

## Most education-related bills become laws in June

During the 2005 legislative session, Kentucky lawmakers passed the following education-related bills. These bills have been signed into law by Gov. Ernie Fletcher and become effective June 20, unless otherwise indicated.

These summaries offer highlights from the bills, listed by number as a Senate Bill (SB), Senate Joint Resolution (SJR), House Bill (HB) or House Committee Resolution (HCR). For the full text of any legislation, go to [www.lrc.ky.gov/record/05rs/record.htm](http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/05rs/record.htm).

### Certification

Education Professional Standards

Board (EPSB): Clarifies exemptions for a school principal or assistant principal who was certified in another state. Clarifies that a one-year certificate may be given to a person to serve as an assistant principal if only a limited number of applicants meet requirements. Specifies that a student enrolled in an alternative program under Option 6 must successfully complete the assessments before participating in the internship. Clarifies that a teacher who is fully certified in Kentucky and is seeking an additional certification is not required to repeat the internship program. Extends the deadline from October

to November for informing the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) of teachers who are assigned classes out of field. Extends the pilot two-year teacher internship program by one year. (HB 183)

### Curriculum

Reading: Makes changes in the Early Reading Incentive Grant program to implement Gov. Fletcher's Read to Achieve initiative. Provides renewable, two-year grants for schools to support implementation of reading diagnostic assessments and research-based intervention programs for struggling readers. Requires the Kentucky Board of Educa-

tion (KBE) to promulgate an administrative regulation establishing grant criteria and guidelines. Includes more teachers and a library media specialist on the renamed advisory committee. (SB 19)

Reading instruction resources: Directs KDE to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the professional development training and resources needed in each school to help each child achieve reading and literacy proficiency by 2014 and develop a strategic plan designed to reach the goal of reading and literacy proficiency. Requires the department to

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## Board continues testing discussions

By Cathy Lindsey

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The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), preschool funding and local school district issues had the attention of the Kentucky Board of Education at its April meeting.

Kentucky Department of Education staff made several presentations on CATS, the "Kentucky Core Content for Assessment" and the Request for Proposals (RFP) document that will be used to determine the state's next testing contractor. The board also considered the possibility of additional testing to meet federal reading and mathematics requirements, ways to track individual student accountability and efficiency in test administration.

Department staff voiced concern about keeping testing times reasonable for each grade level. Board members agreed that they wanted to keep testing efficient enough to be administered within a reasonable amount of time.

The board will continue its discussions on CATS-related issues in May. Final decisions about the RFP components are expected at See **BOARD** on Page 9



Photo by Rick McComb

### Writing it down

Jamie Watson, a fourth-grader at South Todd Elementary in Todd County, finds a quiet corner of the classroom to reflect on the pieces she will include in her writing portfolio this year. As part of her letter to the people who will review her writing portfolio, Jamie is explaining why she chose the examples of her writing and how she feels she has grown as a writer.

## Mother and daughter by chance, teacher colleagues by choice

By Joy Barr

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The second Sunday of May has become one of the more popular days of the year to dine out. The telephone lines record their highest traffic as sons and daughters everywhere take advantage of this day to honor and to express appreciation of their mothers.

While many take this time to celebrate and commemorate their mother-child relationships on Mother's Day, two teachers in one Kentucky school district have the opportunity to strengthen this bond on a daily basis.

Jeannie Stone teaches eighth grade at Pikeville Junior High. Her daughter, Raquel Stone, is a third-grade teacher at Pikeville Elementary. They are colleagues in the small southeastern Kentucky independent school district with one elementary school and one school that houses the junior high and high school.

Pikeville Independent is an exemplary school district with an academic index on the 2004 Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) of 87.2. To be an exemplary school district, schools must be classified as "Progressing" or "Meets Goal" and meet the dropout and novice reduction criteria.

Jeannie has taught for 29 years in the Pikeville Independent District. She began her teaching experience in a pilot program for teacher training at the end of her junior year at Pikeville College. The pro-

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# Bulletin Board



Photo by Rick McComb

## Conferences

### Early Childhood Summer Institute

The 19th annual Early Childhood Summer Institute, sponsored by the Kentucky Early Childhood Regional Training Centers, is set for June 20-22 in Louisville. Pre-register by May 20.

Contact: Vanessa Garland, Berea Early Childhood Regional Training Center, (800) 343-2959, vgarland@berea.k12.ky.us

### Gifted Education

The National Association for Gifted Children will hold its 52nd annual convention Nov. 9-13 in Louisville.

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

### Middle School

The Kentucky Middle School Association's fall conference is Sept. 25-27 in Northern Kentucky. The conference will feature the 2005 Schools to Watch.

Contact: Fran Salyers, fran@ure.net  
[www.kmsaonline.com/conference/conference.asp](http://www.kmsaonline.com/conference/conference.asp)

### Physical Education

The Kentucky Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance will host its summer physical education conference June 27-28 in Bowling Green.

Contact: Lonnie Davis, executive director, (859) 622-1887

### Geography and History

"Geography and History" is the theme of this year's Kentucky History Education conference. Scheduled for July 7-8 at the Kentucky History Center in Frankfort, the event will feature content, resources and teaching ideas that explore connections between the two social studies strands.

Contact: Vicky Middleswarth, (502) 564-1792, vicky.middleswarth@ky.gov

### Behavior Institute 2005

The Behavior Institute 2005: Taking Rachel's Challenge will be June 27-29 in Lexington. Registration deadline is June 1.

[www.ky.gov/agencies/behave/misc/bi01.html](http://www.ky.gov/agencies/behave/misc/bi01.html)

## Events

### Summer teacher academies

The 2005 Summer Teacher Academies provide intensive content-focused professional development to increase teacher knowledge in specific core content areas. Each 30-hour academy includes an additional 12 hours of face-to-face or electronic follow-up. Participants receive stipends. For more information about specific academy offerings, go to [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov) and enter "Teacher Academies" in the keyword/search box.

### Kentucky Teacher of the Year

The Kentucky Department of Education and Ashland Inc. are seeking exemplary teachers for the 2006 Kentucky Teacher of the Year program. Deadline for nominations is May 31. For application and program specifics, go to [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov) and enter "#toy" in the keyword/search box.

### Bullying workshop

The Badgett Regional Cooperative for Educational Enhancement will host a professional development workshop, "Stop Bullying Now," on June 13 in Madisonville. Author Stan Davis will present information on preventing bullying in schools. Workshop fee of \$100 includes the book, "Schools Where Everyone Belongs."

[www.badgettcoop.org](http://www.badgettcoop.org)

### Institute for Arts in Education

The 2005 Kentucky Institute for Arts in Education will be held at The Kentucky Center in Louisville June 20-July 1. Co-sponsored by the University of Louisville, the two-week seminar will integrate all aspects of arts and humanities. Graduate credit or non-credit tuition available.

Contact: Jeffrey Jamner, The Kentucky Center, (502) 562-0703, jjamner@kentuckycenter.org  
[www.kentuckycenter.org](http://www.kentuckycenter.org)

### Science opportunities

The Louisville Science Center offers teachers two professional development opportunities this summer. The Louisville Inquiry Summit will be held June 27-July 1. Teacher trainers and educational administrators will create a supportive network of schools using inquiry in the classroom. The Louisville Science Center's annual Teacher Institute is set for July 14-29. Teachers in grades 2-8 can attend sessions of exploration science, integrating art and science, environmental health, force and motion, and weather.

Contact: Amy Lowen, (800) 591-2203, amy.lowen@loukymetro.org

[www.LouisvilleScience.org](http://www.LouisvilleScience.org)

### We the People... institutes

The Administrative Office of the Courts will host summer institutes for elementary, middle and high school teachers to implement We the People... curriculum in their classrooms. The free institutes are scheduled on July 18 (elementary), July 19 (middle) and July 20 (high) in Frankfort. Register by June 20.

Contact: Rachel Bingham, (800) 928-2350

### Kentucky State Fair

The Kentucky State Fair is Aug. 18-28. Kaleidoscope Discovery Zone, a gigantic interactive educational learning center, will allow fairgoers to investigate plate tectonics, earthquakes and tsunamis. Fairgoers also can explore the continent of Asia as part of Project Global.

[www.kystatefair.org/special\\_exhibits/educational\\_exhibit/index.html](http://www.kystatefair.org/special_exhibits/educational_exhibit/index.html)

### Days of Remembrance

The annual Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust is celebrated May 1-8. Classroom materials can be downloaded from the Holocaust Memorial Museum's Web site.

[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

Bulletin Board is compiled by Joy Barr  
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# Commissioner's Comments

## Clarifying core content will benefit teaching and learning in Kentucky public schools

By Gene Wilhoit

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Last fall, I told you that the Kentucky Board of Education was putting together specifications for the new Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) contract. It has been a long process, involving extra board meetings and input from thousands of educators on key components of CATS that will affect teaching and learning in Kentucky.

An important part of preparing the new testing contract requirements is providing potential test developers with the parameters for designing the state assessment items. Since the inception of education reform, Kentucky has used the "Core Content for Assessment" to convey that information to our potential contractors and test developers.

Kentucky educators helped develop the document nearly 15 years ago and have been partners in refining it several times since then. As a result, the "Core Content for Assessment" contains only the classroom content that teachers have said is appropriate for inclusion in the test and the norm-referenced tests for CATS.

Teachers also find the document helpful to ensure that they address state-assessed content in their classrooms. However, some teachers confuse the "Core Content for Assessment" with the "Program of Studies."

The "Program of Studies," which is based on Kentucky's learning goals, academic expectations and national standards, contains the content standards for primary, intermediate and middle level programs that lead up to high school. It also specifies the minimum content for the required credits for high school graduation.

The "Core Content for Assessment" contains only what we are able to test on the state level. We know, for instance, that good speaking and listening skills enhance a student's reading performance. Speaking and listening skills are not specifically assessed within CATS because it would be difficult to measure them on a paper and pencil test. For this reason, we assess reading performance on a state level, but not listening and speaking.

Likewise, we know that rich inquiry is the backbone of studying science. We can assess student knowledge about science concepts on a state level, but teachers must include as part of their classroom lessons the experiments that germinate ideas and cause students to use their higher-level thinking skills.

It has been more than six years since Kentucky educators have taken a close look at our content standards and updated the "Core Content for Assessment." Since



Morgantown Elementary primary student Charity Payne shows Commissioner Gene Wilhoit how to read the graph she created to indicate the different shapes she found in a handful of cereal. The commissioner recently visited the Butler County school, which was named a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

### 'Core Content for Assessment, Version 4.0'

Go to [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov).

Enter "draftcc" in the keyword/search box and click.

Select appropriate content area and grade level.

Remember, this version contains draft documents that are being considered by the Kentucky Board of Education for use in development of items for the 2007 Kentucky Core Content Tests. The completed version for use by educators should be available on this Web site before August.

that time, new research and national standards – the American Diploma Project, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Framework, standards required by ACT and SAT, and standards set by national content organizations in mathematics, English and science – have emerged.

In addition, teachers and administrators have told us that some parts of the core content document need to be clearer. They say that the format for this document hasn't been conducive to vertical curriculum alignment conversations. They also say that they want more resources to help them with instruction.

Since last August, department staff and teams of P-12 and postsecondary educators from throughout the state have worked on specific parts of the document. They laid the groundwork for refining, clarifying and reorganizing the "Core Content for Assessment."

We posted the work of those teams on

the department's Web site as part of an online survey. Nearly 6,000 of you – each spending up to 90 minutes of your valuable time – completed all or part of the survey. Your feedback has been vital in helping to clarify what students should be learning.

It also resulted in designing a consistent document format across content areas. I think this will be extremely helpful to primary and elementary teachers who teach several content areas each day.

Because of the time and effort teachers have invested in this project, I feel confident the new version of the "Core Content for Assessment" will help teachers see across grade levels what students in Kentucky should be expected to know to prepare them ultimately for postsecondary studies or the workplace.

The results of this overwhelming teacher input, I think, are impressive and have made the "Core Content for Assessment, Version 4.0" an extremely valuable, useful tool.

The draft of Version 4.0 will be given to potential test contractors to help them prepare their bids for the work. We will continue to refine and polish the document over the next few months before a final version is released to schools as guidance for the spring 2007 tests.

However, if you'd like to see the draft core content document, it's available on the department's Web site. (See directions to Web location in box on this page.) For now, you can compare the draft document to the document you're currently using, begin discussions about how your school and district curriculum maps will change, and begin discussions around content. Some of you have suggested that you will use Version 4.0 as a basis for summer work.

The improved document reflects the rigor and relevance needed to align with national standards. It clearly shows the broad concepts that can be assessed at each level, what content students need to know at each grade and how students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of each concept.

The new version is organized by grade level from end of primary through eighth grade. At the high school level, each content spans the four years. Reading is the only high school content area written for specific (9 and 10) grades.

This new format organizes the information to better facilitate teacher conversations across the elementary, middle and high school levels. I believe the framework provides a more developmental approach to how content is taught and learned.

It also underscores what we've been saying for years: Content is not "owned" only at assessment grades. Rather, every teacher is responsible for adding to the foundation of learning for each child.

Additionally, department staff and teachers are beginning to work on professional development for schools and districts to help use the new document. We also will be retooling existing teaching tools and creating others to help give teachers the kind of instructional resources they want to enhance classroom instruction. These tools will include student work and examples of classroom assessments matched to content.

Before the end of school, I hope you will take time to look at the online draft version of the "Core Content for Assessment, Version 4.0" and let me know if you see something in the document that needs further clarification. This document will only be as complete as public school educators make it.

*(If you have comments on this topic, contact the commissioner at [gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us).)*

# Summer can be a time to reenergize dispositions



Photo by Rick McComb

By Mark Wasicsko

Eastern Kentucky University

Yet another school year is about to end. Probably the farthest thing from our minds as we finish the march to the end of school is getting ready to begin next school year. Perhaps, a few weeks from now will be the perfect time to get started with preparations.

As we know, good teaching is a synthesis of three key ingredients: knowledge, skills and dispositions. Kentucky teachers have numerous opportunities to enhance their professional knowledge and skills each summer through teacher academies, university courses and programs provided by districts and the regional education co-ops.

Reenergizing our dispositions to teach — those essential attitudes that facilitate growth and learning in students — can be accomplished through a painless summer self-renewal plan. Taking time for ourselves and our professional enrichment can help restore the spirit to teach and can heighten our anticipation to embark on the best year ever when classes begin in August.

Every good plan starts with objectives.

The objectives of our summer renewal plan are to reenergize our dispositions in three areas:

**Disposition toward self** — Great teachers are positive people. They are honest, enthusiastic, have a great sense of humor and an infectious excitement for the adventures of living and learning. Together these qualities permit teachers to maintain high expectations for themselves and all students.

Objective 1 for this summer is to reenergize ourselves. This can be accomplished with responsible FUN in plentiful doses.

**Disposition toward students** — When people think of their favorite teacher, they remember things such as “She liked me,” “He made me feel worthwhile and important,” “She maintained high expectations of me.”

Objective 2 is to enhance our beliefs that students are able, worthy and valuable. We must believe that all people are capable of learning and developing.

**Disposition toward teaching** — The best teachers are people-oriented. They expend much effort building positive relationships with students, col-

leagues and the community. They see larger issues rather than immediate and, frequently, less important ones.

Their aim is to ensure that their students are better people 10 years from now because of what they learn today. Objective 3 is to renew our perspectives about what is important in our lives and for our students’ futures.

There are many ways to address these three objectives. The following summer reading list, suggestions for a video series and some “homework” assignments should make for a more enjoyable summer. Hopefully, these activities also will prepare us for a better next school year.

## Reading list

Start the summer with books written by Kentucky authors. Good choices include “Clay’s Quilt” or “Coal Tattoo” by Silas House, some of the poetry in “Affrilachia” by Frank X. Walker or “Icy Sparks” by Gwyn Hyman Rubio.

To help regain perspectives on the things that are most important, pick up a copy of “Life’s Greatest Lessons” by teacher Hal Urban. Next, try the challenging but rewarding book, “The Courage to Teach” by Parker Palmer. This book is a revelation for teachers who have ever questioned why they teach, and its message will penetrate the heart and soul of educators.

You may have seen Ron Clark, the 2002 Disney Teacher of the Year, on TV. His easy-to-read books tell of his experiences teaching “manners” to high-need rural and inner-city students.

He provides concrete “essentials” for having a disciplined class but, more importantly, self-disciplined and high-achieving students. Clark’s books, “The Essential 55” or “The Excellent 11,” won’t disappoint.

## Family viewing

Pop some Orville Redenbacher’s, brew a pitcher of sweet tea and invite the friends and family to a teacher video series. Here are a few favorite “oldies” that either passed under the popular radar screen or are old enough to be new again.

The best teacher movies of all times — most of which are based on true stories — include “Stand and Deliver,” “Conrack,” “To Sir, With Love,” “Renaissance Man,” “The Miracle Worker” (get the old black and white version with Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke), and my favorite, “October Sky.”

For the mature audience, throw in “Mr. Holland’s Opus” and “A Family Thing.” While the latter is not a teacher movie, it addresses issues that are always relevant: prejudice, tolerance and family.

## Homework

**Assignment 1:** Good teachers exhibit

great caring for the needs of others. However, they frequently run out of energy and time before they can take care of themselves.

Summer is a great time to start treating yourself kindly. Discover a new hobby, begin an exercise/diet program or spend some quality “alone time” reading, meditating, gardening or watching the sun set.

To be the best teacher **for your students**, you must **treat yourself kindly**. Not a day should go by without taking “mental health time,” and there is no better time to rekindle the excitement for living and learning than summer.

**Assignment 2:** The best teachers find good in everyone. This summer, practice finding at least one thing you like about everyone you meet. Then, focus on that good quality each time you see the person again.

When you do this, amazing things happen: the person will respond to you more positively, you will then find additional things you like about the person, and — if this cycle continues — you may end up with a good friend.

Being good at this “Will Rogers” skill is what it takes to reach the most difficult students in your classes. It also works wonders for improving relations with family and friends.

**Assignment 3:** One of the best ways to prepare for classes next fall is to practice committing random and unexpected acts of kindness. Such acts do wonderful things for the morale of the receiver. However, they can have profound, positive effects on the perpetrator as well.

This summer, practice unanticipated acts of kindness on loved ones, acquaintances and even strangers. See how they react, and see how it makes you feel.

To get a good start on the summer and set the stage for a great fall, end this school year with a flurry of random acts of kindness with students, colleagues and maybe even an administrator!

Take a lesson from long-distance runners who cool down after each big race. Teachers need to give themselves permission to recover from the physically and emotionally draining events that are a necessary part of facilitating high levels of student learning. Use this summer to treat yourself kindly and have lots of fun. If you do, both you and your students will benefit next fall.

*(Mark Wasicsko is dean of the College of Education at Eastern Kentucky University. He has spent 25 years studying the dispositions of effective educators with particular emphasis on teacher selection and teacher preparation. Contact: mark.wasicsko@eku.edu, (859) 622-3515)*

# Student and teacher work increases achievement

By Jeff Phillips

Harlan County Schools

Harlan County Public Schools initiated a process this school year to improve student achievement. The Self Critique Open Response Evaluation (SCORE) Protocol, a collaborative analysis of student and teacher work, is having overwhelmingly positive results.

"Teachers work together like an artists' colony, considering our craft and our canvas, the quality of the process and the product, and shaping ideas about how to make our work better," said Jeanne Ann Lee, Title I resource teacher.

SCORE Protocol activities take place one day a month at each school. Small interdisciplinary groups of four to six teachers meet in one-hour sessions throughout the day. Each group uses specific questions to examine student work and to guide feedback that provides critical next steps information.

In a typical session, a facilitator guides discussion as one teacher presents student work from a particular classroom lesson. Members of the small group ask questions about the assignment, and the facilitator poses focus questions before the group spends 15 minutes analyzing the teacher and student work.

After completing their analysis, members of the group spend 12 minutes offering supportive and challenging feedback about the work. The group uses the final 10 minutes of each session collaboratively discussing the implications (from analysis of the work)

for teaching and learning. Each group also provides a next steps plan for the presenting teacher.

Superintendent Timothy W. Saylor mandated this initiative for the district's three high schools and any school that failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Other schools received district assistance at the request of their principals. "Nine of the 11 schools in our district are participating in SCORE Protocol activities," said Saylor.

The district curriculum team developed the SCORE model using certain aspects of other research-based models for analyzing student work such as The Tuning Protocol, The Collaborative Assessment Protocol and the Standards in Practice Protocol. The team also reviewed research models from the Annenberg Institute for School Improvement, Coalition of Essential Schools, Harvard University Project Zero and Kentucky Association of School Administrators to determine which parts of each model would address the individual needs of our schools.

The curriculum team also developed an open-response toolkit that was self-explanatory, teacher-friendly and purposefully connected to the Protocol. The toolkit is available to all district teachers.

SCORE is a six-step process facilitated by a member of the District Assistance Team (DAT). The central office curriculum and instruction support staff, who make up the DAT, work in small groups with

each school and the school's District School Improvement Team (DSIT) to provide ongoing assistance. DSIT members are teacher leaders at each school. They work with the DAT to provide training and foster two-way communication between central office and the schools.

In addition to on-going assessments, Harlan County teachers must develop and use an open-response question – according to the district's open-response template – six times during the school year (September, October, November, January, February and March). Teachers collect the student responses but don't score them to avoid any bias during the analysis process.

DSIT members at each school randomly select one teacher from each interdisciplinary group for review. Once the teacher has been identified, four random samples of student work are selected for group analysis, in combination with the teacher work.

Harlan County uses Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) funds, a Title VI program, to provide professional development training for the DSIT members. REAP funds also pay for roving substitute teachers at each school so all teachers can participate in SCORE according to a set schedule.

Why look at student work? "It's what we do to make our decisions about our students more informed, more focused and more intentional," said Superintendent Saylor. "We study student work because it allows us to know more about the subjects we teach,

more about child development, and more about the strengths and weaknesses in the assignments that we design."

Lee, the Title I resource teacher, agrees. "Successful study of student work cannot be accomplished in isolation but should be done collaboratively because we learn more from each other than we do by ourselves," she said. "We study student work because, just as the proof of the pudding is in the tasting, the proof of teaching and learning is in the work students produce. Standards are deadly dull statements in books and binders – until we call them to life by letting student work show us the extent to which students have mastered the standard. How do we know all of our students are meeting high standards? The work will show us."

While our district has experienced "growing pains" during the implementation process, the SCORE Protocol has helped foster a stronger and more positive relationship between central office staff and teachers, between teachers and their students, and among the teaching community. Great strides have been made in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment, but the most stunning advancements can be seen in the area of culture.

"SCORE has definitely raised our level of expectation for ourselves and our students," said Saylor. "We will be using the SCORE Protocol next school year."

(Jeff Phillips is the director of public information for Harlan County Schools. Contact: (606) 573-4330, [jphillips@harlan.k12.ky.us](mailto:jphillips@harlan.k12.ky.us))



Photo by Rick McComb

## Working toward his goal

Ben McGehee, a Western Kentucky University elementary education student and student teacher at South Todd Elementary, takes advantage of his students' recess to work on a college project. McGehee is one of approximately 1,600 education students in Kentucky colleges and universities who have completed their student teaching requirements and will graduate during May.

## Current certification status now available online

The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for issuing and renewing certificates for all Kentucky teachers and administrators.

Those applying for new or renewed certifications now may view the real-time status of their applications via the Internet at [www.kyepsb.net](http://www.kyepsb.net).

The new feature allows educators to track the progress of all documents sent to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) for certification processing.

By using the online tracking tool, educators can determine the status of their certificates, see if any documentation is missing and learn when they will receive their certificates. This feature will contribute to faster processing of all new and renewed certificates.

"Last year, our six certification consultants processed over 25,000 certificates, and they average between 3,000 and 4,000 per month from May through September," said Mike Carr,

EPSB's director of certification. "In the past, processing time was slowed, because the same six people are also handling all telephone inquiries (more than 30,000 last year), many of which regard application status."

If such telephone inquiries can be handled via the Web site, turnaround time on certification cases can be reduced, said Carr.

Educators can check the status of their applications by going to [www.kyepsb.net](http://www.kyepsb.net), logging in and clicking on "View My Application History." This will provide up-to-the-minute status of each document pertaining to applications. If cases are complete, applicants will receive an estimate of when the certificates will be mailed.

"The information applicants may access on the Web site is the most current and up-to-date information available," Carr said. "For that reason, we urge applicants to use the Web-based system as it will allow staff to process many more certificates due to the decrease in phone calls."

# Making poetry speak to students

By David Deborde

Greenup County Schools

Ray Bradbury once remarked that “[w]e are cups, constantly and quietly being filled. The trick is, knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the beautiful stuff out.” For a unit on poetry, the trick is not only teaching students to let the beautiful stuff out through creative writing, but also to see that students are being filled with knowledge that meets Kentucky’s learning goals and academic expectations.

How do we give students the opportunity to experience poetry in an innovative and exciting way? What can we use in the classroom to help create avid readers/writers and enhance the positive experiences of creating and presenting literature?

At Greenup County High School, one of the “tricks” we have found is “Poetry Speaks” (\$49.99; ISBN 1-57071-720-6). An anthology of more than 40 of the greatest poets in the world, “Poetry Speaks” contains biographical sketches and critical essays on each artist.

More importantly, it pairs the text of the poems with three audio CDs of the poets reading their own works, giving students the chance to encounter poetry in its most powerful form — the spoken word. Using this resource in our classrooms has generated four main benefits:

- **Students gain a better understanding of the poems they encounter.**

Instead of trying to explain the terms rhythm, meter or free verse, students can hear the difference between Gwendolyn Brooks’ reading of “We Real Cool” and John Berryman’s reading of “4” from “The Dream Songs.” The importance of detail and word choice becomes clear when students listen to Elisabeth Bishop’s “The Fish” and I ask them to sketch the image she creates in the poem.

- **Students appreciate poetry.**

Even I was surprised by student reactions to Sylvia Plath’s haunting rendition of “Daddy” and Ginsburg’s anguished “Howl.” Immediately after listening to the recordings, I asked my students to write

about how the poems made them feel. We then proceeded to discuss the evocative nature of poetry and the need for a definite purpose in creative writing.

This type of exercise has translated to the social sciences as well. Other content teachers at my school have used the poetry CDs, playing Jarrell’s “The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner” or Hughes’ “Harlem” or “Mother to Son” to discuss the intersection between society and the arts: the power of literature to record, discuss and even change culture.

- **Students are excited about writing creatively and sharing their work with an audience.**

“Poetry Speaks” contains pictures of early drafts of great poems that can provide models for teaching the process of writing. Comparing a handwritten draft with the final version of Tennyson’s “The Rose,” for example, makes students understand the importance of editing and self-analysis. I required my students to show multiple drafts of at least one poem in their poetry portfolios they compiled during the unit of study.

The “Poetry Speaks” audio tracks provide a model for dramatic presentation. In my class, we taped students reading their own poems and made copies of their CDs available to family and friends. My students’ willingness to share their work was overwhelming as well — we had to extend our end-of-unit poetry presentations because everyone wanted to read their works.

- **Student writings become consistently stronger.**

I realize this is a bold statement, but results from my classes may help illuminate this last benefit of using this poetry collection. Among my four sophomore classes, a total of 87 students (none of which, by the way, were honors students), not a single student failed the unit. Every single student completed and turned in a poetry portfolio. Using a rubric I developed for a college-level poetry workshop, I determined that classroom averages for the portfolios were all within the middle-B



Greenup County High School ninth-grader Tiffany Howard listens as English teacher David Deborde reads her poem to the rest of the class to show how rhythm is used in writing poetry.

to low-A range.

Unmeasurable, but very noticeable, was the enthusiasm of my students. They wanted to create poems their classmates would enjoy. They wanted to read their poems in a manner that, like Hayden’s presentation of “Those Winter Sundays,” provoked a strong emotional response.

As with any resource, the success of using “Poetry Speaks” in a classroom is dependent on many factors — instructor

enthusiasm, classroom climate, use of best practices, etc. For teachers looking to get the most from students’ creative reading and writing, however, this tool may just be the final piece to letting the “beautiful stuff” fall out.

(David Deborde teaches English 9 and 10 at Greenup County High School. He offers to share rubrics, lesson plans and instructional ideas. Contact him at [ddeborde@greenup.k12.ky.us](mailto:ddeborde@greenup.k12.ky.us).)

## Private College Week set for June 13-17

High school counselors and academic advisors may want to encourage students to mark their calendars for the second annual Kentucky Private College Week, June 13-17.

The weeklong event is a collaborative effort among 19 nonprofit, independent higher education institutions in Kentucky to encourage high school students to discover the benefits of private postsecondary education. During Private College Week, each campus will offer daily sessions at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. (local time) that include a campus tour and information on admission, financial aid, academics and student life.

Participating institutions include: Alice Lloyd College (Pippa Passes), Asbury College (Wilmore), Bellarmine University (Louisville), Berea College (Berea), Brescia University (Owensboro), Campbellsville University (Campbellsville), Centre College (Danville), Cumberland College (Williamsburg), Georgetown College (Georgetown), Kentucky Christian University (Grayson), Kentucky Wesleyan College (Owensboro), Lindsey Wilson College (Columbia), Midway College (Midway), Pikeville College (Pikeville), St. Catharine College (St. Catharine), Spalding University (Louis-

ville), Thomas More College (Crestview Hills), Transylvania University (Lexington), and Union College (Barbourville).

Students will receive application fee waivers to the colleges and universities they visit (up to 10 visits possible). With application fees ranging up to \$50, a student could save as much as \$500.

“High-quality academic programs, small classes, individual attention, available faculty and vibrant campus life at affordable prices are hallmarks of private colleges and universities,” said Gary Cox, president of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities (AIKCU). “I urge students and families to visit several campuses during Private College Week and consider the possibilities of a private college education.”

To participate, students may register online at [www.aikcu.org](http://www.aikcu.org). Students will receive confirmation of their registrations, along with follow-up reminders from the colleges they plan to visit. Students also can contact the colleges that interest them and register by phone.

For more information, contact Mason Dyer, AIKCU, at (502) 695-5007, [mason@mail.aikcu.org](mailto:mason@mail.aikcu.org).

## Poetry Portfolio Rubric

(The Poetry Portfolio David Deborde requires for his class contains five poems. Each poem is worth 8 points, making the portfolio worth a total of 40 points.)

### Mechanics: 2 points

Correct spelling, proper format, agreement, and so on. (You should have corrected this through spell check and conferencing.)

### Language: 2 points

Using concrete language to render subject, using the most powerful words for your poem, practicing the economy of language, etc.

### Human Connection and Authorial Intent: 2 points

Is there an evident purpose to the poem? Did you keep your audience in mind? Have you used techniques to engage your reader?

### Being a Poet: 2 points

One of the biggest parts of being a writer is, well, just writing. Even if you hate poetry right now, you’ve at least made the first step in becoming a great poet — i.e., you are writing poems — and this part of the rubric is a reflection of that. You’re not going to write a masterpiece every time, but you can’t write a masterpiece without at least trying.

# Allen County school finds way to energize the 'E-Parent'

By Carolyn Pitchford  
Allen County Schools

"If I could just have some help from parents..."

How many times have teachers said this, sometimes musing aloud to other teachers? Teachers send home notes, which often get lost in bookbags. Parents scan paper newsletters for their children's names before discarding.

Wouldn't it be great if teachers and parents could establish a conversational relationship — personal, real time and on demand?

One of the goals of the staff at James E. Bazzell Middle School (Allen County) this school year has been to improve overall communication with parents and the community. We have tried different avenues with limited success: printed newsletters, an FM radio broadcast from the school, increased contact with the local media and school sign marquees.

Teachers were frustrated with the passive nature of these forms of information exchange and wanted more. Face-to-face discussions with parents are always useful, but often become a logistical headache as parents' schedules have to be juggled with teacher availability. Usually the result is a limited amount of actual contact time.

Today's "connected" parents are tech-savvy, but time constrained, a lot like today's teachers. The answer to improving communications, we discovered, was as close as our desktops.

Typically, teachers at our school begin the school year with access to a few parent e-mail addresses, collected randomly and used on the fly when needed. Leigh Ann Borden, a sixth-grade mathematics teacher, made a decision this fall to carry this concept further by adding parents' home e-mail addresses to her "personal

contacts" folder in Outlook.

As she began to see parental enthusiasm for e-correspondence with her, she started soliciting more home e-mail addresses. She soon was making contact with more than 75 percent of the parents of her team's students.

"After some planning and organization, I began to see changes in my students," said Borden. "Homework was being turned in regularly. Notes were actually signed by parents and returned. Students began to consistently progress in mathematics and were much more successful on tests because they were coming to class prepared.

"After the major successes I have had this year, I can't imagine NOT communicating with parents this way. I have found that positive, continuous communication with parents makes them your partner in the education of their children," she continued. "It's not just the day-to-day things we talk about like homework, tests or misbehavior in class. I am beginning to know my students more as the whole child they are... through their parent's eyes."

Word of Borden's e-mail success spread quickly through our school, and other



Eighth-grade teacher Jeremy Byrn shows how he set up the e-mail list of his students' parents to other Bazzell Middle School faculty members, Sandy Newton, Paula Oliver and Leigh Ann Borden.

teachers explored ways to put e-mail to its maximum use. Each team actively solicited e-mail addresses from parents.

Jeremy Byrn, faculty member of the eighth-grade "Dream Team," said, "It will be easier next year. We're going to include questions about parents' e-mail addresses on our school data forms we send home the first days of school. Students typically make it back with paperwork due at the beginning of the year."

After each team leader entered parents' e-mail addresses for their students

into their own "personal contact" folders in Outlook, Allen County School's district engineer, David Wilson, copied the teachers' contact groups into a "public contacts" folder. This enables all members of the team and the school administration to have access to the data.

As school technology coordinator, I correct and revise the addresses as mistakes are found, as parents change Internet service providers or when addresses need to be added.

"Parents love hearing directly from us about the big picture at school," said eighth-grade teacher Sandy Newton. "Our weekly e-newsletters summarize what we are doing in our classes for the week. We list the assignments due and tests that are coming up. In particular, we have found that the parents love the list of upcoming events like dances, ballgames, selling projects and competitions. The parents tell us that their children rarely tell them what is going on at school."

Byrn says the faculty has learned a great deal about direct parental communication. This positive communication with parents has reaped many more successes than just reporting poor behavior, bad grades and lousy attitudes. The process has opened an immediate, direct dialogue that fits in nicely with the rapidly expanding electronic culture found in modern homes, he added.

"Some students have asked if they can have their parents names taken off the list," Byrn said. "When I asked them why, they said that they didn't like it when their parents knew so much. I believe those comments reinforce our feeling of success!"

(Carolyn Pitchford is school technology coordinator at James E. Bazzell Middle School in Allen County. Contact her at cpitchfo@allen.k12.ky.us.)

## Design your own arts PD this summer

This summer, the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) again offers educators and parents the annual Design Your Own Professional Development seminar. This unique opportunity lets participants design their own classes to address arts and cultural connections through core content.

The two-day workshops will be held July 18-20 at the Kentucky Leadership Center near Faubush in Pulaski County. Workshops benefit arts and humanities teachers, arts specialists, social studies teachers, classroom generalists, special education teachers, language arts teachers, library media specialists, parent coordinators, Family Resource/Youth Service Center directors — or any educator interested in teaching the arts through cultures and cultures through the arts.

During the workshops, teachers can immerse themselves in hands-on cultural arts experiences led by professional, working artists who also teach

in school settings through the KAC Artist Teacher Initiated Projects. Participants receive 12 hours of professional development by attending four workshops. Participants may, for example, choose to study one arts discipline across four cultures, or they may choose to study four diverse disciplines through one culture.

Registration is \$180 per participant and includes lodging, meals, snacks and resource materials. When teaching team members enroll together, subsequent enrollees receive a \$10 discount. Registration closes June 1.

Among the smorgasbord of concurrent offerings for elementary and middle school educators are Native American, West African, Caribbean and Latino dance, as well as colonial American and Appalachian folk dance cultures. Visual arts workshops include mask making in Native American and West African cultures, West African Asafo and Adinkra, Appalachian basket making, Asian batik art, Navajo sand

paintings and Ojibway dream catchers.

Participants also can learn how to integrate watercolor painting with the study of Kentucky's history or environment, or how to create pop-up books of Kentucky history. Musical and storytelling cultures include those from Asia, Africa, Native America and Appalachia, as well as a diversity of musical styles.

There also will be a session on Greek theatre and several multicultural sessions. In addition to hands-on learning experiences, participants will acquire new ways to engage students in experiencing and responding to the elements of arts as expressed in diverse cultures.

Optional evening activities include nature walks, a bonfire on the shores of Lake Cumberland and free entertainment provided by some of Kentucky's finest artists. To check out the options and to register online, go to [www.artscouncil.ky.gov](http://www.artscouncil.ky.gov), click on "Arts Education" and follow the links.

# Students 'Take 10' in the classroom

By Cathy Lindsey

clindsey@kde.state.ky.us

In most circles, "take 10" means taking a break from the action to rest. At South Todd Elementary in Todd County, "Take 10!" means, "on your feet and move!"

As part of a pilot program designed by the Kentucky Department of Education and classroom teachers from across the state, selected second- and fifth-grade classes spent time this year incorporating physical activity into classroom instruction.

The need for increased physical activity in Kentucky's youth is well documented: physical inactivity and poor dietary habits have a direct link to obesity. Research-based studies document that improvements in student health can create optimal learners.

"As much as we have a responsibility to educate our children academically," said South Todd physical education teacher Lisa Chester, "we also have a responsibility to educate our students to become healthier, more physically fit individuals."

In an age of fast foods and video games, many children are overweight. Data from the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate that 15 percent of the state's children

are overweight and 15 percent are at risk for becoming overweight. The survey also shows that 79 percent of Kentucky's students participate in insufficient moderate physical activity (30 minutes or more in the past five of seven days).

Some health experts suggest that if today's youth keep super-sizing meals and downsizing physical activity, they risk becoming the first generation of Americans to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents. Their health will be threatened by obesity-related illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.

In an effort to combat this epidemic, South Todd, along with Fourth Street Elementary (Newport Independent), Strode Station Elementary (Clark County) and Carr Creek Elementary (Knott County), participated in the Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN) pilot. This integrated approach was made possible through coordinated school health funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. From October 2004 through February 2005, the schools integrated 30 minutes of moderate physical activity into other content areas. The program reinforces Kentucky curriculum standards and appeals to multiple learning styles while simultaneously integrating physical activity and nutrition concepts.

Staff from each participating site was provided an extensive training program. Each school received yoga mats and videos, music CDs, hula-hoops, pedometers, beanbags, FitnessGram software, United Dairy Council nutrition kits and the Take 10! curriculum. The Take 10! research-based program was created by the International Life Sciences Institute Center for Healthy Promotion and is aligned to Kentucky's core content standards.

The Take 10! curriculum contains safe and age-appropriate, 10-minute physical activities, according to Coordinated School Health consultant, Jim Tackett. These activities can be integrated into language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and general health classes.

"Take 10! addresses state and national health and physical education standards," said Tackett. "Students will find it fun while it creatively helps them meet daily physical activity requirements."

Students in Jill DeLello's second-grade class at South Todd regularly incorporate physical movement during class through a variety of activities.

"I taught students the names of the bones in their bodies, which are sung to the Macarena and a dance," said DeLello. "There is also a song and dance for learning the parts of insects."

For mathematics, DeLello's class took 10 minutes to "actively learn" about values that are greater than, less than and equal to each other. DeLello would assign a physi-

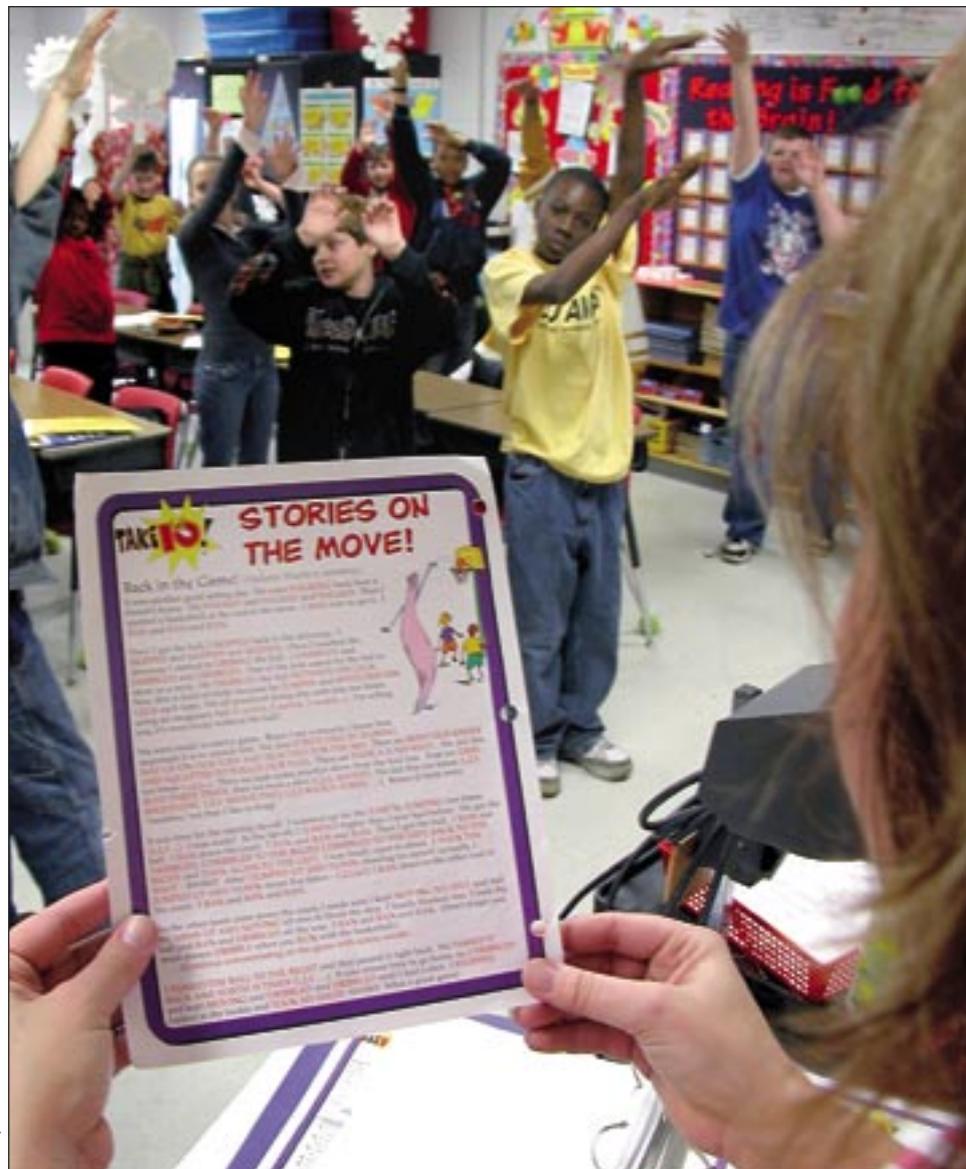


Photo by Rick McComb

South Todd Elementary fifth-graders listen, stretch and move as they act out a story from the Take 10! curriculum being read by physical education teacher Lisa Chester.

cal activity that corresponded with each answer. For example, if the answer were greater than, then the class would do 10 squats.

"One favorite Take 10! of mine is Stories in the Snow," DeLello said. "The teacher reads the story, and students do exercises to help them learn the information. For example, polar bears are seven feet tall. Students are asked to jump high seven times. I love this lesson because through the exercising, students can better remember the information. They also love it."

Teachers at South Todd reported that time on task increased as a result of the movement breaks. They said students were able to work better, concentrate more and think more clearly due to the added physical activity.

"I found my days beginning to run smoother because students knew they would get to exercise at different points," DeLello said. "They were more attentive."

Students also danced to music CDs, learned Tae-Bo and yoga, and wore pedometers every day to log their steps.

"We totaled the steps each week and then converted the steps to miles to see how far we'd walked," said South Todd physical education teacher Chester. "Students earned 'toe tokens,' small foot-shaped shoe charms, to represent the number of miles they walked."

Nutritional awareness also is part of the program. Coordinated School Health consultant Tackett said when teachers talk about various cultures in social studies

they can incorporate activities about food choices, patterns and health-related diseases and disorders in that culture. Also, he said, when discussing food choices and consumption, teachers can integrate the amount and kind of movement it would take to expend the amount of calories within that food item.

With the recent passage of Senate Bill 172 by the 2005 General Assembly, elementary schools in Kentucky will be asked to create wellness plans for students that include increased exercise and healthier food offerings. (See Page 1 for information on new laws.)

Tackett said data collected from the PAN pilot will be analyzed and used to make any changes for future classroom opportunities. Following this, the program and its parameters will be made available for other elementary schools to implement, if desired.

Due to the success of the pilot, South Todd teachers encourage other schools to incorporate more movement into classroom instruction.

"Adding physical activity in the classroom doesn't mean trying to find time to fit more into the school day; all it does is provide 'active learning' for content we're already teaching," said Chester. "Students are expending energy in positive and creative ways while learning so many important concepts."

For more information, contact Jim Tackett at (502) 564-2706, jtackett@kde.state.ky.us, or Lisa Chester at (270) 265-5785, lchester@todd.k12.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

Tyrez Harris and his South Todd Elementary classmates are all smiles as they spend 10 minutes on their feet and moving while studying a class lesson as part of the Take 10! program.

# MOTHER

from Page 1



Photo by Rick McComb

Never far away from their shared love of teaching, Jeannie Stone, left, and daughter Raquel Stone discuss curriculum ideas for writing assignments as they prepare lunch at Jeannie's home.

gram, called Teacher Corps, allowed her to spend her senior year and the following year interning in the third grade at Pikeville Elementary while continuing with her classes. At the end of the two years, Jeannie had completed both her undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Her first year of teaching was at Pikeville Elementary in the Title I reading and mathematics program. The next year, she moved to the junior high to teach English and has been there ever since.

Jeannie teaches reading and writing to approximately 100 eighth-graders and to 25 seventh-graders. One of her main goals, she says, is to encourage her students to read by providing them time in class and allowing them to choose what they read. Although they are introduced to short stories, novels and plays that everyone must read, they still are afforded the element of choice in outside reading.

"I believe that student choice is extremely important in a successful language arts program. Choice allows student ownership, which sparks interest and most always produces higher-quality performance by the students," said Jeannie.

One of Jeannie's proudest moments as a parent was the day she walked into the school as a colleague with her daughter. "We had walked through those doors many times as a mother and child, as a teacher and student, but as we entered to attend as mother and daughter colleagues my heart welled up with emotion," said Jeannie.

Now, Raquel remembers that first day as an educator quite differently. According to Jeannie, Raquel felt extremely intimidated. She was now a colleague of many of the teachers that she had had in elementary and high school. The fear and intimidation gradually went away as they all welcomed her with open arms.

Raquel showed an interest in the teaching profession as a young girl. She would ride the school bus to the high school in the afternoon to wait on Mom to finish her work. While waiting, she would play school using the chalkboard, desks, books and anything else she could find.

"It sometimes was humorous to listen to the things she would say. I could usually tell what she had studied that day and maybe even who had gotten into trouble and why. She always loved to do this," said

Jeannie. "I guess she was just 'destined' to enter the teaching profession."

For Raquel, the classroom has been a comfortable fit. "As long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a teacher. The best thing about teaching is to see a child succeed and realize that you are a part of that child's success," said Raquel. "I also believe that being raised in a 'teacher's home' is reflected in my teaching."

Raquel is in her third year of teaching at Pikeville Elementary. She teaches third grade – right where her mother started. "I just wanted to teach where my heart belongs and that is Pikeville," said Raquel.

Last summer, Jeannie and Raquel participated in a writing project at Morehead State University. The professional development experience was a time for them to grow as colleagues – as well as share a dorm room for four weeks.

Through the writing program, they learned many things about each other that strengthened the mother-daughter bond. Although the grade levels they teach are quite different, they found many similarities in their work.

They read and discussed professional material as well as their own personal writing. "I was overcome with pride as I came to realize just what a wonderful young teacher Raquel had become," said Jeannie.

"Jeannie is always looking for ways to improve the instruction she provides to our students, and the fact that she can do this with her daughter is just an added bonus," said Jon Stratton, principal at Pikeville High. "Not only does she encourage Raquel in a positive and supportive manner, she is a daily mentor and educational leader to the other Pikeville teachers."

Pikeville Elementary Principal Ken Osborne is very pleased with Raquel's teaching efforts. "Raquel is an enthusiastic instructor who has a wonderful relationship with her students. She always goes the extra mile to find ways to motivate and encourage high achievement in all students. She cares about each and every child in her classroom. She embraces new teaching methodologies and is always striving to improve her classroom," said Osborne.

Jeannie has coached Pikeville's national champion varsity cheerleading squad for 29 years, and Raquel is now the assistant coach. "This has been especially exciting and rewarding for the two of us, and now I have another younger daughter on the cheerleading squad," said Jeannie.

Contact: Jeannie Stone at Pikeville Junior High, (606) 432-0185, [jstone@Pikeville.k12.ky.us](mailto:jstone@Pikeville.k12.ky.us) or Raquel Stone at Pikeville Elementary, (606) 432-4196, [rstone@Pikeville.k12.ky.us](mailto:rstone@Pikeville.k12.ky.us)

## BOARD

from Page 1

the June meeting.

### Preschool funds

Each spring, the board establishes the per-child rates for the Kentucky Preschool Program for the next school year based on the budget approved by the state legislature. The program serves 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities and 4-year-olds who are eligible for the free-lunch program. It provides a minimum of a half-day developmentally appropriate program with services that include transportation, meals and parent training.

The 2005 General Assembly allocated \$51.6 million for the preschool program each year for the next two years. This is a slight increase in total funds available this school year. However, given the increased numbers of preschool students enrolled in 2004-2005, the actual amount of funding per-child will decrease.

Better early identification of children with disabilities, as well as at-risk children, is increasing the number of children eligible to participate in the state-funded program. Last year, 95 of the state's 176 school districts experienced preschool enrollment growth of more than 5 percent. In 2004-2005, the growing districts added 1,285 children to the program.

Regardless of participation rates, districts must make services available to eligible children, particularly due to federal requirements for children with disabilities. The board approved with regret

the rates and a mid-year growth amount for districts that may experience rises in enrollment. The board also agreed to discuss the issue of preschool rates with legislative leaders.

In "The State of Preschool: 2004 State Preschool Yearbook," a report produced by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), Kentucky fared well in several areas. Overall, Kentucky met seven of the 10 benchmarks for quality. However, in per-child spending, Kentucky ranked 27th, dropping from 21st place in the 2003 NIEER report.

The board agreed to uphold the ruling of Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit in the nonresident contract dispute between the Breathitt County and Jackson Independent school districts. In December 2004, the commissioner had ruled on a specific number of students that could be included in calculations of average daily attendance for Jackson Independent. The district later appealed to the board for a reassessment of that number.

The board will hold its annual retreat May 17 and 18 at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park in Gilbertsville. The next meeting of the board will be June 8 and 9 in Frankfort. More information about the board is available at [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov). Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click.

## Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

**E-mail:** [kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us)

**Phone:** (502) 564-3421 or  
(800) 533-5372  
(toll free in Kentucky)

**Fax:** (502) 564-6470

**Write:** Kentucky Teacher  
1914 Capital Plaza Tower  
500 Mero St.  
Frankfort, KY 40601



**MOST** from Page 1

submit its findings and recommendations to the Interim Joint Committee on Education of the Legislative Research Commission (LRC) no later than Nov. 1, 2005. (SJR 92)

**Mathematics and reading:** Establishes a Committee on Mathematics Achievement to develop a strategic plan for improving student achievement at all levels and to design a statewide professional development program to begin by June 1, 2006. Creates a postsecondary Center for Mathematics and establishes duties. Establishes a fund for district grants to support implementation of diagnostic and intervention services in mathematics. Sets the priority for the Teachers' Professional Growth Fund from 2006-2010 as training and support for teams of coaches and mentors in reading and mathematics. (HB 93)

**Leadership**

**Instructional leadership:** Requires an instructional leader to complete an intensive training program of 21 hours annually. Requires school district superintendents to report annually any instructional leader who fails to comply and to place the person on one-year probation. Requires KDE to verify training and forward the names of those failing to complete training requirements during probationary period to the EPSB for certificate revocation. (HB 301)

**Budget**

**Elementary and secondary funding:** Provides a SEEK base of \$3,445, up from the current base of \$3,240, to fund the increase in enrollment for the current year. A new weight of 7.5 percent is added for Limited English Proficiency, providing funding of approximately \$2.9 million. Requires local districts to give certified and classified employees raises of 3 percent in 2005-06. Funds salary supplements for National Board Certified Teachers (\$2,000 annually for 10 years upon successful completion). Provides funding in Fiscal Year 2006 for these programs: Extended School Services - \$31,859,500; Professional Development - \$15,034,700; Safe Schools - \$10,128,300; Family Resource and Youth Service Centers - \$51,850,700; Community Education - \$1,800,000; Elementary Arts and Humanities - \$484,400; Read to Achieve - \$11,100,000; Health Insurance - \$471,540,800; Middle School Academic Achievement Center - \$387,500; Teachers Professional Growth and Leadership Mentor Fund - \$4,306,800; State Agency Children Fund - \$10,462,100; Teacher Recruitment and Retention - \$1,686,700; Locally Operated Vocational Schools - \$9,985,400 and Writing Program - \$610,300. Provides \$3.9 million for a new program, the Math Achievement and Professional Growth Fund. Technology funding declined by \$500,000. (HB 267)

**Health and Nutrition**

**Health and nutrition in schools:** Requires credentialing or certification for a school food service director or person

responsible for menu planning at a school within three years of the effective date of the act or appointment. Requires continuing education for the school cafeteria director and managers. Requires the KBE to promulgate an administrative regulation specifying the minimum nutritional standards for all foods and beverages sold outside the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs. Limits the type of beverages elementary schools may offer during the school day. Establishes penalties for violations of food or drink restrictions. Requires an annual assessment of school nutrition, including a written report to parents and a forum to discuss an improvement plan. Limits the sale of retail fast foods to one day per week. Requires each school council of a school containing grades K-5 or any combination thereof to develop and implement a wellness policy that includes daily moderate to vigorous physical activity. Permits the school council policy to allow physical activity to be considered part of the instructional day, not to exceed 30 minutes per day/150 minutes per week. Requires the KBE to develop an assessment tool. Prohibits the sale of competitive foods and beverages from the time of the arrival of the first student until 30 minutes after the last lunch period. (SB 172)

**Truancy**

**Habitual truancy:** Identifies truants and habitual truants. Changes the definition of habitual truant as a student who has been truant two times, as opposed to three. This means a student who is truant or tardy without a valid excuse six times, as opposed to nine, will be an habitual truant and subject to court action. Establishes accountability for failure of a student who is age 18 or older to comply with school truancy laws. Requires school district personnel to inform students (between ages 18 and 21), parents, guardians and custodians that they are subject to the truancy laws. (HB 72)

**Security**

**Criminal background checks and school health services:** Permits a national criminal history background check as a condition of employment for a classified job applicant who has resided in Kentucky 12 months or less. Requires an applicant for any district position to divulge past residency information and provide photo identification. Requires public and private schools to have one school employee on duty at each school with delegated responsibility to administer glucagon subcutaneously for a student who is experiencing hypoglycemia or to administer Diazepam rectally to a student to stop a seizure when the student has a prescription for the medication and the school has written authorization to provide the medication. Requires the student's parent or guardian to sign a written liability release. Requires the school to monitor medications. (HB 88)

**Open Meetings/Open Records**

Dissemination of public information:

Requires the Attorney General to distribute Open Meetings and Open Records information to superintendents of public school districts within 90 days of changes in the law. Requires that notification be provided by the superintendent to each local board and council member 60 days after changes or election to office. Requires superintendent to maintain signatory proof of receipt. (HB 77)

**School Calendar**

**Closure for elections:** Requires schools to close on primary election day. The day may be used for professional development activities, professional meetings or parent-teacher conferences. (SB 7)

**Calendar study:** Directs the LRC to establish a task force to examine the relationship between Kentucky's educational system and the tourism industry relating to annual school calendars. (HCR 55)

**Taxes**

**Revenue and taxation:** Makes omnibus changes to the state's tax code. Relating to school districts, the bill establishes a general tax rate that a district can levy beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2006. Requires the addition of direct satellite broadcast and wireless cable services to any utility gross receipts license tax initially levied by a district board of education on or after July 1, 2005. Establishes an opt-out procedure prior to May 1, 2005. (HB 272)

**Transportation**

**School bus drivers:** Establishes a new school bus endorsement for commercial driver's licenses (CDL), sets forth qualifications, and until Oct. 1, 2005, permits the Transportation Cabinet to waive the driving skills test for the school bus endorsement for current license holders

with satisfactory driving records. Prohibits the destruction of certain violation records for the holder of a CDL. Creates a letter code "S" on a CDL indicating a school bus endorsement. (HB 133)

**Toll exemption:** Makes school district vehicles being operated in an official capacity eligible for a nonpaying toll-road identification card. (SB 115)

**Commissions**

**Autism spectrum disorders (ASD):** Establishes the Kentucky Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders to develop by Oct. 1, 2006, a comprehensive state plan for an integrated system of training, treatments and services for individuals of all ages with ASD, including a timeline to implement the plan in all geographic areas of the state. (HB 296)

**Diplomas for Veterans**

**World War II and Korean conflict or Vietnam War:** Requires a local board of education to award an authentic high school diploma to an honorably discharged veteran who did not complete high school prior to being inducted into the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II and the Korean conflict (HB 60) or Vietnam War (HB 230).

**Inter-District Contracts**

**Nonresident student contracts:** Clarifies that a nonresident student agreement may be a multi-year agreement. Deletes the standard for appeals. (HB 197)

**Student Programs**

**Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES):** Requires high schools to report student grade point averages to the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority. (HB 460)

**BULLETIN** from Page 2**Summer opportunities**

Green River Regional Educational Cooperative Inc. announces summer training sessions in Bowling Green. "Standards, Strategies and Systems" will provide instructional strategies for middle and high school Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II teachers on

June 22 and 23. Registration is \$200. A new model of student learning and school improvement will be presented July 12 and 13 as part of "Making Students as Important as Standards." Registration is \$350 per person with a discount for co-op members. Register online by May 15.

Contact: (800) 958-9498

[www.grrec.coop.k12.ky.us](http://www.grrec.coop.k12.ky.us)

*Resources***Link to bird nesting sites**

Direct links are available online to allow classrooms to watch the activities of pairs of ospreys and Eastern bluebirds nesting in western Kentucky.

[www.biology.eku.edu/KEEP.html](http://www.biology.eku.edu/KEEP.html)

[www.biology.eku.edu/kybluebirds.html](http://www.biology.eku.edu/kybluebirds.html)

**Economics education**

The Kentucky Council on Economic Education offers a variety of workshops and resources for educators who teach personal finance. Visit the Web site to download a monthly newsletter of helpful information.

[www.econ.org/teachers/newsletter.html](http://www.econ.org/teachers/newsletter.html)

**Agriculture Adventures**

Scheduling has begun for Agriculture Adventures: Kentucky, a full-day science program available to Kentucky elementary schools in August.

[www.cosi.org/programs/cow/KY/index.htm](http://www.cosi.org/programs/cow/KY/index.htm)

**Geography help**

A new Web site is available to help teachers and students learn about different countries around the world.

[www.countryreports.org](http://www.countryreports.org)

# Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr  
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## Performance data on Web

A new Web site offers education finance and performance data for every school district in every state. Provided by Standard & Poor's, an independent investment analysis firm, this interactive site is designed to help educators and stakeholders analyze data.

The Web site includes a "Return on Spending Index," to enable users to compare the efficiency of districts within a state. The index is calculated as points (on the state test) per dollar spent (on core educational activities). Because each state defines both halves of that ratio differently, comparisons among states are not valid. But, comparisons among districts within a state are likely to be made, even though many variables come into play in each unique school district.

The Web site—[www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com)—is a product of the Education Data Partnership, which is a collaborative effort of the Council of Chief State School Officers, Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services, Achieve Inc., and the CELT Corp. The project is funded by the Broad Foundation and by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



Photo by Rick McComb

## Listening to legislative update

Roger Marcum, Marion County superintendent, and Diane Woods, a superintendent intern from Fayette County and recently named superintendent of Campbellsville Independent Schools, listen intently as Kentucky Department of Education officials discuss new education laws passed during the 2005 General Assembly. Superintendents and department officials spent an afternoon discussing the laws and education budget information, and how they will affect schools and districts.

## KET converts to digital

Kentucky Educational Television (KET), the largest statewide public television network in the nation, has spent the last three years converting to digital transmission. During this transitional period, KET has continued to provide its schedule of K-12 school programming via satellite (Star Channel 703). As of June 30, KET will discontinue its satellite broadcast.

In its place, schools that have converted to digital reception can select any one of the following six KET channels on their digital antenna receivers:

- KET1 and KET2 — PBS programs and KET-produced series and specials (the KET watched in homes)
- KET3 — Instructional television for schools (the replacement for Star Channel 703 and the normal setting on school receivers)
- KET4 — Annenberg professional development workshops and series for teachers
- KET5 and KET6 — Special programming (e.g., legislative session)

Kentucky schools that have not converted to digital should move quickly to ensure receiving KET instructional programming for the 2005-2006 school year and beyond.

## Safe Schools Conference

The Kentucky School Boards Association and Kentucky Center for School Safety, in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education, will sponsor the 11th annual "Safe Schools – Successful Students" conference, Sept. 19-20 in Louisville.

[www.kysafeschools.org/clear/conference/cssconf05.html](http://www.kysafeschools.org/clear/conference/cssconf05.html)

## May 27 is deadline for minority internships

Educators interested in participating in the 2005-2006 Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP) have until May 27 to apply. The MSIP was created two years ago by the Kentucky Department of Education to help identify and train a pool of highly qualified ethnic minority superintendent candidates for Kentucky school districts.

More information and the program application can be found on the department's Web site at [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov). Enter "MSIP" in the keyword/search box and click. A selection committee will place candidates by late June.

This non-traditional program emphasizes the development of leadership skills to increase student learning, including skills in the areas of management, strategic planning, fiscal oversight, communications, community engagement, the politics of education, analyses of current exemplary teaching and learning strategies.

Sara Elaine Farris and Diane Woods, two graduates of the program, have been hired as superintendents. Farris is completing her first year as superintendent of Shelby County Public Schools. Woods becomes superintendent of Campbellsville Independent Public Schools in July.

## Value of an education

New information from the U.S. Census Bureau reinforces the value of a college education: workers 18 and older with a bachelor's degree earn an average of \$51,206 a year, while those with a high school diploma earn \$27,915. Workers

with an advanced degree make an average of \$74,602, and those without a high school diploma average \$18,734.

For additional information, visit [www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html).

## Best Buy Foundation

The Best Buy Children's Foundation supports programs that connect children, technology and education. Best Buy's technology program, [te@ch](mailto:te@ch), recognizes and rewards schools that integrate interactive technology into the curriculum.

Public schools may apply to receive up to a \$2,500 gift card. Fourteen Kentucky schools received gift cards in 2004.

<http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach.asp>

## Teacher-to-Teacher

The U.S. Department of Education will conduct regional workshops this summer bringing together principals and teachers to share best practices for raising student achievement. A workshop will be held in Cincinnati on June 20-22. Other dates and locations are listed on the Web site.

The workshops are a part of the ongoing national Teacher-to-Teacher initiative, designed to support teachers and keep them informed of the latest strategies and research that help students learn to high standards. Topics include elementary and secondary instruction, with breakout sessions on literacy and reading, mathematics, science and social studies.

The e-Learning program, which provides teachers with free, online professional development training courses in a variety of subject areas, will be introduced.

Registration information is available at [www.ed.gov/teacherinitiative](http://www.ed.gov/teacherinitiative).

The Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference (KTLTC) invites you to propose a presentation for KTLTC 2006, which will be held in Louisville March 9-11, 2006. To be considered, your presentation must focus on any aspect of teaching, learning or school management.

All proposals will be reviewed by a committee of educators, with those who submit the best proposals being invited to participate in the conference. All applicants are expected to use materials and language that do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age or physical ability.

The strongest proposals will provide educators with proven strategies and tools, and will align with "Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment" and Kentucky's core beliefs about education.

The application deadline is Sept. 9, 2005.

**Pathways**  
to  
**PROFICIENCY06**  
KENTUCKY TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE

KTLTC is the Kentucky Department of Education's primary professional development event and draws an estimated 5,000 educators each year. It is an excellent opportunity to showcase your successes so that other educators – as well as students – can benefit from them!

For more information, visit  
[www.kentuckytlc.org](http://www.kentuckytlc.org).

# Program puts agriculture stereotypes out to pasture

By Cathy Lindsey

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What comes to mind when you hear the word agriculture? Do you picture yourself out on the farm? If so, agricultural science students at Seneca High School in Jefferson County would like to educate you. In case you hadn't heard, agriculture is not just about cows, plows and sows anymore.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), today's agriculture industry offers more than 200 rewarding and challenging careers. Only 10 percent of those involve traditional farming.

Veterinary science, landscaping and turf management, forestry, greenhouse technology and agribusiness principles are just a few components of Seneca's Urban Agriscience Program.

"There's so much beyond what people typically think," said vocational teacher Don Reid. "Not only are our students learning about agriculture, but they are realizing the practical applications of it in their world."

A recent USDA study concluded that job openings in agricultural sciences have exceeded the number of qualified graduates for the past four years. Seneca's program helps students discover college and career opportunities related to agriculture while fostering personal and leadership skills that employers want and need, Reid said.

Reid often invites speakers from the community and university representatives into his classroom. He said he tries to use community resources to enhance the program and enable students to have unique experiences.

Some students participate in job shadowing at the Louisville Zoo. As part of a block schedule class, selected students work toward three college credits in animal science. Besides working at the zoo, students also visit local veterinary offices and pet shops. They study animal reproduction, breeding, animal nutrition, feed and meat quality.

Other students spend their

summers in special programs to learn more about possible careers in agriculture. These programs encourage minority students, as well as disadvantaged students, to seek careers in the agriculture industry.

The Research and Extension Apprenticeship Program (REAP) at Kentucky State University, the Ag-Discovery program at Alcorn State University in Mississippi and the Odyssey program at the University of Missouri provide interns with educational experiences. They also allow professionals in various fields of agriculture to serve as mentors to the students.

Reid believes the students' participation in the extracurricular programs is helping them succeed in the classroom. Lamar Allen, a junior, achieved a Distinguished in reading last year on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). Reid attributed the achievement in part to the hours Allen spent reading and researching data during several summer agriculture programs.

Allen has aspirations of becoming a veterinarian. He believes the agriscience program at Seneca has put him on the right track. During the summer programs, Allen has studied brucellosis in cows and pseudorabies in pigs. He has checked cows for pregnancy, worked on a catfish farm and worked for both small and large-animal veterinarians.

"I have had so many opportunities," Allen said. "I know I am very lucky."

Sophomore Desirae Vaughn also desires to become a veterinarian. She worked in a lab with beetles and maize weavers during her summer fellowship.

"It's something I never thought I'd be doing," said Vaughn, "but, Mr. Reid encouraged me to get involved, and now I have some real experience."

Cary Leib, a student teacher from Western Kentucky University, worked with the Seneca program last fall. She comes from a traditional, rural agricultural science program and was pleased



Photo by Rick McComb

Devin Moore, a junior at Seneca High School, uses a sonogram to view the kittens of a pregnant cat during Don Reid's Urban Agriscience class.

with how urban students in Louisville received the classes.

"I love teaching ag in the city," Leib said. "I think it makes students better consumers."

She said that by making practical applications of what they learn, students are now more likely to recognize things like meat quality in the grocery store and the principles of lawn care.

Through collaboration with

other Seneca teachers, Reid has integrated core content in his program.

"Agriculture relates to every subject," Reid said. "It integrates math, science, social studies and English."

Seneca's CATS science scores have moved from 57.73 in 2000 to 71.28 in 2004. The school's total academic index has increased from 62 in 2000 to 76

in 2004. Reid believes the urban agriscience program has contributed to this success.

"A program like this really fosters positive attitudes with the kids," Reid said. "The more hands-on they can be, the more it stimulates the brain for other classes."

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