

# Kentucky Teacher

MARCH 2002

## *Parlez-vous français?*

# Authentic resources will help Kentuckians learn French

The world became a little smaller last month for Kentucky teachers and students as the result of an agreement between Kentucky state government and the Burgundy Department of Education (Académie de Dijon) in France. The partners are touting the four-year agreement as a first-of-its-kind model collaboration. It will foster projects that – besides teaching the French language and culture in Kentucky and English and the Anglo-American culture to people in France – can internationalize education on a variety of levels.

Programs and activities are in the planning stages for educators and students at the P-12 public school and postsecondary levels. The agreement will make possible these projects:

- Visiting teachers program – placing qualified teachers from France in Kentucky preschool, elementary, middle and high schools
- Foreign language instruction – improving foreign language and bilingual instruction through an English teaching assistant program that employs Kentucky college students to teach part time in French elementary schools
- Student exchange program – benefiting students in elementary, secondary and postsecondary institutions in both countries

- Exchange of teaching methods and resources – connecting education personnel in each country to share ideas and information about teaching methods in a variety of disciplines and on a variety of levels

- Student internships through Kentucky Community and Technical

College System collaborations with Hilton Hotels, chambers of commerce and businesses

- Professional development for teachers in both countries
- Research – developing a program to focus on specific areas of language teaching and learning

- Professional development for administrators who want to learn more about European curriculum and school organization

- Use of technology to share information and resources on a shared Web site and through joint electronic field trips with Kentucky Educational Television

- Educational research – developing a program to focus on specific areas of language teaching and learning

A delegation from France made the agreement final during a visit to Kentucky in February. This is the second agreement Kentucky has entered into with a foreign government to give Kentucky teachers and students new opportunities to learn foreign languages. An agreement with Spain in late 2000 has provided native-speaking Spanish teachers to many Kentucky classrooms through a visiting teachers program.

For more information about these foreign language programs, contact Jacque Van Houten, foreign language consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education, by phone at (502) 564-2106 or by e-mail through the KETS global list at [jvanhout@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:jvanhout@kde.state.ky.us).



Photo by Rick McComb

Student Hakim Wooda answers questions from Josiane Attuel (left) and Catherine Pidancet, who were visiting Biggs Early Childhood Center in Covington. Both women are members of a delegation that traveled from France to Kentucky to put the finishing touches on an agreement that will foster exchanges of language and cultural education in P-16 schools. The partners are touting the four-year agreement as a first-of-its-kind model collaboration.

## When schools empower teachers to change what doesn't work, schools improve

By Gene Wilhoit  
Commissioner of Education

About 18 months ago, we in the Department of Education asked ourselves: How does our work relate to getting students to proficiency? We analyzed everything we were doing. If we found ourselves involved in any activity that didn't help teachers move students toward proficiency, we stopped doing that activity. During our analysis, we discovered that we were doing some things for the worst of reasons: because they had always been done. We refocused our time and energies on work that teachers and administrators have asked us to do – work that will help them focus on getting to proficiency and beyond.

All of us will need to analyze our work. Is each of your actions helping your students and your school get to proficiency? If not, you may be able to save your valuable and all-too-limited time, reduce frustration and increase success by replacing those ineffective activities with those that work.

What works? I think we can help you there. We in the department frequently visit schools throughout the state. We visit schools performing at all levels, from highest to lowest. We listen, and we analyze what these schools do – what works and what doesn't. As a result, we have collected an array of tools from Kentucky educators for getting students and schools up the achievement ladder. We will gladly share this collection with you.

My current round of visits is to schools that posted the greatest gains on the 2001 Kentucky Core Content Tests. Many of these schools began last school year far below their goals. While disappointed and even embarrassed by their schools' low standings, the professional educators in those schools didn't let the low scores

defeat them. Instead, teachers and administrators rallied and took action:

- They put into practice the visiting team's recommendations for school improvement.
- They identified and began to fill the gaps in their curriculum.
- They aligned what they were teaching to the state's core content and program of studies.
- They began working together on strategies to help students improve.
- They learned to use Kentucky Core Content Test results and student classroom work to guide their instruction and assessment.
- They sought more effective professional development activities to

improve their content knowledge and instruction skills.

- They started sharing learning strategies with parents and involving them in classroom activities.
- They began using technology as an integral part of their classroom teaching to engage students in their learning.

When they did these things, great things happened. In a matter of months, Oneida Elementary in Clay County raised its state testing and accountability index by 25.3 points. Middle Fork Elementary in Magoffin County raised its index 24.9 points.

By focusing on how they delivered instruction – and by working smarter, not harder – teachers at these

schools caused fantastic academic gains to occur in a short time.

It's obvious to me that schools that are improving are the schools in which teachers feel empowered to change what isn't working. They don't give excuses about students being poor, parents who don't care or students who have limited life opportunities. These teachers believe their students can learn at high levels given adequate time, opportunity and support. They talk to each other about what works for each individual student, and they refuse to let any student fall through the cracks. They do what works, and they stop doing anything that doesn't support student success.

What practices and policies would work best in your school, in your classroom, with your individual students? Call on us. We want to help you find the answers. Teachers and administrators in every region have told us what works for them, and we're prepared and eager to share their strategies with you. We're also eager to know what is working for you.

Please think of us as your partners. Working together, we can reach Kentucky's goal: every school at proficiency or beyond by 2014.



Photo by Rick McComb

### Making Great Gains

When Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit visited Isonville Elementary in Elliott County, student Kera Keaton was happy to chat with him about her classwork. The school was the first stop in Wilhoit's "Great Gains Tour" of improving Kentucky schools. The tour will include half-day visits to 11 schools that have made some of the state's most significant, verified, one-year gains in their Commonwealth Accountability Testing System index scores. The tour started in mid-February. It will conclude April 12 with visits to three schools in Clay County. For details and a schedule of stops, click on "Wilhoit tours schools" online at [www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org).

To request information and support in getting to proficiency, phone the Department of Education toll free at (800) 533-5372. Visit the Web at [www.kentuckyschools.org/olsi/improve/schaudit/schaudit.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/olsi/improve/schaudit/schaudit.asp) for helpful documents, including "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement" and "Leverage Points," a list of attributes common to successful schools.

# Study looks at primary programs and practices

A recent, preliminary study of primary programs in Kentucky indicates a strong link between developmentally appropriate classroom practices and high student achievement. Teachers using these practices keep students engaged meaningfully in learning activities, use hands-on materials to support learning and involve students in making decisions about their learning.

The research project, outlined in "Characteristics and Attributes of Primary Programs and Practices," looked at practices in the primary programs of 45 schools ranked as high performing, improving and low performing based on 4th-grade scores on the Kentucky Core Content Tests. The study sought to identify specific practices that best facilitate student learning during the first four years of school.

The Kentucky Department of Education commissioned the study. Katherine M. McCormick, University of Kentucky Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling, led the research with team members Lynley Anderman, Jennifer Grisham-Brown and Leah Nellis, in collaboration with Nawanna Privette of the Kentucky Institute for Educational Reform.

The 1990 Kentucky General Assembly established the primary program, part of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, for students "from the time they begin school until they are ready to enter fourth grade." The law identified these seven attributes as critical for the primary program:

- developmentally appropriate practice
- multiage and multiability classrooms
- continuous progress
- authentic assessment
- qualitative reporting methods
- professional teamwork
- positive parent involvement.

This phase of the study examined each attribute while asking the question, "What types of programs, supports and environment best facilitate student learning in the primary classroom?" Major preliminary findings include the following:

**Instructional practices:** Teachers in high-performing classrooms included in the study use significantly more hands-on materials, have effective room arrangements with defined spaces for specific activities, give students individualized instruction, use appropriate questioning techniques that prompt students to elaborate and expand their language, integrate computers and technology in instruction, and draw on the services of parent volunteers to individualize instruction for students. Teachers in low-performing schools included in the study engage in more pencil, paper and worksheet activities. They tend to use more punitive discipline strategies such as suspension and expulsion, have to get more approvals to

buy materials, and conduct fewer arts and humanities activities.

**Multiage multiability grouping:** There were no significant differences between high-performing and low-performing schools in multiage multiability grouping or in the number of students who took more than four years to complete primary. The study showed that all schools in the study randomly assign students to homeroom and include children with disabilities in classroom activities.

**Use of assessment tools:** The findings suggest that most teachers in the study do not use individual student assessment to monitor student progress and guide instruction. McCormick suggests that this indicates the need for stronger preservice and inservice activities that help teachers broaden their understanding of assessment and its link to high-quality instruction.

**Professional teamwork/professional development:** Teachers in

high-performing schools have more hours for planning, professional teamwork and development. Most often, the report said, their professional development decisions reflect priorities in the school's consolidated plan.

**Leadership:** Principals and councils in high-performing schools involve teachers in professional issues such as textbook selection and curriculum alignment. Teachers in low-performing schools more frequently receive assignments to work ball games and bus duty. Principals in all categories of the surveyed schools are involved in the teaching and learning at their school and support their teachers in setting high expectations for students.

**Transition:** In high-performing schools more than in lower-performing schools, teachers report that students and parents are likely to visit school prior to the students entering school for the first time. Teachers in low-performing schools said preschoolers often arrive unprepared for primary. The UK researchers say further analysis is needed to understand if this is real or perceived.

**Parent/family involvement:** The study found no significant differences in the amount of parent/family involvement among the different categories of schools. Parents most often coordinated extracurricular and arts/humanities programs at schools.

Phase II of the study, taking place this school year, takes a closer look at multiage multiability grouping, collaboration, transition and family involvement. A proposal for Phase III includes a longitudinal study of student, teacher, classroom and leader variables that lead to high student performance.

For more information about the study, contact Katherine McCormick at the University of Kentucky at (859) 257-9573 or kmcco2@uky.edu.



## Learning in the Air

Primary students Aimee Gonzales and George Cole experiment with air pressure while learning about weather at Simmons Elementary in Woodford County. The "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools" calls for hands-on science experiences that build on primary students' natural curiosity about their environment.

Photo by Rick McComb

# Bardstown high school students are 'ACEs' in tutoring primary students struggling to read

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

At Bardstown Elementary, high school students drop by to tutor the primary students. That's not really big news. Students tutor students in many schools.

Bardstown Elementary's program is news because of its approach to training the tutors and its focus on young, at-risk students with serious reading difficulties. The school's Accelerated Community Empowerment (ACE) reading program trains high school students (and other non-educators) to use proven, research-based best practices with the struggling young readers. The high school students learn to be systematic, purposeful and goal-focused tutors.

Jack Jones, principal at Bardstown Elementary, learned about ACE at a national conference and brought it home to Kentucky. "There are many tutoring programs for reading, but this one is different," Jones said. "ACE is designed to help students who may be at risk for school failure because of their poor reading skills."

As far as he knows, Bardstown Elementary is the only school in Kentucky using the ACE program. Approximately 400 struggling readers have participated in the program nationally since May 2001. According to the program's founder, Peter Dowrick of the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii, 80 percent of those students now read well enough to benefit from regular classroom instruction.

In a real win-win situation, the high school tutors benefit, too. Juniors and seniors take a for-credit high school class called "Elementary Tutoring." Armed with best practices and strategies, they walk the short distance from the high school to the elementary school to meet with their young students. Jenny Buckman, the school's reading resource teacher, says the course plus practical experience produces effective tutors who may decide to become teachers.

"Many of the high school students don't think of teaching as a profession until they work with the elementary students," Buckman said. "If tutoring is a good experience for them, we may get some new teachers from our efforts."

This year, eight high-schoolers and 24 second-year primary (1st-

work with the young students. Latasha Lyvers, a senior, looks forward to working with the 1st-graders each day. "They try so hard and get excited when they succeed," she said. "I really enjoy the hour I spend with them."

Last year the 1st-graders participated in ACE's "book" version, read-

published by The Learning Company, are accessible electronically. The tutor-learner team clicks on a story and listens to the computer read it aloud. The learning student can hear as many repetitions of a word, phrase or paragraph as needed. The tutor and the student work together on a different story each day for eight weeks, listening, then reading in unison, then working on difficult areas. Finally the elementary student reads the story independently.

Throughout the process, as tutor and student build a relationship, the tutor is able to identify and concentrate on the specific learning needs of the struggling reader. The lessons proceed at the younger student's individual pace.

"The high school and elementary students look forward to reading every day," Buckman said. "Giving and getting that one-on-one personalized attention has really been a benefit. The elementary students' reading accuracy, fluency and expression have increased. These students are more competent readers as a result. They have fun and learn, too."

Second-grader Hannah Cecil participated in last year's program and saw a big improvement in her own reading skills. "Now I like to read. I especially liked learning new words," Hannah said.



Photo by Rick McComb

**Primary student Brey Stivers gets some one-on-one help from high school senior Latasha Lyvers through Bardstown Elementary's Accelerated Community Empowerment reading program. High school students get training in systematic, purposeful, goal-focused tutoring strategies and use their skills to help young students who have major reading difficulties.**

grade) students are participating in the program. Buckman reports that the high school students take their work seriously and are proud of their

ing from printed materials. This year they are using the "computer" version. Forty stories from "Reader Rabbits' Interactive Reading Journey,"

For more information about Bardstown's ACE for Reading program, contact Jenny Buckman at (502) 331-8801 or [jbuckman@btown.k12.ky.us](mailto:jbuckman@btown.k12.ky.us).

The developer of ACE for Reading is Peter Dowrick, Director of the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii. Contact him at (808) 956-8741 or [dowrick@hawaii.edu](mailto:dowrick@hawaii.edu). Information is available online at [www.cds.hawaii.edu/creating\\_futures/computer.htm](http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/creating_futures/computer.htm).

## A Strong Start in Physical Education

Kathy Todd likes to get her entry-level primary students up and moving!

Todd, one of two Kentucky Elementary Physical Education Teachers of the Year 2001, wants the 5-year-olds to start early toward developing a lifelong appreciation of physical activity and how their bodies react to exercise – and the lack of exercise.

On a recent day at Johnson Elementary in Madison County, Todd sent Nikea Banther and other students on a journey through a giant model of the human heart. She also introduced Rebecca Brown to the sound of her own heartbeat.

Through these and other activities, students in Kentucky's high school graduating class of 2014 are learning the relationships between physical activity and health. Here is how their learning relates to a few of the physical education expectations, as outlined in the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools."

**Primary** – Students will feel and hear their own heartbeats; perform simple stretching and strengthening exercises; recognize that exercise affects heart rate; describe how practice helps individuals improve their physical abilities.

**Grade 5** – Students will explain relationships of exercise to fitness and wellness; explain concepts of muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and cardiorespiratory endurance; evaluate their own progress toward fitness goals; perform stretching, strengthening and cardiorespiratory exercises.

**Grade 8** – Students will evaluate their own health-related fitness; monitor intensity of exercise (resting heart rate, target heart rate, recovery time); identify principles of training and conditioning; establish personal fitness goals and personal fitness programs.

**High School** – Students will describe how the benefits of exercise (disease prevention, self-esteem, improved fitness, weight control, improved appearance, higher energy level) are interrelated; develop health-related fitness (cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, etc.); apply nutritional concepts; establish, develop and implement a lifetime personal fitness and activity plan.

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For more about what this year's entry-level primary students are learning, refer to "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools." The document is available free of charge online. Go to the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site ([www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org)) and select "Program of Studies" from the drop-down menu. It is also available for purchase from the KDE Bookstore. Select "Bookstore" on the department's Web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or [wnewton@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:wnewton@kde.state.ky.us).



Photo by Rick McComb

Johnson Elementary School physical education teacher Kathy Todd shows student Rebecca Brown how to hear her own heart beat. The activity is one of several health awareness strategies included in Kentucky's program of studies for entry-level primary students.



Photo by Rick McComb

Nikea Banther journeys through a giant model of the human heart at Johnson Elementary in Madison County. Through this and other activities, Nikea and other students in Kentucky's high school graduating class of 2014 are learning about the heart and the relationships between physical activity and health.

Welcome back to "New to the 'Net," a professional development series for teachers who want to use technology effectively for teaching and learning. So far, this series has introduced e-mail as a teaching and learning tool, MarcoPolo resources, the Kentucky Virtual Library and other Internet-based resources.

In this lesson, explore some of the ways Web-based resources can help teachers work more efficiently. When you visit the online version of this lesson, you will discover how it can help you meet Standard X of Kentucky's Experienced Teacher Standards.

To locate this lesson online, go to the Kentucky Department of Education's home page ([www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org)) and select "New to the 'Net" in the drop-down menu, or go directly to [www.kentuckyschools.org/newt](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/newt), then click on "Lesson 2.6."

## Lesson 2.6

The Kentucky Department of Education's Web site offers a wealth of resources, including the Kentucky Program of Studies and the academic expectations. Teachers may use these online resources to copy and paste text regarding the expectations for students and the six learning goals of into lesson plans. Find the program of studies at [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Publications/ProgramofStudies/](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Publications/ProgramofStudies/). The address for the academic expectations is [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Publications/Transformations/trans.html](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Publications/Transformations/trans.html).

The Internet can help with class instruction. Online lesson plans are available from MarcoPolo and the partner sites. These standards-based lessons are developed for specific grade levels and represent a variety of content areas. The Kennedy Center's ArtsEdge site features materials based on national art education standards and provides curriculum

units, lesson plans, activities and ideas for integrating the arts into classroom instruction. To learn more about this arts and humanities resource, visit [http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teaching\\_materials/artsedge.html](http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teaching_materials/artsedge.html).

The EDSITement site contains lesson plans from the National Endowment of the Humanities' in the subject areas of literature and language arts, foreign languages, art and culture, and history and social studies. Lessons are searchable by subject and grade level. Visit <http://edsitement.neh.gov/>.

In addition, the EDSITement calendar features lesson plans, Web resources, learning activities and special events. The address is [http://edsitement.neh.gov/calendar\\_archive.html](http://edsitement.neh.gov/calendar_archive.html).

Create effective mathematics lessons by tapping into the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' "Illuminations" Web site (<http://illuminations.nctm.org/lessonplans/index.html>). Internet-based lesson plans are solid examples of how to use Internet links to create standards-based mathematics lessons that provide real-world applications. The council links to sites that provide tools for graphing, visualizing or computing.

Browse EconEdlink ([www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.cfm](http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.cfm)) to locate lessons by title, grade, standard, type or concept. These lessons are based on the Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics.

"New to the 'Net" started in the August 2000 issue of *Kentucky Teacher*. If you need copies of printed lessons, go to [www.kentuckyschools.org/newt](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/newt) and click on the link to each Kentucky Teacher issue or send a request to *Kentucky Teacher*, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; [kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us).

Susan Lancaster of the Department of Education's Division of School Instructional Technology is the mentor for this year's "New to the 'Net" series. E-mail your questions, comments and ideas to her at [slancast@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:slancast@kde.state.ky.us) (or through the KETS global list), or phone her at (502) 564-7168, extension 4542.



# Anchorage integrates life skills into curriculum

By Fred Gross  
Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative

"What life skills did the Founding Fathers have?" asked 5th-grade teacher Peggy Bahr.

Her students at Anchorage Independent Schools knew the answer. It's perseverance. Learning life skills has become the engine that powers classroom instruction and fuels a safe and enriching environment at the school.

To one student, Holly Fisher, perseverance is very important.

"I try to use that skill every day," she said. "I really feel frustrated when something's not clicking, but I keep at it."

Posted throughout this K-8 school are words revolving around life skills: teamwork, friendship, cooperation, curiosity, initiative, responsibility, common sense, integrity, perseverance, effort and pride. According to principal Terry Brooks, the school's faculty and staff have woven the words into a common vocabulary taught to all students at age- and grade-appropriate levels.

For example, when Carla Brown prepared to teach her 4th-grade students about Native Americans, she and art teacher Ellen Sears devised an art project related to the topic. Students turned their life-skill words into symbols, following Native American traditions of using symbols to communicate ideas.

For the project, media specialist Kathy Bowling had made sure the school library contained books that dealt with the life skill concepts. "The Little Engine That Could" inspired students working to develop a symbol for perseverance.

This task demonstrates how everyone at the school is involved in promoting the program they call "Anchor Skills" throughout the curriculum. The school concentrates on one word each month but uses all the words throughout the year in age-appropriate ways.

When the word for the month was "initiative," teachers in the lower

grades taught the concept, not necessarily the word. They praised students for being self-starters, said counselor Dorothy Caskey, "and for seeing that a job needs to be done and doing it." A teacher might say, for example, "Thank you, Jonathan. You were the go-getter."

The older students read books about historical figures who personified initiative. They also did higher-level thinking, defining what initiative meant to them and how they've shown initiative themselves.

Bahr, the 5th-grade teacher, introduced "Anchor Skills" at the school.

She said the theories of a nationally respected educator, Susan Kovalik, influenced her. Those theories deal with brain-compatible learning and integrated thematic instruction.

At Anchorage Elementary, the first step was to establish classroom behavioral expectations, teaching the importance of trustworthiness, truthfulness, active listening, no put-downs and personal best. The faculty then incorporated the life skill words into daily behavior, interlacing the words into a common language used in everyday instruction and learning.

Groups of 7th-graders recently

crowded around lunchroom tables laden with pound cakes, frosting, candies and strawberries. It was time to decorate the cakes in the "Iron Chef Dessert Challenge." In each group, students decided who would spread the frosting and who would arrange the candies and strawberries. Hands worked at a feverish pace as judges walked around with rubric in hand, evaluating the work with food-related terms. Novice became "dangerous chef!" Apprentice translated to "What is this stuff?" The term for proficient was "YUM!" They called the distinguished level "Bon appetite!" The judges evaluated students on their presentation and creativity, taste and use of ingredients.

The project was fun, but it also involved several life skills, including cooperation, teamwork, responsibility, effort and pride.

Liz Ferguson, a volunteer parent and one of the judges, said she is sold on "Anchor Skills."

"It's such an all-encompassing and well-rounded program," said Ferguson, who has four sons at the school. "It gives us something we can talk about, whether during homework or cleaning the kitchen. Life skills should be incorporated at school and at home. If (students) hear the words in different settings, (the meanings) sink in that much deeper."



Photo by Rick McComb

Anchorage Elementary 5th-grader Nikka Kanani writes about a friend and uses the words "flexibility" and "patience" to describe her. Through the K-8 school's "Anchor Skills" program, faculty and staff have woven those and other life-skill words into a common vocabulary taught to all students throughout the year in age- and grade-appropriate ways.

Fred Gross is a school public relations specialist with the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative. *Kentucky Teacher* adapted this article from the fall 2001 issue of OVEC's "Newsbytes" and printed it with permission. To contact Gross, send e-mail to gross@win.net or phone (502) 423-8583

To learn more about "Anchor Skills," contact Anchorage School principal Terry Brooks at (502) 245-2121 or tbrooks@anchorage.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

# Software programs that read text aloud can break

By Fran Salyers

Kentucky Department of Education

What's a teacher to do? A classroom full of 7th-graders is doing independent research using the Internet and printed materials. Some of the students are making steady progress. Some could use some additional help. Two students are struggling. Jane is physically unable to hold a book or enter commands on a computer keyboard. Robert's dyslexia inhibits his reading at grade level. Both Jane and Robert can understand content, but disabilities make print materials inaccessible to them.

Does the teacher, an aide or another student devote all-too-short teaching or learning time to read the material to Jane and Robert? Does the teacher excuse (in effect, exclude) Jane and Robert from the project? Each option comes with its own unsatisfactory consequences.

Two hundred Kentucky schools are trying another option: computer software that reads text aloud. With financial support through a pilot initiative called Universal Design for Learning, text reader software gives students with print barriers new independence through electronic access to the printed word.

The Department of Education's Division of Exceptional Children Services, with support from the Kentucky Developmental Disabilities Council, provided a 50-50 matching fund offer to the first 200 schools that applied for the initiative, then negotiated low prices so the schools could have site licenses for WordSmith text reader software in time for the 2001-02 school year. The department also provided text scanners and offered training to at least one teacher and one technician from each participating school.

After using the software for only a few months, the schools are starting to report successes. (See Page 9.)

Text reader software can be ideal for making text accessible to special education students, but Preston Lewis of the division's Program Services and Practices Branch advises educators to consider its potential for other students, too. "This software can break many barriers that keep students from learning," he said. "It has applications for students with limited proficiency in English; students who physically can't hold a book or turn pages; learning-disabled students with dyslexia; students with cognitive disabilities who need help reading and understanding words; and students who have low-level reading skills but don't meet the criteria for learning disabled."

Lewis cautions against using text reader software before fourth-year primary (traditional 3rd grade). "We can't stop teaching children to read and replace it with

technology that reads," he said. "This software is a bridge to reading."

The director of Kentucky's Universal Design for Learning Project, Linnie Calland, recommends that teachers view text readers as one of many tools. "No one program or method is the answer for all students," she said, "but I have seen the use of a text reader open the door to learning for many of my students who previously had no hope of being able to read on their own."

## Assessment?

The Department of Education hopes to have the Kentucky Core Content Tests in digital, Web-based format by April 2003. The content would be the same as in the print version but formatted with accessibility and special needs in mind.

Scott Trimble, associate commissioner for assessment and accountability, said the ability to provide digitized tests will depend on the results of three steps:

1. Technical review of prototype tests, scheduled for this month
2. A limited field test in spring 2002
3. An expanded field test of the total process in fall 2002

Still unresolved are technical challenges that range from test security to the ability to digitize certain graphic elements used in the printed tests. Trimble said the department will announce in November whether or not the state core content tests will be available in electronic format by spring 2003.

Students could use text reader software to take the state tests electronically only if the text reader accommodation was part of their Individual Education Program or 504 Plan and embedded into their regular instructional routines.

## What does text reader software do?

The main function of text reader software is to read text aloud. Most programs will read text from the Internet, from a CD-ROM, or from printed pages scanned into a computer.

Kentucky's pilot program uses WordSmith, a text reader program from TextHELP.com. WordSmith offers many reading and writing features, including these:

- Optical Character Recognition – Turns any scanned text into an accessible Word document for text reading, on-screen editing and document sharing.
- Speech – Highlights and reads words, sentences or paragraphs, helping students recognize new words and vocabulary.
- Speaking Spellchecker – Reads spelling options aloud; logs errors to allow monitoring of progress.
- Word Prediction – Suggests and predicts words based on accepted grammar and individual student writing patterns.
- Thesaurus – Lists 180,000 words and their alternatives.
- Word Wizard – Helps students develop creative sentences and expand vocabulary.
- BrowseAloud – Reads Web pages on Internet Explorer.

For details, go to [www.texthelp.com/front.asp](http://www.texthelp.com/front.asp) and click on "WordSmith."

## Save 45% on text reader software!

Thanks to pricing negotiated by the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky schools and individuals can buy WordSmith at significantly reduced prices.

- Site License – Regular price: \$2,000. For Kentucky buyers: \$1,100
- Single-User License – \$275 (for school or home)
- For Macs – Type&Talk at discounted prices

To get these discounts, go to [www.texthelp.com/front.asp](http://www.texthelp.com/front.asp) and click on the blue Kentucky flag in the top right corner of the screen. Enter the Kentucky ID "UDL" and the password "ETEXT" (both in all caps but without the quote marks).

These negotiated prices expire Sept. 30, 2002.

Questions? Contact Preston Lewis at (502) 564-4970 or Linnie Calland at (606) 564-5563, or through the KETS global list.

# barriers between students and the printed word

## *Students gain confidence and independence using text reader software*

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

Reading a simple story can be a difficult task for some students. Finding a way to help struggling readers succeed – and feel successful – is a challenge for classroom teachers. Computer software that reads text aloud is helping these students gain independence and confidence in their reading efforts and improve in all subjects.

Some Kentucky schools are using this text reader (also known as text-to-speech) software to break barriers between students and the printed word. Through a pilot initiative called Universal Design for Learning (see Page 8), schools offer this software to students for whom reading is difficult or impossible. On this page, teachers from three of those pilot schools talk about their experiences with the program.

### **Beechwood Elementary**

At Beechwood Independent's elementary school, Michelle Bertke is a 5th- and 6th-grade special education teacher for language arts in both resource and collaborative settings. Her students use text reader software in several ways, but perhaps the benefits are most evident in writing. "The students seem to like the computer speaking as they write, and they are able to catch their own mistakes," she said.

Last year, students used a text reader during a WebQuest assignment for a French class. Because the software read Web pages aloud, the students could do their research independently. "I didn't have to sit there and read everything word-for-word to them," Bertke said. "They were able to highlight and read things they couldn't before."

She said the most significant gain from the use of text reader software has been the boost in students' self-esteem, which in turn snowballs into improvements in test scores, work completion rates, attendance and classroom behavior. The students realized that, with text readers, they could do things on their own at their own pace.

### **North Oldham Middle**

Julie Baustien, a collaborative teacher at North Oldham Middle, sees a real boost in her students' reading confidence. Using text readers, some of her students follow science projects

on various Web sites. Because the software reads the pages aloud, Baustien says, "I no longer need to stand by the computer constantly to read each paragraph. The students can complete their assignment. The independence they have gained is great for their self-esteem."

One feature of the school's text reader program is the prediction option available to students when they write. The computer helps the student predict the spelling or even the selection of a word. This can especially benefit a student whose disabilities make keyboarding extremely slow or difficult.

Sometimes using a text reader can bring unexpected benefits. One of Baustien's students had difficulty staying on task. When the time came for a classroom test, he donned headphones to hear the computer reading the text of the test aloud to him. The use of the headphones helped. "It kept him more focused. He was not distracted by other students in the room," said Baustien.

### **Southwestern Pulaski High**

Kathy Epperson teaches at Southwestern Pulaski County High and has seen firsthand the benefits of text reader technology. "It has opened doors to students who otherwise would never see the other side," she said. "For instance, a student with a learning disability just left my room with a three-page story written independently. Without the technology, he would have written one paragraph with spelling so poor that it couldn't be read." The software provides a "speaking spell check" so students who can't read can still recognize their spelling errors.

"The greatest thrills have come from the faces of students when they see the program work for the first time, especially when they use the text reader with the Internet," Epperson said. "It has given students hope that they will no longer miss



Clayton Willman uses text reader software to write a short story, "Christmas in Florida," with hopes of including it in his portfolio. The software enables the Beechwood Elementary student to hear the text he is writing. A statewide pilot project called Universal Design for Learning is testing the software's applications for students who for various reasons have difficulty learning from printed materials.

Photo by Rick McComb

out on all the information that has eluded them."

While the benefits and potential of text readers are great, she said, she and her students have experienced some frustrations. It has been a slow process getting the program installed, teachers and students trained and technical problems resolved. "Being aware of the potential of the program, I have a vision of what it could eventually become for our school," Epperson said, "but I'm impatient and want it to happen today."

For details about the way these schools are using text reader software, contact the quoted teachers through the KETS global e-mail system or phone their schools: Beechwood Elementary, (859) 331-1220; North Oldham Middle, (502) 228-9998; Southwestern Pulaski County High, (606) 678-9000.

For general information about the pilot program and opportunities for using text readers, call Preston Lewis at (502) 564-4970 or Linnie Calland at (606) 564-5563.

# Under The Big Top at Crosby Middle School

The circus came to school. Now grades are up, attendance rates are better, and students' self-confidence is soaring!

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

Colorful balloons. The smell of cotton candy. Excited children. Clowns. Music. Excitement in the air. Does this seem like a typical school setting? It is at Jefferson County's Crosby Middle School, which recently transformed itself into a one-ring circus complete with daring young men – and women – on a flying trapeze.

This was no traveling circus with professional performers. The performers were Crosby students. In just one week, they learned to juggle, jump through hoops and perform feats of daring before an amazed audience. The students practiced for hours in the afternoons and evenings to learn everything from applying make-up to balancing on large, rolling balls. All the while, they kept up with their schoolwork.

Circus of the Kids, a program designed to teach circus arts to young people, has been coming to Crosby Middle for seven years. Excitement builds for each year's new production. Bruce Pfeffer, creator of the Florida-based program, has been taking the circus to schools for almost 20 years. His organization's materials refer to the program as a "blend of learning, exercise and just plain fun."

The program charges the school \$100 per student for up to 45 students, plus room and board for the eight-member circus staff. Crosby Middle School holds fundraisers and asks parents to pay \$65 to register a child for the program. However, no child is turned away because of a lack of funds. More than half of the participating students receive some type of sponsorship. Parents, teachers, administrators, school staff, business leaders and others volunteer their time, talents and resources in what has become a community event.

Auditions for the circus are open to all Crosby students, and the school

finds a role for every student who expresses interest. This year, more than 55 students participated in six gala performances, three during school days plus three on the weekend for the community.

This year's production had a "celebration" theme and featured 11 acts plus a grand finale. Performers juggled, rode five-on-a-bike, performed aerial ballet, suspended themselves from ropes and rings, glided on a trapeze, bounded from mini-trampolines, propelled each other through the air from teeterboards and even ate fire. In typical circus style, they ended each act with a flourish, stretching out their arms to prompt the audience's cheers and applause.

Circus of the Kids encourages students to try new things, to stretch

themselves and take controlled risks. The result, Pfeffer and Crosby teachers agree, is a boost in self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment at learning a difficult skill. Students learn to work in teams and gain confidence with every trick. More importantly, Pfeffer adds, they learn they can be successful.

Students must keep up with their class work despite the long hours of rehearsals. If they don't, they cannot participate. "Teachers use the circus program 'to light a fire' with some students," Pfeffer said.

Terra Murphy, the school's library media consultant, says some of the students who "join the circus" are those who tend not to participate in other school-related activities. "The circus helps them feel important and

successful," Murphy said. They have fun, and they take away from the experience such traits as self-esteem, endurance, persistence and self-discipline.

To learn more . . .

- Contact the Crosby Middle School media specialist, Terra Murphy, at (502) 485-8235 or [tmurphy1@jefferson.k12.ky.us](mailto:tmurphy1@jefferson.k12.ky.us).

- Visit [www.circusofthekids.com](http://www.circusofthekids.com); write to Circus of the Kids, 926 Waverly Road, Tallahassee, FL 32312-2813; or phone toll free (866) CIRCUS-5.



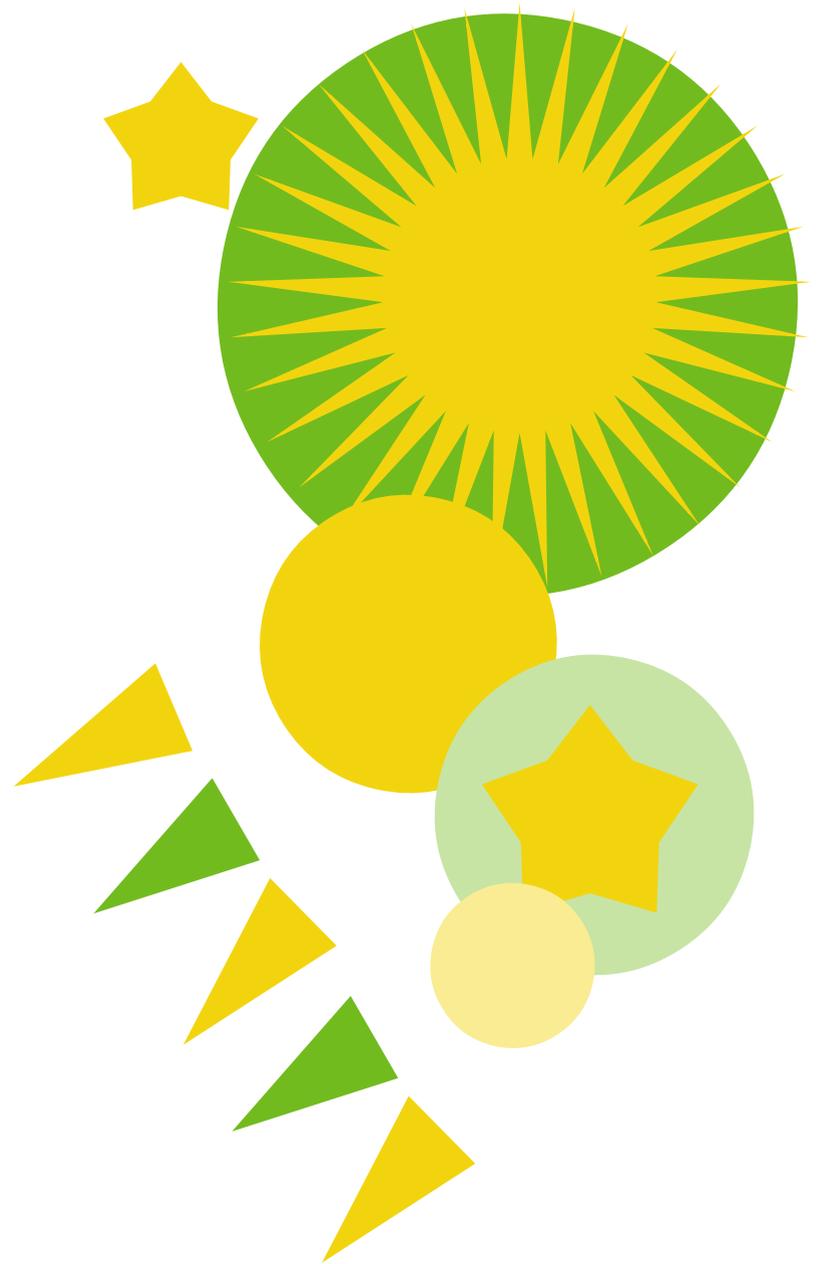
Photo by Rick McComb

Clara Spurr, Crosby Middle School's food service manager, clowns around to entertain students and spectators at Circus of the Kids.



Photo by Rick McComb

Katlin Durbin (left), Paul Marks and Katie Kubitskey star in an aerial ballet. All student performers in Crosby Middle School's Circus of the Kids auditioned for their roles and had one week to learn their acts.



## Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls! Enjoy the show!

Ringmaster Robert Wardlaw, a 7th-grader, enthusiastically introduced each act at the Crosby Middle School Circus of the Kids. He thought the previous years' performances were "really cool" and couldn't wait to sign up. Wardlaw said he wanted to be the ringmaster because he loves to talk in front of people. Not a shy bone here!

Eighth-grader Tammy Varon also had watched the performances in prior years. This year she got up the courage to try the rolling ball, and she had to concentrate and work hard to keep her balance. "I fell lots of times," she said, "but you just get back on and try harder."

Eighth-grader Janet Tate, a veteran performer from last year's circus, tried fire eating this year. She said she "gained confidence and had to work hard to perform the act."

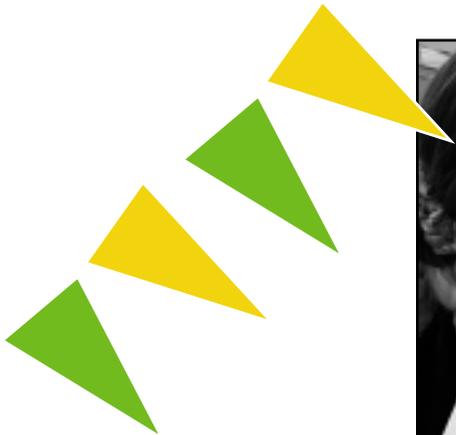


Photo by Rick McComb

Behind the scenes, Crystal Carlson helps performer Andrew Duncan apply make-up. Every student who wants to participate in the annual Circus of the Kids gets a role.

# Talk to us!

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



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(toll free in Kentucky)



Fax (502) 564-6470



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Frankfort, KY 40601

## Five-day arts academies planned for all eight education regions

Pending budget approval, teachers in all eight education regions in Kentucky will have access to five-day professional development arts academies this summer.

Funded by the Kentucky Department of Education and presented in partnership with the Kentucky Center for the Arts, each academy will serve up to 30 teachers and will focus on two arts disciplines: dance and drama or music and visual arts. Faculty specialists will guide first-hand experiences focused on core content areas and cross-curricular connections. Each academy will feature a field trip designed to show teachers how they can guide students through artistic responses on their own field trips.

For details and registration, contact the coordinator in the appropriate Department of Education regional service center. Note that funding has been secured for the five Arts Academies in June. Three academies slated for July are pending legislative approval of the budget this April.

- June 3-7: Region 3 (Dance and Drama); Sharon Wuorenmaa, (502) 485-3150, [swuoren1@jefferson.k12.ky.us](mailto:swuoren1@jefferson.k12.ky.us)
- June 17-21: Region 1 (Music and Visual Art); Dawn Francis, (270) 762-3217, [dfrancis@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:dfrancis@kde.state.ky.us)
- June 17-21: Region 2 (Music and Visual Art); Angela Weathers, (270) 746-7063, [aweather@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:aweather@kde.state.ky.us)
- June 24-28: Region 4 (Dance and Drama); Violette Fausz, (606) 292-6778, [vfausz@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:vfausz@kde.state.ky.us)
- June 24-28: Region 5 (Dance and Drama); Susan Nichols, (859) 361-8541, [snichols@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:snichols@kde.state.ky.us)
- July 8-12: Region 8 (Dance & Drama); Sarah Lewis, (606) 886-0205, [sjlewis@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:sjlewis@kde.state.ky.us)
- July 15-19: Region 6 (Music & Visual Art); Allison Vonantz, (606) 862-0282, [avonantz@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:avonantz@kde.state.ky.us)
- July 15-19: Region 7 (Music & Visual Art); Paula Stafford, (606) 783-5377, [pstaffor@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:pstaffor@kde.state.ky.us)

Teachers who attend a five-day academy will receive a \$400 stipend. All participants will have opportunities to use a music and drama “arts toolkit” prototype developed by Kentucky Educational Television and several partners. In addition, academy participants can participate in an online e-mail distribution list for electronic follow-up support and sharing of information and ideas.

The regional centers mailed applications to school districts in mid-March. The application deadline is April 16. For more information, contact the appropriate regional service center coordinator or Jeffrey Jamner at (502) 562-0703 or [jjamner@kentuckycenter.org](mailto:jjamner@kentuckycenter.org).

## ‘Dig In’ to use archaeology as a teaching, learning tool

By Betsy Adler  
Friends of McConnell Springs

Want students to “dig” learning? Archaeology can inspire students not only in science and history but in literacy, reading and writing, too.

Find out how at Dig In At McConnell Springs, a free two-day Project Archaeology workshop scheduled for June 6 and 7 in Lexington. Professional development credit is available to teachers who attend the entire workshop.

McConnell Springs is a natural and historic site in the heart of an urban industrial area off Old Frankfort Pike. It was here, according to accounts, that William McConnell and other frontiersmen were camped when, hearing word of the Battle of Lexington, they decided to name their new town Lexington after the site of the battle. The site was a major source of gunpowder for the War of 1812.

Working with trained educators and professional archaeologists, “Dig In” workshop participants will explore the science of archaeology and its classroom applications. Assisting in the on-site excavation of the historic Trotter Gunpowder Mill will give teachers hands-on archaeological experience. The mill excavation will be open for school visits in the fall.

In addition to hands-on activities, participants will also have access to high-quality educational materials and continuing professional development opportunities through printed updates, networking, awards for educational excellence, and additional learning and teaching opportunities. While the focus of the workshop is grades 2-7, the materials are adaptable to all age levels.

The Project Archaeology fee of \$65 per participant is waived for this workshop, thanks to a grant from the Kentucky Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. After May 22, applications will be accepted for any available openings on a first-come, first-served basis. Participation is limited to 20 teachers.

Fayette County public school teachers may register online at [apps.fayette.k12.ky.us/pd/](http://apps.fayette.k12.ky.us/pd/) (item P-40) for 12 professional development credits.

Workshop sponsors include The Friends of McConnell Springs, Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington-Fayette Division of Parks and Recreation, the Kentucky Archaeological Survey and the University of Kentucky Department of Anthropology.

Project Archaeology is a national education program that teaches students to appreciate and protect the nation’s rich cultural heritage. In Kentucky, the project is part of the Kentucky Archaeological Survey, jointly administered by the Kentucky Heritage Council and the University of Kentucky’s Department of Anthropology.

For more information on Dig In At McConnell Springs, contact Betsy Adler, 416 Rebmann Lane, Lexington, KY 40504; (859) 296-5681; [b-adler@insightbb.com](mailto:b-adler@insightbb.com); or Gwynn Henderson, Kentucky Archaeological Survey, 1020-A Export Street, Lexington, KY 40506-9854; (859) 257-1919; [aghend2@pop.uky.edu](mailto:aghend2@pop.uky.edu).

# When are patriotic activities ‘instructional’?

The Department of Education, in response to questions from school district administrators, recently issued the following clarification concerning a school's or district's ability to count time spent in patriotic activities as instructional time:

“(The department) strongly supports public school students saying the pledge of allegiance every day, singing the national anthem, and participating in patriotic activities at their schools.

“There are many ways in which patriotic activities can be used as part of a school's instructional day. KRS 158.175(2) requires each local board of education to establish a policy and develop procedures whereby pupils may participate in the pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag at the beginning of each school day. KRS 160.345 gives school-based decision

making councils the responsibility of setting curriculum policy for the school and determining which instructional materials and resources, within the resources allocated by the local school board, will be used.”

The statement guides schools to the department's Web site for information about flag etiquette and patriotic exercises.

**For elementary schools:**

[www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_Ele.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_Ele.asp)

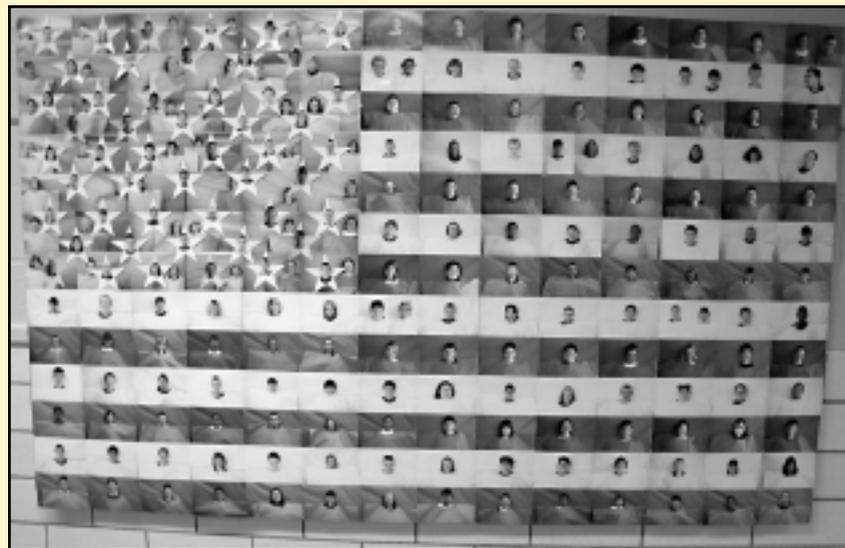
**For middle schools:**

[www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_ML.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_ML.asp)

**For high schools:**

[www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_HS.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_HS.asp)

For further clarification, contact Sydney Lawson at (502) 564-3846 or [slawson@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:slawson@kde.state.ky.us).



## Stars, Stripes and Students

Students are the stars – and stripes – in a patriotic display at Longest Elementary in Muhlenberg County. The school achieved the effect by photographing students' faces against red, white and blue backgrounds and arranging the color photos on a wall to form the large flag.

## KET offers sneak previews of new instructional series

**By Marianne Mosley**

Kentucky Educational Television

At meetings throughout the state this spring, Kentucky Educational Television education consultants will give teachers a sneak preview of 14 new instructional television series coming to KET this fall.

The new series are among hundreds of commercial-free educational programs available to all schools via satellite and aligned with Kentucky's program of studies, core content and academic expectations. Almost all of these video resources have related Web sites, teaching materials, lesson plans,

CD-ROMs or a combination of tools to give learners a way to respond actively to what they see and hear.

The new series include two in practical living/vocational studies, one in mathematics, four in science, five in social studies, and a technology series titled “Hollywood Homeroom: Producing Classroom Videos with Hollywood Magic.” This P-12 series offers tips for producing outstanding classroom videos and using video to demonstrate student knowledge in all curricular areas.

Another new series, “Entrepreneurs in Kentucky,” uses video profiles of people and businesses from the KET series “Kentucky Life” to look at basic economic concepts and entrepreneurship within a framework of Kentucky history, geography, business and economic development.

KET's spring workshops will give teachers an opportunity to view excerpts from all of the new series. Details are available from KET education consultants throughout the state or from KET at (800) 432-0951.

## Workshop Schedule

- May 1: Pike County, 10 a.m. to noon EDT
- May 7: Lexington, KET Network Center, 9 a.m. to noon EDT
- May 8: Paducah Community College, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; Johnson County, 9 a.m. to noon CDT
- May 10: Maysville, 9:30 a.m. to noon EDT; Bowling Green Jr. High, 9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. CDT
- May 14: Kentucky Christian College, Grayson, 9 a.m. to noon EDT; JCPS Gheens Academy, Louisville, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. EDT
- May 15: Natural Bridge State Park, 9 a.m. to noon EDT
- May 16: Hazard Community College, 9 a.m. to noon EDT; Oldham County, 9:30 a.m. to noon EDT; Deer Park Elementary (Davies County), 9 a.m. to noon CDT
- May 17: Erlanger, 9:30 a.m. to noon EDT



## Inside Kentucky Schools

A Kentucky Department of Education Production

30 minutes of news and features about education in Kentucky, hosted by Pia Cummings

Second and fourth Saturday of every month

- noon Eastern/11 a.m. Central on KET
- 5:30 p.m. Eastern/4:30 p.m. Central on KET2

Please check TV listings for air times on local cable stations.

[www.kentuckyschools.org/comm/mediasvcs/](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/comm/mediasvcs/)

## Scott County to host international conference on problem solving

The Scott County school district, in partnership with Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Georgetown, will host an annual international conference on problem solving June 11-13.

Students from Japan, Singapore, India, Africa and the U.S. will compete and demonstrate problem-solving techniques.

The conference is an outgrowth of Toyota's QUEST partnership, which teaches students how to work in teams to solve problems. Kentucky students will participate as demonstration teams. The conference invites teachers and other professionals to observe ways their students could use problem-solving techniques in the classroom.

Teachers at the conference can participate in professional development sessions on measuring student engagement in the classroom, using WebQuest, individual learning and teaching styles, and improving learning through invitational education. Examples of best practices will be on display.

For more information about QUEST or this summer's conference (officially named the Fifth Annual International Convention of Students' Quality Control Circles), contact Diana Waddle at (502) 867-3989 or [dwaddle@scott.k12.ky.us](mailto:dwaddle@scott.k12.ky.us), or visit [www.QuestLearningSkills.org](http://www.QuestLearningSkills.org). The Web site includes registration information.

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## NBPTS summer opportunity offers jobs and professional development

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is recruiting teachers to assess the portfolio and assessment center exercises of educators seeking the board's certification. Those who qualify will receive training to enable them to accurately assess entries. They will also learn about the certification process.

Louisville will be a scoring site in June 2002. Teachers selected for the scoring task will receive an honorarium of \$125 per day plus a \$300 fee waiver if they apply for national board certification in 2002-03.

To be an NBPTS assessor, a teacher must have a baccalaureate degree and at least three full years of teaching experience in a pre-K-12 classroom; a valid teaching certificate; current employment in teaching at least half time in the certificate area to be assessed, or national board certification in that area; and successful completion of assessor training provided by NBPTS. (Note: Nationally certified teachers teaching in another subject area at least half-time may also assess in that area.) An assessor may not be a current candidate or formerly unsuccessful candidate for national board certification.

The board has openings for scorers in the following categories. Dates are subject to change.

- Middle Childhood/Generalist (students ages 7-12), June 10-28
- Adolescence through Young Adulthood/English Language Arts (students ages 14-18+), June 10-28
- Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Social Studies-History (students ages 14-18+), June 10-28

Scoring sessions will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. Monday through Friday; Saturday scoring may be required. Lunch will be provided. NBPTS cannot reimburse scorers for travel or lodging expenses.

For details and updates, or to apply online to become an assessor, phone (800) 22TEACH or visit the board's Web site at [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org) (click on "I want," then "to be an assessor").

## 'Frontier Tales' tell state's history in story and song

Students in grades 3-5 can join in the fun as professional performers present "Frontier Tales" at Old Fort Harrod State Park in Harrodsburg, site of Kentucky's first permanent settlement.

This 40-minute mini-drama uses original narratives, folk tales and songs to depict Kentucky's frontier history. The Kentucky Humanities Council, educators and the Kentucky Department of Parks developed this interactive presentation aligned with Kentucky's core content and academic expectations. A teaching guide highlights themes of the performance and provides details about the fort's buildings, including Kentucky's first schoolhouse and the Lincoln Marriage Chapel.

Group reservations for "Frontier Tales" are available for April 15-May 24 and Sept. 16-Oct. 25. A \$5-per-student fee covers the performance plus a tour of Old Fort Harrod State Park and the Mansion Museum of historic artifacts, paintings and documents.

For more information or reservations, call (859) 734-9614 or (859) 734-3314 on weekdays. To learn more about the park, visit [www.state.ky.us/agencies/parks/ftharrd2.htm](http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/parks/ftharrd2.htm) on the Web.

# THE Bulletin Board

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

## Aviation Museum offers incentives for fall tours

The Aviation Museum of Kentucky, located at Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, is open for tours daily except Mondays. The museum has 15 aircraft (including biplanes, supersonic fighters, helicopters, experimental aircraft and sailplanes) plus hands-on simulators and other exhibits on space travel, women in aviation, aviation in war and great aviators from Kentucky.

The group rate is \$1.50 per student or accompanying adult. Chaperones (one per 10 students) tour free of charge. Spring is the most popular time for tours. To encourage student groups to visit from September through December, the museum drops the cost to \$1 per student and admits all accompanying adults free of charge.

For details about tours and summer programs for students, visit [www.aviationky.org](http://www.aviationky.org) or call the director, Steve Parker, at (859) 231-1219.

## Summer scholarships available for preparation to be counselors

To help meet the increasing need for counselors in schools and community agencies, the Kentucky Counseling Association is offering scholarship assistance for people who are interested in becoming professional counselors but who have not yet met the certification requirements.

Persons with undergraduate degrees may apply for tuition assistance for summer classes at one of these participating institutions: Eastern Kentucky, Lindsey Wilson, University of Louisville, Morehead State, Murray State, Western Kentucky and Xavier. Grants of up to \$100 are also available for textbooks.

The application deadline is April 15. For details and an application, visit the KCA Web site at [www.kyca.org](http://www.kyca.org) or contact Bill Braden at the Kentucky Counseling Association at (502) 223-5905, (800) 350-4522 or [bradenkca@aol.com](mailto:bradenkca@aol.com).

## 'Congress in the Classroom' registration due April 17

High school teachers and postsecondary professors of U.S. history, government, civics, political science or social studies may apply to participate in the 2002 Congress in the Classroom workshop, scheduled for July 29-Aug. 1 at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill. Enrollment is limited to 35. The application deadline is April 17. Obtain a registration form online at [www.pekin.net/dirksen/CiCapplication.htm](http://www.pekin.net/dirksen/CiCapplication.htm).

## Web site teaches students about U.S. House

A new educational Web site, "Kids in the House," is an interactive learning tool that offers legislative and historical information about the U.S. House of Representatives and the Office of the Clerk. The site's content is geared toward middle-school students.

For more information, visit the site at <http://clerkkids.house.gov> or contact Janice Wallace-Robinson at (202) 225-1908 or to [janice.wallace-robinson@mail.house.gov](mailto:janice.wallace-robinson@mail.house.gov).

## Energy resources available to teachers

The U.S. Department of Energy offers a free "Get Smart About Energy" poster and interactive CD with more than 250 energy-related lesson plans for various K-12 grade levels. For more information, call the department's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Clearinghouse at (800) 363-3732 or visit the Web at [www.eren.doc.gov/](http://www.eren.doc.gov/).

## Classroom guidebook 'visits' the nation's capital

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund has produced "Echoes From the Mall: A Field Trip Guide," to introduce students to "The Wall" and other memorials in Washington, D.C. The guide suggests activities for classes visiting the memorials or learning about them in the classroom.

Any teacher may request a copy by sending a fax on school letterhead to the Memorial Fund at (202) 393-0029. For information about other educational programs related to The Wall, phone (202) 393-0090 or send e-mail to [vvmf@vvmf.org](mailto:vvmf@vvmf.org).

## Murray State accepting nominations for Outstanding Teacher Award

Murray State University is accepting nominations for the seventh annual Kentucky Outstanding Teacher Award of \$1,000 to one full-time teacher at each level: primary/elementary, middle grades and high school.

A letter of nomination must include one section on each of three criteria: demonstrated excellence in teaching, contributions to parental involvement in learning and commitment to school excellence. The letter must not exceed 750 words. Include the nominator's name, title, address, telephone number and relationship to the nominee (self-nominations accepted). Also include a letter of support from an administrator in the nominee's district, if the nomination is by someone other than an administrator.

The deadline for nominations is April 12. Send nominations as an attachment to e-mail addressed to [george.patmor@coe.murraystate.edu](mailto:george.patmor@coe.murraystate.edu) or mail nominations to Dean's Office/Education, Murray State University, 3101 Alexander Hall, Murray, KY 42071-3340. Refer questions to George Patmor at the same e-mail address or at (270) 762-3832.

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# Kentucky Teacher

MARCH 2002

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News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

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Photo by Rick McComb

**ON HER WAY UP** – Preschooler Johnneisha London returns to class with student teacher Meghan Riegel following recess at Covington Independent's Biggs Early Childhood Center. The center, which this year has 373 students, has received state and national recognition for its innovative use of the arts in preschool education.

"It's obvious to me that schools that are improving are the schools in which teachers feel empowered to change what isn't working. These teachers ... talk to each other about what works for each individual student, and they refuse to let any student fall through the cracks."

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, on the impact teachers can have at their schools. See Page 2.

Kentucky Department of Education

Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner

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