

# **INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

## **Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the 2019 Interim**

**November 20, 2019**

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The 6th meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Education was held on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Max Wise, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Max Wise, Co-Chair; Senators David P. Givens, Jimmy Higdon, Alice Forgy Kerr, Stephen Meredith, Gerald A. Neal, Robert Stivers II, Johnny Ray Turner, Stephen West, and Mike Wilson; Representatives Tina Bojanowski, R. Travis Brenda, Randy Bridges, John Bam Carney, Mark Hart, Scott Lewis, Mary Lou Marzian, Bobby McCool, Reginald Meeks, Charles Miller, Melinda Gibbons Prunty, Steve Riley, Attica Scott, John Sims Jr, Russell Webber, and Lisa Willner.

Guests: Richard Innes, Education Analyst, Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy; Kelland Garland, Kentucky Association of School Councils; Gay Adelman, Dear JCPS; Lucy Waterbury, Save Our Schools KY.

LRC Staff: Jo Carole Ellis, Yvette Perry, Joshua Collins, and Maurya Allen.

### **Approval of Minutes – October 2, 2019**

Following recognition of Kentucky School Boards Association members, Senator Wilson made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 2, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Representative Lewis and passed by voice vote.

### **Kentucky Department of Education Assessment Blueprint Revision and Development Process for Reading and Writing, Mathematics, and Social Studies**

Chairman Wise explained that there was a requirement for Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to present several reports on the Kentucky Assessment and Accountability system. Commissioner Wayne Lewis was present with Michael Hackworth, Policy Advisor, Office of Standards, Assessment and Accountability; and Dr. Jennifer Stafford, Division Director, Office of Standards, Assessment, and Accountability. Commissioner Lewis reiterated it was a statutory requirement for the department to convene a committee to review the assessment system and align it with standards. Dr.

Stafford said beginning in fiscal year 2017-18 and every six years thereafter, KDE shall implement a process for reviewing Kentucky's academic standards and the alignment of corresponding assessments for possible revision or replacement. This is to ensure students are getting the best education and assessments are covering the material in standards. The review committee consisted of public school teachers, representatives of Kentucky higher education institutions, and business/industry representatives. There were additionally three advisory panels with the same mix of representation.

Alignment of standards is achieved through the creation of assessment blueprints. The purpose of a blueprint is to outline the percentage of items that will be assessed within the domains of the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) in each subject area. Blueprints were created to guide the development of individual test items, serve as targets for assessment development, define how results from the assessment are reported, and provide information to teachers as they make instructional decisions.

Mr. Hackworth then illustrated the process for members through the use of a flow chart. This indicated that the alignment process is approximately two-thirds completed and the next step is for the Commissioner to report to the Standards/Assessment Process Review Committee. If they determine the process is sufficient, the assessments will go before the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) for final approval and new assessments will be implemented in all schools no later than the second academic year following the review and alignment process. The process began in April 2019 and has currently been completed for reading and writing, and mathematics standards and assessments. The process is ongoing for social studies standards and will start soon for science standards.

The public feedback and comment period allows for open participation for Kentuckians by use of an independent third party, the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, to collect and transmit comments to the department and to the panels. Blueprints were posted for 30 days during each public comment period. Dr. Stafford said that there were multiple group types responding during comment periods including teachers, administrators, retired teachers, parents, students, community members, and representatives of higher education institutions. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the domain levels for reading and writing and its blueprint as well as for the domain levels and readability of the mathematics blueprint. Dr. Stafford briefly illustrated the domains by giving an overview of the blueprints for reading, on-demand writing, and open ended essays. For social studies, there were similar results regarding public feedback and support. Over 72 percent agreed that the domains were acceptable "as is" and over 90 percent of respondents felt the blueprint was easy to read and understand. She indicated that the social studies and the mathematics blueprints were available in member packets. Dr. Stafford said that more in-depth information was available to members in a binder as well as online in an electronic version.

In response to a question from Representative Willner, Dr. Stafford said that there was a public release and information was sent straight to administrators and faculty regarding the public comment period. It was dependent on the local schools to disseminate that to students. Mr. Hackworth said they encouraged administrators during web seminars to include students.

Responding to questions from Representative Carney, Dr. Stafford said it would be possible to get rough regional information regarding those who applied to participate in the committees and panels. Representative Carney echoed Representative Willner's concern about lack of student feedback, and said there was also a troublingly low amount of parent feedback.

Responding to a question from Representative Scott, Mr. Hackworth said the links to the online version were available in the electronically disseminated version of member packets.

In response to questions from Representative Bojanowski, Dr. Stafford said the survey was strictly confined to questions about the blueprint and did not include questions about general feelings regarding assessments. Commissioner Lewis reassured the members that the amount of testing performed in Kentucky is the bare minimum required by federal law. Representative Bojanowski said she would like to see assessments inform classroom instruction instead of just accountability measures.

Responding to questions from Representative Prunty, Mr. Hackworth said there were postsecondary and business partners included in the committees and advisory panels. And the press releases requesting public comment were posted on the KDE website and published in the regular areas. Responding to questions about the social studies standards, Commissioner Lewis said that they made the decision to honor the work of the committees and uphold the standards as they were presented.

In response to questions from Senator Givens, Dr. Stafford said the current blueprints are presented here and combined with the new standards, will be used to create assessments. Senator Givens said it would have been nice to see what the specific changes were from the previous standards and assessment alignment.

Responding to a question from Senator Wilson, Commissioner Lewis said it is true that by law criterion based assessment should be used to assess Kentucky standards. KDE has temporarily been using the ACT® to fill in a gap, but it is not compliant with Kentucky law as it is a norm-referenced test. In the upcoming year, assessments will be used that will be compliant and criterion based to align with Kentucky standards. He further explained there is not funding to administer the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade assessment at this time. While there has been savings from eliminating some assessments, other requirements of Senate Bill 1 of the 2017 Regular Session have been using those funds. Largely the administration of

industry certification testing has been prioritized as those are credentials students can immediately put to work and they count toward school accountability scores.

### **KDE - Discussion of Graduation Requirements**

Commissioner Lewis spoke to the requirements of statute for him to conduct town hall meetings to get feedback regarding changes to the state graduation requirements. Four meetings were held in Shelbyville, Bowling Green, Hopkinsville, and Hazard. Three of the four meetings were hosted by local education co-op organizations. While there were not large numbers of participants, there was rich dialogue. However, there was little feedback regarding the reading and math competency element. There was additionally an online forum for feedback on reading and math competency. There was widespread miscommunication about how the requirement for reading and math competency would be met. Largely, it was believed that students would only be able to demonstrate competency through an assessment. While there are two assessments used to assess competency, there is also the ability to demonstrate competency through the use of a portfolio of work submitted to the local superintendent.

There were also concerns about students with disabilities and their ability to demonstrate competency. Students would have the opportunity, through their ARC teams and IEPs, to make necessary accommodations and alterations to demonstrate the necessary competencies for graduation. Commissioner Lewis said it was very rewarding to participate in these meetings and it creates richer guidance for the department, especially as it relates to the use of portfolios.

In response to a question from Senator Wise, Commissioner Lewis said there is cost to retesting that will be borne by the department. However, there was intense discussion about ways to improve preparation, especially at the early ages, to provide supports that would reduce the amount of retesting required. This would also incur some additional expense, but as these are foundational skills for students, it is important to ensure students have these skills. Commissioner Lewis said before the requirements changed, it was required for students to pass Algebra II. That was a far more rigorous requirement than demonstration of math and reading competency. If districts were graduating students before the change, this should not pose a difficulty now. He does not believe that basic competency should be a high bar, in fact, it sets the bar very low.

Responding to comments from Senator Givens, Commissioner Lewis agreed that the listening tour was very rewarding and he again thanked the General Assembly for requiring it in statute. He also agreed that the diplomas should matter, and there will be some discomfort for students who will not graduate in the spring because of the new guidelines. This year because of the changes to assessment in 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, there is less data to know how many students will not receive a diploma in spring 2020. Approximately 20 percent will need to submit a collection of evidence to prove competence in reading and

math. Next year, using the data from the new assessment, there will be a better, and hopefully lower, estimate on the number at risk of not graduating.

In response to a question from Senator Meredith, Commissioner Lewis said in terms of equity of access in meeting the requirements for reading and math company, all districts have what they need. However, there are some districts who are better equipped and will not have as many struggles to meet these standards. Additionally, there was misunderstanding about the qualifiers, but many districts were impressed with the flexibility and variety of ways for students to meet those elements of the standards once it was explained. These qualifiers replace the ‘transition readiness’ portion and helped meet the needs of districts with less access to industry certification assessments.

### **KDE - Analysis of State School Accountability System**

Commissioner Lewis said the analysis of assessment and accountability was required by statute and incorporated statewide stakeholders to review the system. Dr. Stafford explained that the review committee was very diverse, with members from all the regions of the state as well as from different stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, parents, assessment coordinators, special education instructors, community members, and representatives of higher education. They were charged reviewing assessment results and consider impacts and potential for all schools to reach the highest rating in our statewide accountability system.

Prior to the meeting, a survey was distributed to invited members which included questions about their roles, the most positive aspects of the accountability system, which components might benefit from revision, and any potential unintended consequences. While not all invitees participated, there were robust responses from those who did participate and several topics were identified for further discussion at the in person meeting. Those topics were overall accountability, equity of reporting, how equity would be measured, English language learners, student growth in reading and mathematics, and transition readiness. During the meeting the committee prioritized potential changes and made recommendations to KDE.

Dr. Stafford then briefly gave an overview of the system, including indicators in elementary and middle schools. There are indicators for proficiency in reading and mathematics, separate academic indicators in science, social studies, and writing tests, and growth in reading and mathematics as well as English language attainment for English-language learners. For high schools, there are four indicators. Proficiency in reading and mathematics (which for this year utilized ACT® scores), separate academic scores in science and writing tests, transition readiness, and graduation metrics.

She next covered the overall accountability weights, which this year do not yet include quality of school climate and safety. Those will be included in next years’ report

as the survey tool for assessing them is still being created. During the 2018-19 school year, schools, districts, and state all received a Star Rating (1 to 5 stars), an overall accountability score, and an indicator label, which was made public on October 1<sup>st</sup>. There was a distribution of ratings among all the star ratings, whose boundaries had been set by stakeholders. Different combinations of school performance were used to establish what qualified as a 1 star, 2 star, 3 star, etc. The committee further established a standard using a criterion based approach, as opposed to a normative approach. Commissioner Lewis said it is a requirement of federal law to provide meaningful differentiation among rankings in the system. Secondly, the committee did use the criterion approach even though the resulting distribution resembles a normative curve. The stakeholders desired a criterion based system so that they could have a definitive goal, not a target that would change based on the performance of other schools.

Further, the definition of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools was created with assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. There were also exit criteria established for each of these categories. It is required that the bottom five percent of schools be considered CSI schools, and if they do not exit that category they become ATSI schools in order to receive more support from KDE.

After the public release of accountability data, there was a 10-day period for districts to request individual student changes. Based on individual change requests and allegations, there can be changes. For the 2018-19 school year, two schools increased a star rating, two districts increased a star rating, one school decreased a star rating, and one school was removed from ATSI. In negotiation with the US Department of Education, there had previously been two tiers of TSI school, which have informed the CSI and ATSI definitions for the upcoming school year. Also, Senate Bill 175 of the 2019 Regular Session introduced the change in terminology to better align with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). All 418 schools identified as TSI are now reported as ATSI, however, this was merely a change in terminology, not a substantive change. Further, changes were submitted to the US Department of Education but without a change to the definition of TSI, the state plan would not be accepted. Kentucky's plan was approved on September 23<sup>rd</sup> which allowed for the public reporting of scores on October 1<sup>st</sup> and further discussion with the review committee on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The review committee said the assessment and accountability systems were reported as expected, and were completed well without any major incidents. School performance on multiple measures were reported, and overall performance reported in a simple 5-star rating making the school report cards easy to read. There were a range of scores, with most schools in the middle (3-star) category. Schools and districts received much more detailed data on individual students than can be presented publicly. Low performing schools were identified, and there were also schools that performed well even with challenging

circumstances. However, achievement is still lower than desired and achievement gaps do still exist in some at-risk demographics.

Some unintended consequences discussed were the over simplification and misuse of the star rating. Parents and community members may look simply for higher star schools, without fully understanding what their school was doing well because of the complexity of the system and the reporting measures. There is also less nuance regarding special needs or special interests which may be present in a 3-star school but go overlooked by a desire for students to attend a 4- or 5- star schools which may not have the same services. There was also scrutiny of the calculation of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade non-graduates in the transition readiness measure. At the request of the US Department of Education, transition readiness will now be calculated by dividing the number of high school graduates plus non-graduates who have met measures of transition readiness plus the number of English language learners who have achieved English proficiency by the total number of graduates plus non-graduates plus the number of graduates who have received English language services during high school.

There was a significant amount of debate regarding the inclusion of English language learners into state accountability. Currently, these students are included twice both in the growth and transition readiness indicators. This is a requirement of the ESSA and very few modifications can be made without risking access to federal Title IX funding. There is an option to remove English language learners progress from transition readiness and include a separate indicator for English language proficiency, but the committee was not receptive to a separate indicator so no changes will be made at this time.

The committee agreed the system was designed logically and there was potential for all schools to achieve a 5-star rating. One question raised by the committee, though, was whether schools with a high percentage of students achieving proficient and growth in separate academic scores could achieve a 5-star rating. This was demonstrated to be true with several examples of schools achieving high ratings with growth. Achievement gap identification was also discussed at length with some committee members stating more schools should be identified as having a gap and others stating the opposite. Achievement gaps, however, were identified using statistical and practical differences. Using these measures, over 75 percent of schools at the 4- or 5-star rating did not have a statistically significant achievement gap. Further analysis showed that the schools received these ratings while being accountable for groups of students with IEPs, English language learners, students with economic disadvantages, and students in racial/ethnic minorities. KDE does plan to enhance reporting of achievement gaps in the future to further closing the gaps.

In response to a question from Representative McCool, Commissioner Lewis said there should be no public schools without a population of students with special needs. There are some schools with higher percentages, but there is a diversity of ways that

schools are meeting the needs of their special needs populations. Some are doing very well and can serve as examples to others.

Responding to a question from Senator Meredith, Commissioner Lewis said growth is only an indicator for elementary and middle schools where it is 35 percent of the weight of the accountability system. It is not an indicator that is required by federal law, but it helps provide some equity for schools that are economically disadvantaged. Schools with low proficiency can help their accountability score improve by working with those students and seeing growth among those groups. It rewards their efforts to improve over time.

In response to a question from Representative Willner, Commissioner Lewis said SBDM groups lose their authority when schools are designated CSI as a result of statute not department policy. However, there are ways that those groups can maintain a voice as is illustrated in parts of Jefferson County.

In response to a question from Representative Meeks, Commissioner Lewis said this is the first accountability system to flag achievement gaps at such a degree and the first time that those gaps have an impact on accountability. While there was some debate among committee member regarding the number of schools with achievement gaps, this is only the first application of the system and it may be refined over time.

Responding to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Commissioner Lewis said the accountability system is very sensitive to the dynamics of large populations of English-language learners, high poverty, and high trauma. This system rewards schools who make any gains among students even when they are not reaching levels of proficiency that would be desired.

In response to a question from Representative Scott, Commissioner Lewis said enhanced reporting will include more information on how the system arrives at a specific designation of an achievement gap. These are highly technical statistical models, but in the interests of transparency, they will be provided online with the scores in the future. Commissioner Lewis confirmed his dedication to identifying achievement gaps and to work towards reducing them.

### **2019 Senate Bill 3 – School Councils**

Senator John Schickel was present with Dr. Randy Poe, Superintendent, Boone County Schools; Davonna Page, member, Russellville Independent Board of Education; and Eric Kennedy, Director of Advocacy, Kentucky School Boards Association, were present to discuss the issue of school governance and Senate Bill 3 of the 2019 Regular Session. Senator Schickel said currently school councils are dysfunctional, especially in terms of hiring of principals, superintendents, and accountability. Mr. Poe said parent involvement is very important in schools and it exists regardless of how SBDMs are formed. Boone County has been doomed to lack of success because of lack of cohesion



among the feeder schools in terms of curriculum and reporting. Correcting for problems and seeing any growth measures for the accountability system is difficult for middle schools that only have students for three years, and no control over the feeder schools. He advocated that KDE needs to step in to help create more aligned curriculum.

Ms. Page said she is a member of a school board as well as a former parent representative to a site based decision making body. Public schools are incredibly important to her and her passion for improving them motivated her to seek a seat on the board of education. Effective teamwork requires a common goal and purpose, and this applies to superintendents in building their team of principals. While superintendents are part of the process, SBDMs are the last voice in principal hiring, making it difficult for superintendents to form their best teams. Changes to the principal hiring process will not remove parent voice, but will streamline the chain of command and accountability among principals, superintendents, and parents.

Senator Schickel said the proposed legislation had passed the Senate in the past, and a version specific to Jefferson County was passed during the 2019 Regular Session. He has high hopes that it will complete the process this year. Mr. Kennedy said he also included a brochure to define the difference between school boards and school councils to help members better understand what these bodies do. The primary purpose of the bill is to refine accountability and make sure that schools are doing their best to educate students.

Also present to speak was Richard Ennis, Education Analyst, Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy. He spoke in favor of the bill but expressed specific concerns about SBDMs in the state. He gave additional information about the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) review where both white and black students in Mississippi outscore their Kentucky peers in math and reading assessments by a statistically significant amount. Mississippi accomplished this while paying teachers less than in Kentucky, generating less education revenue, and with a higher rate of poverty in the state. Policies enacted in 2013 formed the turning point for Mississippi. But as it stands right now, he believes that Kentucky's SBDM laws would interfere with any attempt to implement similar policies.

Kelland Garland, middle school principal and representative of the Kentucky Association of School Councils spoke against the bill. He said the principal selection process has been in place for a couple of decades and starts with input from teachers and parents. Shifting it from the SBDM body to a single person could be problematic because it limits that input avenue. It is necessary to examine the effectiveness of the change in Jefferson County, specifically the change allowing the superintendents to chair meetings or send a designee. How many send a designee? If they want input, why do they not participate directly? Principals and superintendents are on the same team, and there is a chain of accountability that ends with the superintendent, who still reserves authority to fire a principal. School board members are elected but are not required to have any children

in the school system while site based members do and are elected in the same way as school board members.

Gaye Adleman, Dear JCPS advocate, spoke against the bill. She said principal selection at the district level with a culturally competent superintendent may work fine, however, a non-culturally competent superintendent could be unhelpful as was her experience. Removing SBDM groups from struggling schools has made things worse, not better, as illustrated by a spreadsheet from publically gathered data. She also showed correlation between poverty, loss of parent voice, and lower ranked (CSI) schools. She admitted that this data was compiled prior to the publication of the new star ratings, but demonstrates advisory only SBDM schools are segregated into a single region.

Rep Marzian asked for copies of Ms. Adleman's statistics for further review.

Lucy Waterberry, Save Our Schools, spoke against the bill and said involvement of stakeholders is necessary for schools to improve. Fayette County has 66 schools and there are superintendents who may not spend sufficient amount of time in any school to understand the cultures there, especially as there has been high turnover of superintendents in the district. If superintendents engaged they would get the principals and support they want but in the larger districts, putting sole principal hiring authority with a single individual is too much. She urged the legislature to stop sending middle managers and taking away power from parents. She also commented that it does not appear that rural districts have any trouble with the system as it is because they engage.

### **Report from Career and Technical Education Task Force**

Senator Wilson and Representative McCool were present to cover the findings of the task force over the 2019 interim. Senator Wilson said they looked specifically at inequity among the split system in terms of funding, in terms of teacher salaries, and in terms of access. There is no overarching solution to these inequities at this time, but some recommendations for things to work toward improving.

Representative McCool said there are significant differences between the Local Area Vocational Education Centers (LAVECs) and Area Technical Centers (ATCs). Clearly, it would be preferable to raise the funding for the group that gets significantly less, the LAVECs. Costs over four years to bring equity were presented as rough numbers to the committee. In some rural areas there is more need for greater access, while other regions have easy access and many opportunities. Career and technical education is a feeder into the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and there is a need to ensure alignment among the centers, KCTCS, and local industry. There also needs to be greater accountability, including use of performance-based funding. Job placement at the end of high school as well as the end of associate degree attainment would be valuable data to know.

Senator Wilson said KYStats has the ability to illustrate this data and see what the employment realities are. The data was compiled by KDE and analysts at LRC which indicates state funds necessary to bring LAVECs to the level of ATCs over a four year period. KDE also presented during the interim and proposed reducing ATC funding in order to raise LAVECs up. Lack of alignment for industry certification also exists between local needs and state accountability. Some courses offered in certain regions do not rise to the level of high need at a state level, so they are not counted in the accountability system. And courses that are offered because they meet a state need go unfilled because there is no local demand. There is a high need for skilled workers throughout the state and the education system needs to be designed to help these students graduate, attain employment, start families, and live a good life.

In response to a question from Representative Carney, Senator Wilson said the proposal scenario represents new money. Chuck Truesdell, analyst, LRC Office of Budget Review said the first column in the handout represents current dollars spent and that money does not go directly to school districts but is distributed through the state ATC.

### **School Counselors in Kentucky**

Dr. Bart Liguori, Research Division Manager, Office of Education Accountability; and Sabrina Cummins, Research Analyst, Office of Education Accountability presented an overview of school counselors in Kentucky as required by Senate Bill 1 of the 2019 Regular Session. Ms. Cummins explained the bill had two goals for school counselors, the first is for them to spend at least 60 percent of their time on direct services to students and the second is for there to be a ratio of one counselor per 250 students. The report showed that 57 percent of schools did not meet the target for amount of time spent with students and the number of school counselors would need to increase by 80 percent to meet the target for student/counselor ratios. Additionally, staff pointed out there were some definitions in the statute that need refinement for clarity.

First, there is no definition of what qualifies as “direct services to students” and which types of schools are subject, whether this applies to only A1 schools or are career and technical schools and alternative schools also subject to these requirements. There was also no effective date to require one counselor per school. While July 1, 2021 was listed in the bill, language also said “or when funds become available” meaning there was significant flexibility in when schools should be in compliance. Ms. Cummins briefly gave an overview of the data sources for the report and also presented some data regarding costs to schools for increasing school counselors to meet statutory requirements.

Direct services and indirect services are defined by the American School Counselor Association but need to be incorporated more specifically in statute or regulation. Direct services are defined as “in person interactions with students” and this was the benchmark used for the survey used in this report. For comparison, West Virginia is the only surrounding state that requires a minimum amount of time for school counselors to spend

on direct services, requiring 75 percent of time. For this analysis, only A1 schools were surveyed. On average 53 percent of time spent with students, with elementary school counselors spending the least amount of time on direct services and high school counselors spending the most time. High school counselors further spent more direct services time on academic counseling. Elementary schools struggle to meet the benchmark as they do not have assistant principals, therefore school counselors spend more time in special need consultations and other indirect services. Mental health counseling is least at the high school level. However, elementary schools spend almost double the amount of time as high schools on personal and social development. Regarding indirect services, on average 19 percent of time was spent on these services. In elementary school this was significantly higher due to the above mentioned time spent on special needs and other consultations. The report also showed counselors spend time up to 28 percent of their time on duties that are not direct or indirect such as test monitoring, bus duties, and event planning.

It is an ambitious goal for the state to achieve a 250 to 1 ratio compared to surrounding states. The requirement in Missouri is a ratio of 500 to 1, but has a recommendation of 300 to 1. Tennessee and Virginia both have ratio requirements, however, these are less for higher grade levels, while Kentucky has proposed this ratio across all grade levels. Currently, the average ratio is slightly over 400 to 1, with higher ratios at the lower grades. Ms. Cummins stated the report contains a further breakdown by school size and poverty level, but she reminded the members that all calculations were based on A1 schools. While some career and technical schools and alternative schools have counselors, they were not included in this survey. Neither were other service providers such as psychologists, therapists, and college/career coaches. In order for Kentucky to meet the target ratio across just A1 schools, an additional 1,156 counselors are needed state wide to meet the goal ratio. Estimated annual cost to employ this number of school counselors would be approximately \$93 million. Currently, 96 percent of school counselor salaries are paid from district general funds. Recruitment and retention are expected to present major challenges, as a greater percent of school counselors are eligible for retirement with full benefits than classroom teachers. While over 260 school counselors graduate annually, which would cover the annual number who retire, superintendents report significant recruitment and retention problems. School counselors are also classified as instructional leaders and required to get 21 hours of professional development annually related to their duties as school counselors. There are also two regulations mentioned in the current professional development regulation that are outdated and need to be amended. Noted in the report, almost half of counselors are not getting their required professional development hours because of this lack of clarity. It was recommended that KDE revise the regulation and that school districts ensure compliance on professional development for school counselors. Superintendents must report number and placements of school counselors annually and KDE performs a survey. However, the survey does not meet the requirements of the statute for reporting. Dr. Liguori said KDE implemented their survey in order to assist districts with reporting proactively, however, there are improvements that can be

made. Ms. Cummins gave a brief overview of the findings and asked if members had any questions.

Chairman Wise said there will likely be revisions to the statute in the upcoming session to address some of these recommendations.

Representative Willner expressed concerns about districts releasing certified mental health professionals in order to meet the ratios of school counselors but was gratified to hear that that may not need to occur with changes to the statute.

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.