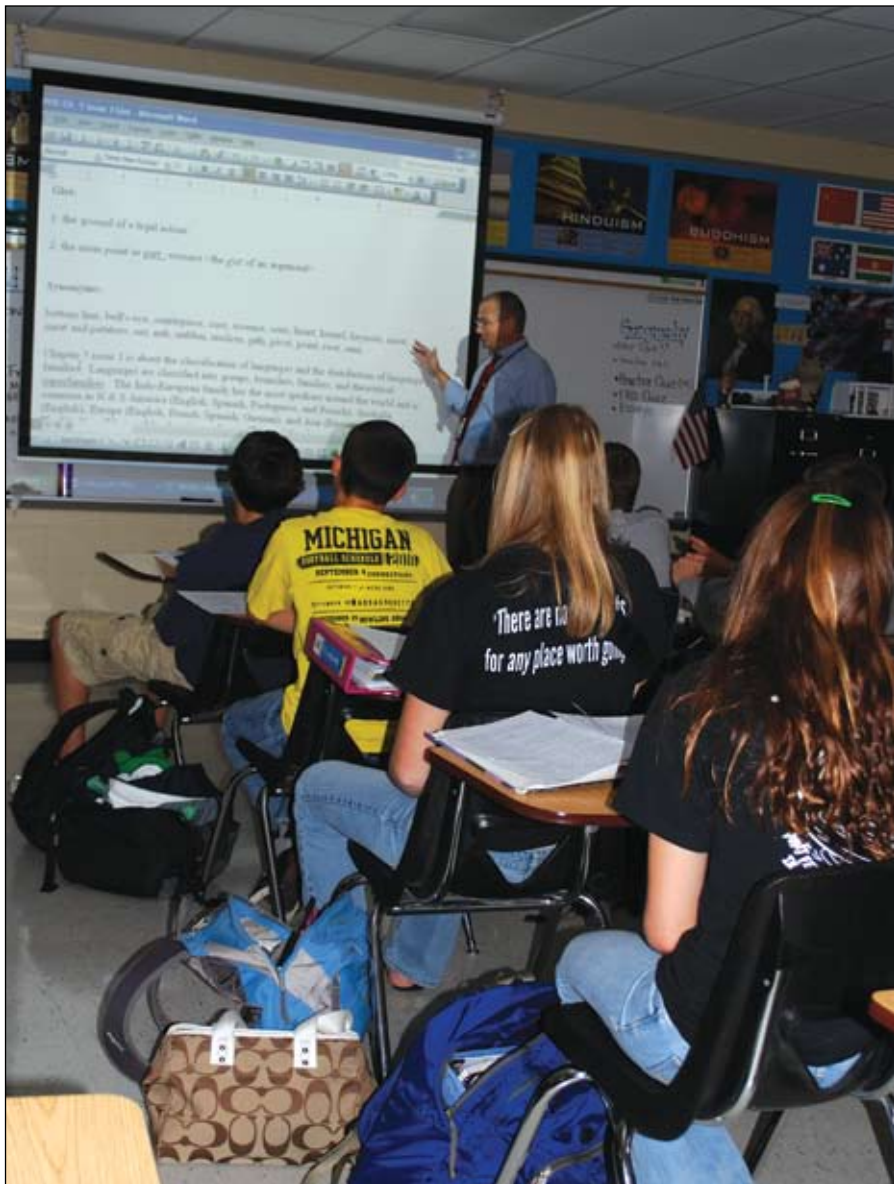
"We do work a lot individually, since we are such a small school," said Paintsville Counselor Beverly Martin. "I bring them in one-on-one to make sure they've applied to at least one college. Most apply to two or three."

Martin helps with the application process, financial aid and scholarship forms, and will even take students on group visits to a college.

"And if a student is not geared toward bookwork, we try to get them interested and enrolled in a vocational/technical program," she said. "This past year, we had two students enroll in welding and one in nursing at technical school."

Beechwood also benefits from being a small school.

"We were actually excited when the state added the ACT as part of the state assessment because it's national and it does give us some very valid information about who is going to do well in college and who is not," Webb said. "One of the advantages we have to being a grade 7 to 12 school, we have ownership of all of those scores, the PLAN, EXPLORE and



Will Jones, AP human geography teacher at North Oldham High School, goes over the previous night's assignment with his class of freshmen. Principal Lisa Jarrett said encouraging students at all grade levels to take AP classes has contributed to the school's success in ACT college and career readiness scores.

Photo opposite page: Crista Williford, freshman AP biology teacher at North Oldham High School, leads students through a lesson.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

the ACT. So we're starting at the younger grades and looking at those scores to see what kids need to improve on so they will be college ready when they take that test as a junior."

She said the data allows the school to pinpoint specific academic weaknesses in individual students.

"Their homework might be tied to what they need to work on, whereas the person sitting next to them might need to work on something else," she said. "So really, they're using that information to target each individual kid's needs, and I think that's the key. It's definitely differentiated homework."

#### Being pushy

At North Oldham, pushing is not only allowed, but it's encouraged. Jarrett said the school has a strong parental culture that places a high value on education.

"You can have all of the AP classes in the world, but if parents aren't pushing and encouraging, then why would the kid take it?" she asked. "When it's ingrained in them from a young age, they're going to want to do everything they can to be better prepared, and no one wants them to go to college and for the first time have to study or not know what it's like to be in a rigorous class."

Webb said Beechwood's parents and community are also involved in school.

"A lot of our parents really value education; they move to Ft. Mitchell so their children can attend here," she said. "We are lucky in the sense that we have a lot of community support from people who value education and have an expectation that their kids are going to go to college."

Jarrett said North Oldham's teachers also push their students.

"We have teachers with high expectations who aren't afraid to push kids, aren't afraid to work them a little bit and aren't afraid to make them uncomfortable because they know that's part of life," she said. "The earlier a student can experience getting out of their comfort zone, the better prepared they are for life." ❧

## READY, SET, GO

### Kentucky high schools with 50 percent or more of its students deemed prepared for college and careers

Beechwood Independent	80 percent
Ryle (Boone) High School	57 percent
Dunbar (Fayette) High School	58 percent
Highlands (Ft. Thomas) High School	72 percent
Ballard (Jefferson) High School	58 percent
Louisville Male (Jefferson) High School	61 percent
Brown (Jefferson) High School	67 percent
DuPont Manual (Jefferson) High School	81 percent
West Jessamine High School	52 percent
Model Laboratory (Madison) High	68 percent
South Oldham High School	64 percent
North Oldham High School	66 percent
Paintsville Independent High School	64 percent
Walton-Verona High School	56 percent
Woodford County High School	50 percent

*From the Kentucky Department of Education*

## Best Behavior

Maximize your district's efforts in addressing student discipline issues. Attend KSBA's

### Student Discipline Conference

Nov. 12, 2010, Lexington

For more information or to register online, go to [www.ksba.org](http://www.ksba.org)



# LAST CHANCE, FIRST CHANCE

## KSBA's 2010 Winter Symposium

When: Dec. 3-4

Where: Louisville Marriott Downtown

For seasoned school board members, Winter Symposium is the last chance to earn training credits for the year. For newly elected board members, it's the first chance to learn about their new job. That's why the day-and-a-half training event is a mix of sessions covering both the basics and more advanced courses from the Academy of Studies.

### Snapshot:

- Emphasis on finance and facilities
- Half-day session on school energy management
- Training sessions at all Academy of Studies levels
- Basics for new board members
- The return of the Friday night tailgating reception

Watch your mail and the KSBA website at [www.ksba.org](http://www.ksba.org) for details and registration information.

EILA and Board Credit Hours available



# To beat the dropout rate, beat the bushes

By Wayne Dominick

Chelsea Pelfrey knows why she wants to go to college. “I want to make more money,” the Menifee County High School senior told school board members at KSBA’s Fall Regional Meeting in Morehead. Her route to college is a little different, however, and that is what the audience was there to discuss.

Pelfrey is one of many Kentucky high school students who have dropped out of school or are in danger of doing so.

Keeping students like Pelfrey in school is not only good for her bottom line, it is also in the best interests of the Kentucky economy, KSBA Executive Director Bill Scott explained at the Eastern Kentucky North regional meeting.

This year’s series of regional meetings focused on dropout prevention and increasing graduation rates.

According to the latest figures, high school graduates will earn \$7,000 a year more than those without a diploma, be less likely to slip into poverty, be unemployed or go to prison.

While those are all excellent reasons to keep students in school, Scott gave one more reason: “Keeping kids in school is more than an economic issue. It is our moral obligation to give students everything they need to be successful.”

Although Kentucky’s dropout rate has fallen in recent years, Scott pointed out there is still much work to do – especially if districts are to comply with Senate Bill 1, which requires Kentucky school districts to raise graduation rates.

The key, according to the Center for Public Education’s research, is prediction, intervention and recovery: Identifying students most likely to drop out; developing strategies to help these students before they fall behind; and developing programs for students who are failing.

Scott also pointed out that even though at-risk students often have problems out of the classroom, the reasons most dropouts give for leaving school are problems in school. Dropouts say they left school because they were failing classes and did not think they could graduate.

Scott said the school board’s role in dropout prevention goes beyond allocating resources for programs.

Board members have to set measurable targets for improving dropout and graduation rates. In addition, they should show their support for the programs by giving them the same attention they give to other schools in the district.

“You all have to be out there telling everyone how important these programs are and how much they help kids and the community,” Scott said. He added that board meetings are the perfect place to recognize those students who have succeeded.

To illustrate how to help at-risk students, the program included a panel of administrators, teachers and students from Bath, Menifee and Rowan counties who are involved in alternative schools and credit recovery programs.

While each program is different, all three had two things in



**Top photo:** Menifee County student Chelsea Pelfrey told the audience that if she had not been able to return to the county’s alternative school after the birth of her son she would have dropped out. “Because they were flexible and willing to give me extra help, I was able to come back to school. There’s no way I could have been able to do that in a regular school.” Looking on is Tamilyn Ingram, one of Chelsea’s teachers.

**Bottom photo:** Carter County Superintendent Darlene Gee reviewed dropout rates with board members Randy Steagall and David Jessie during one of the breakout sessions. Gee credited Carter County’s dropout rate decline over the past two years to an emphasis on identifying potential dropouts and enrolling them in credit recovery programs.

common – individualized instruction and flexibility. As Brandy Breeze, program director for Rowan County’s Bluegrass Discovery Academy put it, “You have to find each student’s



story. Find out what caused them to fall behind and work out a program to fix it.”

Todd Neace, the principal at Bath County’s Graduation Success Academy, said it is important to be flexible with hours and courses. “A lot of these kids are facing problems outside of school we never dreamed of,” he said. “We have to help them overcome these obstacles and work around them.” That sometimes means allowing students who have to work or raise children to attend half-day classes or design courses that give them credit for their life experiences.

Rowan County student Krystal Kelsey said the personal attention makes the difference. “I feel like everybody cares about me there,” she said about the Discovery Academy. “It’s not just about grades and books – they care about everything that’s going on in.” Pelfrey, the Menifee County student, added, “The teachers care so much about us, we work extra hard because we don’t want to let them down.”

Bath County Schools Superintendent Nancy Hutchinson

pointed out that a good program alone won’t stop students from dropping out. “You have to do more than just start a program. You have to go out and find the kids who dropped out and get them back into school.”

Hutchinson credits the home visits the Graduation Success Academy staff makes as a big reason the district’s dropout rate has dropped to 0.67 percent. “We visited every student who dropped out and found out why and what we could do to get them back in school,” she said.

Amid all the talk of dropout rates, statistics, graduation requirements and funding, Bath County teacher Phoebe Swank reminded board members and administrators to remember they are dealing with children. “They’re babies,” she said. “They’ve been through a lot and have had to deal with a lot, but deep down they’re children. They need our love, our guidance and our support.” ❧

— *Dominick is a writer from Frankfort*

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## Four new regional directors join KSBA board

### Dennis R. Smith



Hazard Independent school board member Dennis R. Smith is the new regional chairperson representing the Upper Kentucky River region on the KSBA Board of Directors.

A member of the Hazard Independent board since 2005, Smith is retired from American Electric Power/Kentucky Power, where he was named top marketing achiever for four years. Smith received an associate of arts degree from Hazard Community College and attended Lindsey Wilson College.

The father of four is a former Kiwanis Club president and current chairman of the trustee board of Town Mountain Baptist Church. Smith, a Columbia, Ky., native, is a Kentucky Colonel and school volunteer.

### Ambrose Wilson IV



A Woodford County school board member has taken his seat on the KSBA Board of Directors. Ambrose Wilson, deputy commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions, will represent the Central Kentucky region on the KSBA board.

Wilson, of Midway, is serving the second of two stints on the Woodford County board. His current tenure began in 2004 and he previously served from 1984-1996. He currently is its vice chairman and he also sits on the KSBA Education Foundation board of directors.

Wilson holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Kentucky. His community involvement includes leadership in the Woodford County Red Cross, Midway Merchants Association, Central Kentucky Habitat for Humanity, Midway Renaissance, Fayette County Cancer Society and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Kentucky. He also chairs the board of Midway Christian Church, where he is an elder. In 1991 he

was named Woodford County Chamber of Commerce educator of the year and in 1996 was named citizen of year by the Lions Club for his public education service.

### Phyllis J. Lawson



A Frenchburg businesswoman will represent the school districts of KSBA’s East Kentucky North Region. Phyllis J. Lawson has been a member of the Menifee County school board for nearly 24 years. She has served as board president and vice president during that time.

A graduate of Frenchburg High School, Lawson is the treasurer and bookkeeper for Lawson Trucking Co., Inc., a position she has held for 40 years. She is vice president of the Frenchburg Lions Club, a charter member of the Frenchburg Chamber of Commerce, and serves on the boards of Gateway Services, Christian Social Services, Menifee County Extension Board and Project Worth, an adult education program.

Lawson also is past treasurer of Frenchburg Baptist Church, past president of both the Menifee County Lions Club and 1st Club Homemakers. She is a former Boy Scouts den mother, 4-H Club treasurer and bookkeeper and treasurer for the Menifee County Library Board.

### Scott Burrows



Trimble County school board member Scott Burrows will represent the Fifth Region on the KSBA Board of Directors. Burrows is in his first term as a member of the Trimble County board, starting his service in 2007. His roots run deep in his school district; he is a 1969 graduate of Trimble County High School.

Burrows, who lives in Pendleton, also graduated from the United Electronics Institute. He is the manager of a truck repair and wrecker service and has two children. Burrows also is a 10-year volunteer emergency medical technician for the Trimble County emergency medical service.

# In it together

Freshman Learning Community improves student transitions in Henry County

## Fabulous freshmen

By Jennifer Wohlleb  
Staff Writer

Henry County High School has experienced a dramatic decrease in freshmen retention rates since the Freshman Learning Community began in the 2007-08 school year.

School year	Retentions
2005	24
2006	20
2007	27
2008	6
2009	3
2010	3

At Henry County High School, nearly all freshmen take agriculture as an elective. They also take a tech concepts elective, a computer tech applications elective, a financial literacy elective or an art elective class – all in one year.

To help students make a more successful transition to high school and to expose them to the school's range of programs, freshmen rotate every nine weeks through four of these five electives. It's all part of the school's Freshman Learning Community.

"We had done different things over the years, but we were able to identify that our freshmen were just struggling," said guidance counselor Cheryl Gilley, describing the four-year-old program. "We were losing a lot of kids and we knew we needed to do something different."

While not a complete school-within-a-school, the learning community (an idea borrowed from Owen County High School) groups the freshmen together, to be taught by the same group of teachers for English, math, science and social studies. The teachers share a hallway as well as a common planning period so they can collaborate and share their experiences with these students. The cadre also includes a





Jessica Parrish watches in anticipation to see if the balloon will power the device she built in tech concepts class across the wire. Fellow freshmen Collin Morris and Jhenna Dykes wait their turns.

**Opposite page:** Art teacher William Martin discusses a portrait project with freshman Ashton Rice. Art is one of five, nine-week elective rotations freshman can take.

special education teacher.

The system is working. Graduation rates increased nearly 7 percent between 2006 and 2009. ACT and Kentucky Core Content Test scores also have increased. And the number of retentions has dropped from between 20-27 in the three years preceding the program to between three and six in the first three years of the learning community. Discipline problems also have declined.

“Statistically, their behavior and their academics are better,” said teacher Katie Johnson. “Before we started this, we had some crazy number of failures and write ups. Last year, we went the whole first semester without a write up.”

Johnson, an English teacher, said the teacher collaboration has been successful.

“We communicate so much more now, and if all of us are having trouble (with the same student) we can work together to figure something out,” Johnson said. “Or if one teacher has a closer relationship with a student who may be having problems at home, he or she can let the rest of us know what’s going on so we can understand.”

This approach also has provided greater scheduling flexibility, which has improved classroom dynamics.

“We can move them around a little bit better than we used to,” Gilley said. “If there are a couple of kids in a class not blending well together, we can move them around to try to get better chemistry.”

#### Exposure to new ideas

The freshman electives rotation is helping students make better academic choices after their first year.

“I know my numbers have skyrocketed for my computer classes,” said business teacher Jessica Sekulski. “There used to be students who would not even be comfortable with turning a computer on, but once they come to my room, they say, ‘Hey, this isn’t so bad.’ They realize that it’s something else they are interested in and I’m able to stress to them how important this is to their futures. I’m getting huge numbers of students from the Freshman Learning Community.”

Ag teacher Lindsey Davie has also seen an increase in students. Two years ago there were 85 students; last year it was up to 115.

“I get a lot of kids in FFA who probably wouldn’t be there if it weren’t for the learning academy,” she said. “A lot of them thought it was just about farming. We’ve also been getting a lot of girls.”

Exposing freshmen to different programs keeps them from later locking themselves into a yearlong class they may end up not liking.

“It stops kids from thinking they like ag and then getting halfway through it and deciding they hate it and are stuck in it for the entire year and end up failing it,” said English teacher Shelly McClure. “Now, if they don’t like one of these classes, they only have to survive nine weeks.”

#### Transitions

The Freshman Learning Community also includes transition classes, which evolve each year. Gilley said initially they worked on study skills, note taking and test taking.

“This year we have done more targeted transitions,” she said. “We’ve looked at students’ test scores and placed them in transitions based on their math and

reading scores, to target those specific areas. I think that’s working for us.”

Gilley said though the tweaking will continue, the program’s foundation is strong.

“We needed to do something and we had to do it within the resources we had,” she said. “We all sat down and said, ‘What is it we think we need?’ Every year we tinker with it and the teachers are getting a better handle on different things.

“But we have the foundation, and the fact that the teachers are together and they’re communicating with each other, and the ownership they feel is as much of a difference as anything.” ❧

# Walt Ryan

Retiring Walton-Verona Independent school board member

*In Conversation With... features an interview between a leader or figure involved in public education and a staff member of the Kentucky School Advocate.*

*As citizens across the Commonwealth go to the polls this month to elect their school board members, this edition's conversation is with Walton-Verona Independent school board member Walt Ryan, who is retiring from the board at the end of this year after 47 years of service. Ryan shares some memories and advice.*



Photo by Patrick Reddy/The Enquirer

“Being a school board member, you really need to listen instead of talk so much, and get all of the facts before you act.”

**Q.** You have been on the board for 47 years. Why did you decide to retire at the end of this term?

**A.** I want to collect my pension, get my retirement. (laughs)

No, I just thought it was time for somebody else younger. We don't have any kids or grandkids in the school system anymore. I thought someone else could do it.

**Q.** What was your motivation for running for school board in the first place?

**A.** I graduated from Walton-Verona in 1955, got married a year after that. Two years after that we had our first son. A year after that we had another. When they were starting elementary, I had a friend, an older friend, who had been on the school board for years and he was not going to run again. He asked me to do that, so I did. And that's where I've been ever since.

**Q.** What made you stay for so many years?

**A.** Just the interest in it. I've been involved in the community for all these years, plus some other things in the community, so I just stayed with it.

And like I said, we had kids who graduated from there and grandkids, so I just stayed involved.

**Q. How has education changed since you've joined the school board?**

**A.** We've gone from chalkboards to Smart Boards. It's just been amazing, the changes. When you go into the schools, it's nothing like when I was a student there or even the first few years (as a board member). We've been very fortunate to have good people there, good administrators, and they've kept us on the ball, kept us in good shape.

**Q. What has your learning curve been with the changing technology? How have you kept up?**

**A.** Part of me still wonders if we're being too "smart" for our own good. I'm not sure. And I'm kind of computer dumb, so that's another reason I'm retiring. I thought it would be best if I got off of the board at this time.

**Q. Do you think that's vital knowledge for a school board member to have?**

**A.** I would say so, with the way everything is now. My wife does all of the computer stuff and I get all of the information from the superintendent. He has Friday notes every week, so I get all of that.

**Q. What are some of the other changes you have seen over the years?**

**A.** We've really been fortunate over the last few years. We built a new wing onto the high school. We have a new sports facility, which is just super.

**Q. What has been one of your proudest moments as a school board member? Any decisions you've made or issues you've pushed?**

**A.** This past year I was asked to give the commencement speech by the graduating class. Those who knew me were really surprised that I even considered doing that. But it worked out all right.

Also this past year, I did get the Warren Proudfoot Award (from KSBA for outstanding school board member of the year) in January.

When I got that, I was really proud that my fellow school board members nominated me for that. I thought it was something that maybe not a lot of school boards with that many members that they would all operate together to recommend somebody for that award. When I got the award, they asked me to say a few words, I made the comment that I would be talking a long time because I served on the board with an attorney, an insurance salesman and two women, and I hardly ever got a chance to talk.

But it is kind of strange, you go to some of the national meetings and state meetings, and you listen to other board members talk and you go home and think to yourself, "I'm sure glad I'm in the community that I'm in."

**Q. How does your board maintain that unity, the ability to work together for the greater good?**

**A.** We might disagree, but we agree to disagree sometimes. And we've always worked together. I don't think there's ever been anyone in the 47 years since I've come on the school board that had an agenda where they had everything lined out. It just works out. We all kid around together and say what we think, and we all get along good.

**Q. When you spoke at commencement, what did you tell the graduates? What advice did you give?**

**A.** I had three different points. I told them to put God first, their family and friends second, and work in the community, third.

**Q. What does the future of education look like in Kentucky?**

**A.** It has really improved since I've been on the board. The test scores really show that. And I'm really proud of our school and our test scores, because we're right up there among the top. The Advanced Education people did a survey in our school just recently. We haven't got the final report back yet, but we met with them (in mid-September) and our school was (rated) highly functional and we got an excellent review from them. We're really proud of that.

**Q. Has being a school board member taught you anything about yourself or life in general?**

**A.** Being a school board member, you really need to listen instead of talk so much, and get all of the facts before you act.

That was the advice (his old friend) gave me before I went on the board. He said, "There's one thing I want to tell you before you get on there: if you have someone come and complain about something, just don't commit yourself because you are acting as a board. And most of the time, when you look into it, it's not what was explained to you in the beginning to start with." I've kind of kept to that.

**Q. I guess that would be good advice for new school board members?**

**A.** Yes. I guess that would be, think before you act because things aren't always as they appear in the beginning. ☘

# Want to reduce dropouts? Kids say reach out and show us some love

The usual suspects were on hand during this year's KSBA fall regional meetings. Students who set hands to clapping and toes to tapping with song and dance. Incredible meals that forced attendees to loosen their belts on the way home. Solid networking – or grumbling – time with leaders of nearby systems. Hail to newly elected regional chairpersons and farewell to those ending their service.

And then there is the KSBA program. A good deal of thought, coordination and preparation go into these sessions. That said, there are some years – after hearing the presentation for the fourth or fifth time – when I'm tempted to slip out and wait in the car, especially if my New York Yankees are in a competing playoff game.

But the 2010 fall meetings that I attended were different. And based on what I heard and observed from the school board members and superintendents who attended, I wasn't the only one feeling that way.

KSBA Executive Director Bill Scott and Board Team Development Director Kerri Schelling – the tag team that plans the fall program – chose to focus on the high school dropout problem in Kentucky and in far too many Kentucky districts. They pulled together a lot of enlightening statistics for the PowerPoint presentation. They even promoted several online resources – such as NSBA's Center for Public Education – that give those wanting more the option to really dig deep into the latest national research on the subject.

Yet it turned out that all of the numbers, graphs and facts about the dropout reality and possible solutions were merely the appetizer for the meat of the evening. That was when administrators who run dropout prevention programs and – much more grippingly – the students in them gave their first hand views. Students opened up and shared what was keeping them in school and on track to graduate and – to quote the kids themselves – from getting pregnant, doing drugs, ending up in jail...or dead.

## From the mouths of babes

Usually, the panel began with one or more administrators who detailed initiatives and personal engagement designed to combat leading dropout factors: high absenteeism, lack of interest, academic struggles, limited (if any) support at home and behavior problems.

But it was when the kids spoke that you could hear, well, only the kids. No rustling of papers or creaking of chairs, except when someone strained closer to hear a soft-spoken storyteller.

There were shaking and sweaty hands, folding and unfolding single sheets of paper where they had jotted down a pos-



Brad Hughes  
KSBA Member  
Support Services Director

sible response to the prepared questions. There were trembling voices, revealing a home life of adult disinterest or some peer encouragement to walk in one school door and just as quickly slip out another and off campus.

And then there was the consistent theme woven from student to student about what had changed attitudes – someone who had demonstrated to each teenager that he and she was worthy. Worthy of respect. Worthy of support. Worthy of discipline tendered fairly. Worthy of confidence.

Worthy of a relationship based on more

than “being a number.”

Now I don't want to suggest that these were stories of an epiphany about how a high school degree would transform their lives. But there were stories about lives transformed – and on a firmer path to one essential element for greater potential for future careers, finances, relationships and responsibilities.

You could tell that their words had had an impact. A standing ovation at one meeting. Reverential praise at another. And always the line of school leaders moving quickly at the end to shake the hands of those youths who had made the choice to stay in school.

At least for now.

These were stories more of hope and relief than of commitment and confidence. But there was one student who has already reached his degree requirements. He told the audience at his forum that he was off to college to become a teacher, to return home as an educator, and someday (pointing directly at the superintendent) to occupy that role as top educational leader in his community.

## The Last Word

At meetings of school board members and superintendents, it's hardly an irregular event to hear celebratory talk about this school's test scores or that school's new media center. In fact, if you ask school leaders to tell you about something positive in their district, you could learn about a new instructional program, a teacher mentoring initiative or a technological innovation that is engaging students in new ways to think.

After this fall, I'm going to start asking folks different questions. About their alternative programs. Their efforts to reach at-risk students. Their messages to staff that every single child has a spark that can be ignited by the gift of caring, persistent attention of truly interested adults.

I had that gift in my home growing up and from several of those educators who helped me keep that focus beyond the moment, the paper, the class, the dance, the date and the choices of youth.

And that's a message worth getting out. ☘



# Safe and Healthy Schools and Students Conference

**November 15-16**

**Galt House East, Louisville**

You may notice a new addition to the title of this year's conference – the word "healthy." The traditional Kentucky safe schools conference has been expanded in this, its 16th year, to encompass student and staff health issues.

The packaging of health and safety is a logical step, as both areas affect a student's ability to learn at school. It's also a step closer to addressing the needs of the "whole child."

Though KSBA and the Kentucky Center for School Safety have added this new branch, the conference's roots are still strong, with plenty of sessions and speakers who will deal with multiple aspects of school safety.

For more information or to register online, go to [www.ksba.org](http://www.ksba.org), and look under "Featured Events" at the top of the page.





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# Setting the stage for 2011 General Assembly

Across the state, education leaders have contributed to the development of KSBA's Legislative Agenda for the 2011 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. From individual suggestions to group discussions, school board members and superintendents have been helping formulate the plan prior to the Jan. 4 opening day.

Upper right: Lee County Superintendent Jim Evans and Jessamine County Superintendent Lu Young were part of a team of local leaders who traveled to Frankfort in September to review an initial draft of the association's legislative priorities.

Upper Left: Board members (Right to left) Marshall Jenkins of Morgan County, John Inman of Meade County and Fern Reed of Montgomery County studied proposals ranging from early childhood development and the SEEK formula to the new school accountability system and local district autonomy during the KSBA Board of Directors meeting in October.

Right: (Left to right) KSBA President Delmar Mahan of Whitley County, Executive Director Bill Scott and Immediate Past President Ed Massey of Boone County listen as Governmental Relations Director Shannon Pratt Stiglitz (not pictured) answers questions about the draft. The full board will act on a final lineup of legislative goals for the 2011 session when it meets in December during the KSBA Winter Symposium in Louisville.

