

EDUCATION ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2026 Interim

July 1, 2026

Call to Order and Roll Call

The first meeting of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee was held on July 1, 2026, at 9:00 AM ET/8:00 AM CT in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Timmy Truett, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Matthew Deneen, Co-Chair; Representative Timmy Truett, Co-Chair; Senators Gerald A. Neal, Lindsey Tichenor, and Stephen West; and Representative Steve Riley.

Guests: Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE); Dr. Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), KDE; Dr. Lauren Graves, Policy Advisor, OCTE, KDE; Bryan Jones, Acting Deputy Director, Investigations Division Manager, Office of Education Accountability (OEA); and Dr. Deborah Nelson, Research Division Manager, OEA.

LRC Staff: Yvette Perry, Lauren Busch, Joshua Collins, Emily Wiley, and Jay Harris.

Approval of October 14, 2025 and November 4, 2025 Minutes

A motion was made by Co-Chair Deneen, seconded by Senator Tichenor, to approve the October 14, 2025, and November 4, 2025, minutes. The motion passed by voice vote.

Acceptance of Office of Education Accountability Report: Analysis of Student Discipline Data in Kentucky Schools

A motion was made by Co-Chair Deneen to accept the report, seconded by Senator Tichenor. Motion passed by voice vote.

Implementation Update on 26 RS HB 257

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner, KDE, testified regarding KDE's implementation of changes to the education assessment and accountability system.

Responding to Co-Chair Deneen, Dr. Fletcher stated one of the requirements for the college entrance exam request for proposal (RFP) is science examination. KDE is currently undergoing an unbiased procurement process. Once the procurement process is scored this October, KDE will select the next vendor. KDE's overall goal is to get the best vendor for the students of the Commonwealth.

Responding to Chair Truett, Dr. Fletcher stated the ACT was named in Kentucky statute until 2018, when the statute changed to use the phrase "college entrance exam." With this change, KDE went through a bidding process with vendors. Last year's bid was won by the SAT. The ACT and SAT both have good customer service, and Dr. Fletcher has not heard unusual complaints about either.

Responding to Senator West, Dr. Fletcher stated there is a part of the RFP that permits multiple vendors, allowing the possibility for a school district to decide which vendor would best fit that district. He also stated there are data tables to compare ACT and SAT scores.

Responding to Senator Tichenor, Dr. Fletcher stated he would need more information on the Classical Learning Test before answering whether it could be selected as a vendor for the college entrance examination.

Responding to Co-Chair Deneen, Dr. Fletcher said every school district must meet the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS). School districts may create custom assessments to measure grade-level progress and improve academic growth. Dr. Fletcher informed the committee that some school districts pay for interim assessments and explained the Local Accountability Design Guide and Toolkit and State Assessment and Accountability Systems.

Responding to Co-Chair Deneen, Dr. Fletcher stressed the importance of developing real-life working skills and the drive for local schools to increase work-based learning opportunities for Kentucky students.

Responding to Chair Truett, Dr. Fletcher stated 160 out of 171 districts have created a "Profile of a Learner" to look at the competencies expected from the district's graduates.

Responding to Chair Truett, Dr. Fletcher stated the new accountability system will be in place for the upcoming school year. In 2 years, KDE will go through another RFP to determine the next vendor for the Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA). He said principals will be informed of the changes to the accountability system and formula by fall.

Responding to Representative Riley, Dr. Fletcher stated students in homebound and home hospital programs are considered present for the purpose of calculating chronic absenteeism. Students attending medical appointments would be considered absent.

Career and Technical Education in the Assessment and Accountability System

Dr. Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, OCTE, KDE, and Dr. Lauren Graves, Policy Advisor, OCTE, KDE, testified regarding Kentucky career and technical education programs.

Responding to Chair Tipton, Dr. Hargis stated that 64% of last year's graduates were considered career-ready, which definitionally means they are prepared for a career or college.

Responding to Senator Neal, Dr. Hargis stated there are 50 state-operated area technology centers located across the Commonwealth. Several of the technology centers serve multiple districts and are integrated through the OCTE.

Office of Education Accountability Annual Report

Bryan Jones, Acting Deputy Director, Investigations Division Manager, OEA, and Dr. Deborah Nelson, Research Division Manager, OEA, presented the OEA Annual Report.

Responding to Senator West, Mr. Jones stated the law does not require site-based decision-making councils to be present during the hiring process, but there is a meaningful consultation requirement in statute.

Responding to Chair Truett, Dr. Nelson stated the recommendation is to have KDE investigate alternative learning environments within K-2, where these cases are concentrated.

Chair Truett discussed how student discipline is a major deterrent to teacher retention.

Responding to Senator Tichenor, Dr. Nelson stated that OEA can provide data pertaining to students with disabilities who are causing disciplinary issues and federal guidelines.

A motion to adopt the 2025 OEA Annual Report was made by Co-Chair Deneen, seconded by Senator Tichenor, and adopted by voice vote.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned.