

Kentucky Teacher

April 2009

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

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Literature podcasts
'really getting their
voices out there'

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News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

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Front cover: Teacher Adam Watson and sophomores Will Gabay, left, and Reese Fisher demonstrate how Watson's class uses podcasting at South Oldham High School (Oldham County). Photo by Amy Wallot

Talk to the Experts ...

About Certification

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Two Title I schools recognized nationally

The National Association of State Title I Directors has honored Sedalia Elementary School (Graves County) and James A. Duff Elementary School (Floyd County) as 2008 Title I Distinguished Schools at its annual Distinguished Schools award ceremony in San Antonio in February.

Sedalia and James A. Duff elementaries were among 57 Title I schools, representing 36 states, that were selected for outstanding results in exceptional student performance

for two or more consecutive years or for closing the achievement gap between student groups.

These distinguished schools demonstrate strengths in the following areas: opportunity for all children to meet proficient and advanced levels of performance; strong professional development; coordination with other programs; curriculum and instruction to support achievement of high standards; and partnerships among schools, parents

and communities.

Title I is the largest federal-aid program in K-12 education with more than \$14 billion awarded annually through formula and discretionary grants. These winning schools join hundreds of other Distinguished Schools honored since the recognition program began in 1996.

MORE INFO...

www.titlei.org

Maps available to teachers for classrooms

The Kentucky Geographic Alliance (KGA) is offering maps to educators for use in their classrooms. Maps are available through a partnership between the KGA and the National Geographic Society.

Available maps include:

- World
- Asia
- Peru
- Afghanistan
- Middle East
- Eastern Mediterranean
- Mexico and Central America
- Oceans Realm
- The World Transformed
- Earth's Fractured Surface
- Africa
- China
- Australia
- Iran
- Iraq
- The Americas
- Chesapeake
- Public Lands
- Population
- Climate Change
- Dinosaurs

The maps are free, and teachers may request up to 10 maps, depending on availability.

Teachers can e-mail the KGA at kga@wku.edu to request maps. Most of the maps are not geared toward a specific grade level and can be used by elementary, middle and high school teachers.

The KGA also has teacher toolkits available for classroom use. These kits have non-fiction, high-interest books published by the National Geographic Society and are available on various grade levels. Teachers can request one of the toolkits and keep it for up to two weeks. Teachers must pay the postage to return the toolkit. The toolkits cover a wide range of topics ranging from weather and climate to an African safari.

The KGA regularly sponsors professional development for teachers, including such events as a GPS Day for parents, teachers and kids.

MORE INFO...

www.kga.org



Photo by Amy Wallot

Poetic expression

Beechwood High School (Beechwood Independent) student Torie DiMartile recites "The Slave Auction" by Frances Harper during the Poetry Out Loud state finals at Western Hills High School (Franklin County) March 3. Twenty-eight high school students from around the state competed at the event. DiMartile was named runner-up. Western Hills junior Barbara Gooding won the contest and received a \$200 cash prize and a trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the national finals.

NASA introduces do-it-yourself podcasts

Are you looking for a new approach to engage students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics? NASA introduces the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) podcast activity in the "For Educators" section of www.nasa.gov.

Students can preview and download audio and video clips of astronauts performing work in space and on the ground. They can then use these clips to build their own podcasts or similar audio/video projects.

Learning modules on the DIY podcast page will be categorized by topic to assist students with creating projects about a subject of interest. Each subject module includes video and audio clips, images, helpful information and links to related resources. A variety of audio and video clips will be provided to enhance flexibility and creativity. Students can create video or audio projects using free or inexpensive software on Windows or Macintosh computers.

Educators and their students are encouraged to distribute their NASA projects through podcasts, social networks, Web sites, CDs, DVDs or other channels that they may choose.

The Do-It-Yourself podcast blog will keep users posted on the latest updates. Tips and suggestions for incorporating the DIY podcast into the classroom and updates on when new topic modules are available will be posted regularly. Use the Comments feature of the blog to share ideas and experiences with other teachers and students.

MORE INFO ...

www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/diypodcast/index.html
Deana Nunley, deana.nunley@nasa.gov

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

By Elaine Farris, Interim Commissioner of Education

Focused academic standards should guide school assessment

The 2009 session of the Kentucky General Assembly has ended, and Senate Bill 1 will set the stage for the next phases of assessment and accountability for our students. Though we are in a time of transition until the 2011-12 school year when a new system will be in place, I can provide you with a glimpse into the future.

In February, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) released a position paper outlining strategies for the future of the state's public school assessment and accountability system. That document calls for higher, clearer, fewer and narrower academic standards, which will lead to the development of tests that provide valuable data for many stakeholders.

To develop this paper, KDE and KBE asked for input from many sources, including state associations and groups. We heard from teachers, administrators, parents and citizens about the direction our system should take.

As the position paper notes, our educational progress depends on a strong, valid and reliable system of assessment and accountability. The world Kentucky students face when they leave our classrooms today is drastically different from the one high school graduates encountered nearly two decades ago when the state's 20th-century educational reforms were first enacted. It is time to make significant changes to the educational system to ensure that every Kentucky student acquires the skills required in the 21st century to be successful in the global economy.

The development of higher, clearer, fewer and narrower academic standards is just the first step in a process that will lead to a system that provides valuable, usable data for many stakeholders. A robust, viable system will maintain Kentucky's work to lead students to proficiency and beyond.

The first thing we must do is take a hard look at the curriculum standards that are currently in place. The Program of Studies and Core Content for Assessment have been revised in recent years, but new developments and research, especially in mathematics, call for immediate action.

This process will ensure that all content standards taught in Kentucky classrooms are:

Higher

- articulating what students need to know to be successful in college and career (beyond four years of college)
- using national and international benchmarks so that students can compete in the global economy and educators can compare Kentucky students' performance to the world
- including an analysis of the challenges and development of student thought processes during learning

Clearer

- communicating in a format teachers, students, families and citizens can understand
- including learning targets and progressions, enabling teachers to know when students have achieved standards

Fewer/Narrower

- focusing main standards through a judicious process using research-based evidence
- fitting within the instructional timeframe of Kentucky's school calendar and reducing testing time

When standards are revamped, the next natural step is to rethink the state's assessment and accountability system. The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), and the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) before it, met the needs for school accountability during their times. Now, we will be developing a testing system that more clearly impacts daily classroom instruction, motivates students for individual success, provides longitudinal measures that give clear feedback to educators and families and also can supply the accountability measures taxpayers deserve and citizens expect.

In addition, a realistic timeline is nec-

essary to ensure success. Staff in the KDE Office of Assessment and Accountability have developed charts that show the basic requirements of Senate Bill 1 for the current school year, the interim period and the new generation of assessment and accountability, and those were recently shared with your districts. We are working on and will provide you with more guidance related to specific items as it becomes available.

In addition, we continue to work on revising mathematics standards that could be ready by January 2010 and a mathematics test ready for use by spring 2011. Other content areas could begin work for phase-in beginning spring 2012.

We know that you will need support to teach these revamped standards and prepare students for the complementary assessments. An investment in teacher knowledge and expertise will produce positive change in student learning. The Kentucky Department of Education, in collaboration with educational cooperatives, postsecondary institutions and other networks, will make this investment through professional growth opportunities. Training will focus on priorities such as assessment literacy and high-quality instruction, providing you with the means to effectively utilize Kentucky's new standards within a balanced assessment system.

Kentucky is poised to move forward in the area of standards revision, particularly in the area of mathematics. This work must have one overriding goal – to ensure that the state's standards, assessment and accountability all focus on what is best for every child in the public school setting.

We are all accountable for the academic performance of students, and the interim period between our current system and the next generation is a chance for you to increase accountability within your districts and schools. It's time to show the people in your communities that your work is not just about a test – it's about providing children with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

(Contact Interim Commissioner Farris on this topic at elaine.farris@education.ky.gov.)



Photo by Amy Wallot

International school relations

Interim Commissioner of Education Elaine Farris speaks with Davlatnazar Khudonazarov, from Tajikistan, at Franklin County High School during an international visitors leadership program Feb. 23. More than a dozen participants from around the world visited schools across the state learning about Kentucky's education system. The program was hosted by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and the World Affairs Council of Kentucky/Southern Indiana.

General Assembly skins CATS, orders new test

By Matthew Tungate

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The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) is dead. In its place, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is to develop new tests that track individual student progress using new standards and state and national tests, according to Senate Bill 1, which was approved by the state legislature and signed into law by Gov. Steve Beshear in late March.

For the next three years starting this spring, Kentucky schools' accountability will be based on student test scores on math and reading as required by the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. KDE also will not publish a state accountability index score for those years. From 2009-11:

- Students will take the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) in reading, mathematics, science and social studies.
- Students will take the on-demand and multiple choice portions of the KCCT in writing.
- Students will take the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT readiness tests.
- Students will still have to complete writing portfolios, but they will not count as part of

schools' assessments.

This spring, districts will receive test booklets and scoring guides for testing arts and humanities and practical living/vocational studies, but there will be no scores reported to the state. For 2010 and 2011, students will take new norm-referenced reading and mathematics tests in grades 3 through 7.

"We are all accountable for the academic performance of students, and the interim period between our current system and the next generation is a chance for you to increase accountability within your districts and schools," Interim Commissioner Elaine Farris recently told superintendents and principals across the state. "It's time to show the people in your communities that your work is not just about a test – it's about providing children with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful."

Beginning in 2012, new testing will assess reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing using constructed-response and multiple-choice items and on-demand prompts. It is supposed to produce criterion-based and norm-referenced scores so results can be compared to state and

national standards. It will include EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT readiness tests during five of the last 14 days of the school year. Students' scores are supposed to be returned to schools within 75 days after the start of testing.

The test will be based on new curriculum standards developed in a process involving teachers, postsecondary faculty and staff, and business professionals as well as standards developed by national content advisory groups and professional educators. The new standards are supposed to offer fewer, clearer standards that are better aligned for college readiness and global competition.

KDE released a position paper earlier this year that called for changes to the state's assessment and accountability system, including higher, clearer, fewer and narrower academic standards – and a new accountability-based testing system based on them.

"It doesn't matter if it's going to be called CATS or rats or cardinals, the state of Kentucky will have an accountability and assessment system because we know it is necessary of ongoing education progress," Farris told the state Board of Education at its March meeting.

ASSESSMENT STANDARDS SB 1

The bill relating to state assessment and accountability in elementary and secondary schools:

- deletes all references to "CATS"
- requires KDE, in cooperation with the Council on Postsecondary Education, to develop a process for new standards development within 30 days of the bill's signing
- requires the development of standards to be on a graduated timeline with all standards completed by Dec. 15, 2010, and disseminated by Jan. 15, 2011
- suspends the state accountability system for the 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years, but requires the Kentucky Board of Education to revise the accountability system using the new assessments
- requires, for accountability, the use of program reviews, students' academic performance, school improvement results and other factors deemed appropriate by the board
- removes the writing portfolio, practical living skills and career studies, and arts and humanities from the state assessments in spring 2009 and thereafter, but requires each student maintain a portfolio from primary through grade 12
- requires interim program assessments in writing, practical living skills and career studies and arts and humanities and requires a fully implemented program assessment system beginning in 2011-12
- provides an interim testing program for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years that includes the current criterion-referenced test in reading, mathematics, science and social studies and adding a norm-referenced test in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 7 in 2009-10 and 2010-11
- continues the high school readiness examination in grade 8, the college readiness examination in grade 10 and the ACT examination in grade 11 in the interim

Assessment requirements for the 2011-12 school year and thereafter are:

- diagnostic assessments and prompts as determined by the school to be developmentally appropriate, commercially or locally developed, that measure readiness in reading and mathematics once within the primary grades
- a criterion-referenced test (CRT) that is valid and reliable at the individual student level to measure academic content standards in mathematics and reading to be administered in grades 3-8, augmented with a customized or commercially

available norm-referenced test to provide comparisons to national norms

- a CRT that is valid and reliable at the individual student level to measure academic content standards in science and social studies, augmented with a customized or commercially available norm-referenced test to provide national profiles to be administered once within elementary grades and once within middle grades
 - a high school readiness examination to assess English, reading, mathematics and science to be administered in grade 8, unless the Kentucky Board of Education moves the test to grade 9
 - an editing and mechanics test related to writing to be administered once each in elementary, middle and high school grades
 - on-demand writing assessment to be administered once within the elementary grades and twice each in the middle and high school grades
 - a technically sound longitudinal comparison of the assessment results for the same students, primary through grade 12
 - a CRT that is valid and reliable for individual students in mathematics, reading and science that measures academic content standards not covered by ACT to be administered once within high school grades
 - a CRT that is valid and reliable for individual students in social studies, augmented with a customized or commercially available norm-referenced test to be administered once within high school grades
 - a college-readiness exam to assess English, reading, mathematics and science administered in grade 10
 - ACT administered in grade 11
- Other testing provisions:
- change the testing window to the last 14 days of school with a limit of five testing days
 - require program reviews and program audits for arts and humanities, practical living skills and career studies, and the writing programs
 - require KDE to conduct periodic alignment studies between the norm-referenced components and core content to see if the alignment is such that the number of criterion-referenced items can be reduced
 - require teachers and parents be provided a valid and reliable comprehensive analysis of skills mastered by individual students
 - require any other component necessary to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act or its successor



Photos by Amy Wallot

Teacher Rick Wolf instructs 7th-grade students about reflective writing at Dayton High School (Dayton Independent). The students were beginning to work on a reflective writing piece for their writing portfolios. Under provisions in SB 1, from 2009-11, students will have to complete writing portfolios, but they will not count as part of schools' assessments.



School for the Creative and Performing Arts at Bluegrass (Fayette County) 6th-grade student Ana Marie Miller, left, and Morton Middle School (Fayette County) 6th-grade students Gretchen Bryant, center, and Ashleigh Wallace form a chain and sled downhill together at the Lexington Shriners Hospital after snow caused classes to be canceled Feb. 4. Under HB 322, districts that missed school days because of the severe weather storm of January and February 2009 can request that the commissioner of education waive makeup of up to 10 days.

Other bills from the 2009 General Assembly

CALENDAR

HB 322

The act relating to school calendars:

- allows a school board that missed school days because of Tropical Storm Ike and the severe weather storm of January and February 2009 to request the commissioner of education to waive makeup of up to 10 days
- requires all certified and classified staff to make up days approved as disaster days and identifies activities to be used by staff to make up days
- permits the commissioner of education to approve a school board's request to exceed the five instructional hours that do not have to be made up under administrative regulation when school days were shortened to address an emergency situation
- permits time missed due to shortening days for emergencies to be made up by lengthening school days without any loss of funds
- requires a request for disaster days be made no later than May 1, 2009, and the commissioner to approve or deny a request within 10 calendar

days of the request

- allows the commissioner of education to approve a plan submitted by a board of education that extends the instructional day by not less than 30 minutes

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

HB 198

The act requires KDE to administer a grant program to provide money to school districts to employ one full-time community education director and provide professional development training to all state-funded community education directors.

CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDINGS

HB 292 (repeal and reenacted HB 514 from 2008)

The act relating to financial matters allows the commissioner of education approval of district requests to use funds from their capital outlay allotment:

- for maintenance expenditures or the purchase of property insurance in fiscal year 2008-09 and fiscal year 2009-10 and allow maintenance requests to include priorities that are not major renovations, such as repair, renovation or system upgrades that are necessary to maintain the integrity of an existing school

- to purchase land for a new school or if the project is included on the district facility plan for completion within eight years
- for the operation of a new school for the first two years following its opening in districts that have experienced an increase in adjusted ADA of 20 percent or more over a five-year period

HB 295

The act relating to state funds allocations to school districts allows:

- districts to apply to the commissioner of education to use capital outlay funds to purchase land, modify an existing school or for maintenance or property insurance
- growth districts to apply to use capital outlay funds for operating expenses for two years after a new school opens
- the levy for school facilities currently dedicated for the Facilities Support Program of Kentucky to be used to buy land if approved by the commissioner of education

FUNDING

HB 143

This bill adjusts the state/executive branch budget, including a 2 percent budget cut for education, but leaves the SEEK funding formula unchanged.

HB 236

The act extends a school district's utility gross receipts license tax to include Internet protocol television service as part of the tax levied on multichannel video programming service without a public hearing.

HB 408

The act permits growth districts to request adjustments in the SEEK funds when average daily attendance in the current year for the 20-day school month with the most days in January exceeds the prior year's adjusted average daily attendance plus growth by at least 1 percent. It also prescribes how the state portion of the SEEK program is calculated regarding the value of real estate and allows a local school district to request approval from the commissioner of education to use capital outlay funds to buy school buses or for increased operational expenses for the first three years following increased growth in the district.

MILITARY FAMILIES

SB 39

The act relating to students of civilian military employees provide students of civilian military employees the same rights as students of military families if the parents are required to move to perform their job responsibilities, resulting in the students changing schools.

HB 124

The act grants students excused absences for up to 10 days to visit a parent or legal guardian serving in the U.S. military and stationed out of the country and who is on leave.

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

SB 148

The act relating to sexual and violent offenders requires school-based decision making council parent members to have a fingerprint-based criminal history background check by the Department of Kentucky State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Registered sex and violent offenders are banned from school grounds without permission and barred from serving on school councils.

SPORTS

HB 383

The act directs the Kentucky High School Athletics Association, with assistance from the Kentucky Department of Education, to staff and coordinate a study of sports safety. It also establishes the scope of the study, membership of the study group and a reporting timeline. The act also requires each high school coach to com-

plete a sports safety course consisting of training on how to prevent common injuries and requires that beginning with the 2009-10 school year, at least 1 person who has completed the course shall be at every high school athletic practice and competition.

TEACHERS

HB 480

The act requires the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) to give priority to teacher scholarship program funds for loan forgiveness to teachers who have outstanding loan balance eligibility for Best in Class loans issued prior to June 30, 2008, establishes an option for participants to negotiate an extended repayment schedule consistent with federal requirements if there are insufficient funds for loan forgiveness and urges the governor to encourage the Congressional delegation to provide American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or other federal funds to assist KHEAA in providing loan forgiveness to eligible program participants.

OTHER

Kentucky Board of Education appointments:

HRs 60, 62, 64, 65, 72; SRs 194, 195, 196, 197

These resolutions confirm the gubernatorial appointment of Dorothy "Dori" Z. Combs, Austin W. Moss, Brigitte B. Ramsey and Billy Harper to the Kentucky Board of Education. Steven B. Neal was confirmed by the House but not the Senate, creating a vacancy to be filled by the governor.

Education Professional Standards Board appointments:

HRs 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 63, 73; SRs 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 198

These resolutions confirm the gubernatorial appointment of Gregory E. Ross, Cathy Lynn Gunn, Charles S. Evans, Sandy Sinclair-Curry, Lonnie R. Anderson, Laranna Lynn May and James G. Hughley to the Education Professional Standards Board.

HB 117

This bill has a 10-year phase-in of increased cost of the employer contribution for school district employees that participate in the county retirement system.

Information provided by the Legislative Resource Commission and the Kentucky Department of Education.

MORE INFO...

www.lrc.ky.gov

Teacher ownership leads to success at Blue Ribbon School

This is the final profile in a series about the four Kentucky Blue Ribbon Schools. The March issue of *Kentucky Teacher* featured Veterans Park Elementary School (Fayette County). May Valley Elementary (Floyd County) was featured in February, and Highland Elementary (Davies County) was featured in the December-January issue.

By Matthew Tungate

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Third-grade teacher Paula Cornelison has taught at White Hall Elementary School (Madison County) for all of her 18-year career. She has worked for several principals, and none, she said, has inspired the positive outlook, high expectations and teamwork of her current boss, Randy Neeley.

"Once you have that feeling, it frees you up to really focus on what you are doing in the classroom each day," Cornelison said. "The principal is the leader of the school and helps set the tone for the learning environment."

If that's the case, it's no wonder teachers like Neeley's style of running the school. Now in his fourth year, Neeley said his job is to make sure the school staff has a common vision, which includes allowing teachers to have a say in what happens in the school and then getting out of the way to let them do their jobs.

"You've got to let them speak their minds. They're the experts," Neeley said. "You have to be able to check yourself at the door, take constructive criticism and build upon what you know is going to be best for every child in our school."

The results speak for themselves. The U.S. Department of Education named White Hall a 2008 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon school. The award recognizes schools that help students achieve at high levels and that make significant progress in closing achievement gaps or that score in the top 10 percent statewide in reading and mathematics on state assessments. Blue Ribbon Schools also must make Adequate Yearly Progress under the requirements of the federal NCLB Act.

White Hall's academic index for 2007 was 115.5. In reading, 90 percent of students scored distinguished or proficient, and 87 percent achieved the same in mathematics.

"That's the effect you get when you give people ownership and allow them to do what they need to do," Neeley said. "Once



Photo by Amy Wallot

Teacher Kathy Coomer helps 4th-grade student Bryan Noble with an assignment at White Hall Elementary School (Madison County), a 2008 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon School.

you allow teachers to express their opinions and let their voices be heard, there is a trickle-down effect where people feel, 'Well, he really values what I have to say.' At White Hall, the relationship factor among staff and administration is highly valued."

Neeley employs several strategies in which he includes teachers in decision-making. All teachers in the school participate in disaggregating state testing results. For instance, Neeley said teachers from each grade level break into content-area teams to review the data and report back to the whole group.

"That way we have both horizontal and vertical planning with each other to know the curriculum is being covered," he said.

Cornelison said no one is left out in the planning process.

"No one feels like it's just the 5th-grade test scores or just the 4th or just the 3rd," she said. "It's K-5, working together, setting common goals and everybody working toward those common goals. This collaboration is what gives us the feeling of ownership."

Chrissy Justice, a 5th-grade teacher, said more points of view give better results.

"No two people are going to look at information the same, so with different perspectives we feel that what we come up with at the end is more fully developed than if we just had a one-point or two-point perspective," she said.

Neeley said he incorporates what the teachers decide from the data and recommends changes in instruction across the school. For instance, when conferencing and editing skills needed improvement, he met with the 1st- and 2nd-grade teachers. They decided to hone in on those skills as early as possible so by the time students reach 3rd grade, where state assessment occurs, they would be better prepared.

Another way Neeley promotes ownership among the staff is through the school's leadership team. Anyone in the building can share ideas, concerns or raise specific issues with members of the leadership team.

"We just discuss ideas we think could benefit White Hall or how to improve things

(See **Teacher** on page 11)

That's an example of positive peer pressure because you have some teachers ... who may not want to put in the extra time, but everywhere they look somebody's working. It becomes habit that you stay until 5. I don't require it, but I love it."

—Principal Randy Neeley,
White Hall Elementary School
(Madison County)

Lewis, Fleming counties force the issue in science

By Susan Riddell

susan.riddell@education.ky.gov

Tiffany Toller gives a battery-operated power puck a swift kick while her fellow students in Crystal Thayer's 4th-grade class ready themselves should it dart their way. After all, they have no idea what direction the sometimes hovering, gliding or streaking learning tool will go next.

"We like to watch it bounce against things and go back in other directions," Toller said. "This is such a cool way to learn science because it's easier for us to remember."

"We're not just at our desk writing stuff down. We're doing it ourselves."

The power puck, called a Kick Dis, is one of many hands-on learning tools elementary students in Lewis and Fleming counties have been using to study force and motion this school year.

These lessons are funded through a Partnering to Progress (P2P) grant geared toward improving physical science content knowledge for K-5 teachers and enhancing classroom instruction.

"Considering the level to which we took the kids related to their thinking and problem solving, it's a good thing we went to the P2P because I would have never been able to teach it correctly had I not gone through that training," said Thayer, a teacher at Tollesboro Elementary School (Lewis County). "It really challenged me and made these lessons so memorable for the children."

Lewis County Central Elementary School teacher Sharon Gatherwright agreed. "Having the opportunity to be a part of P2P enabled me to learn new methods for teaching science and for assessing my students during learning," Gatherwright said. "I have especially enjoyed receiving a well-developed unit of study that is aligned with Kentucky's standards."

The two-year P2P grant, a collaborative initiative between the two districts, Eastern Kentucky University, the Kentucky Department of Education and the Partnership Institute for Math and Science Education Reform (PIMSER), is distinguishable for several reasons, according to Diane Johnson, PIMSER instructional supervisor for the Lewis County school district.

"Some things that make our project different are that we have developed learning progressions for force and motion concepts for K-5, which develop the key concepts for force and motion — probably the most difficult and counterintuitive concepts in the



Photos by Amy Wallot

Crystal Thayer, a 4th-grade teacher at Tollesboro Elementary School (Lewis County), helps students Shyla Osborne, left, and Ashley Cooper conduct a push-pull experiment demonstrating motion and forces. Students in Lewis and Fleming counties are taught the force and motion lessons at a gradual progression from kindergarten through 5th grade.

science standards," Johnson said. "We have used these progressions to design activities to enhance teacher content knowledge as well as to design instructional units for each grade K-5 and pencil/paper summative assessments for grades 3-5. The units are designed using a guided inquiry approach and have formative assessments embedded with some possible next steps instructionally, vocabulary strategies and science notebooking built into them."

Each participating school received a kit containing several Go!Motion detectors, Kick Dis, other common items and a grade-specific kit. Grant funding also provided Promethean Boards, projectors, document cameras, Airslates and clicker systems.

"Each school could select the technology they needed within spending limits, so different schools purchased different equipment," Johnson said.

These tool kits have been critical to the program's success.

"The number-one way to teach science to a young child is through an inquiry based approach," said Patsy Adams, a teacher at E.P. Ward Elementary School (Fleming County). "The students need to explore what they are learning with their hands. If they don't feel it, touch it and experience it, then they will not remember the concept being taught."

Aside from the Kick Dis, Thayer's kit

includes compasses for learning about point of origin and push-pull meters for tracking time needed for objects to be pushed or pulled certain distances based on weight. Styrofoam tubing and marbles were used to describe motion from change in position over time.

Selected teachers began monthly trainings in the P2P and then met five days in the summer to troubleshoot. Principals also met twice a semester to "develop their understanding of what a high-quality science program is and what good instruction looks like," Johnson said.

Lessons were aligned vertically to make sure students didn't get inundated with material.

"The force and motion lessons are taught at a gradual progression from kindergarten to 5th grade, so that what I teach in kindergarten is not taught again in 3rd grade," said Jill Bradley, a kindergarten teacher at Ewing Elementary School (Fleming County). "We wanted to make sure that we review the knowledge the students obtained from the year before and allow them to participate in different activities and learn new words."

"This helps build on their knowledge about force and motion," Bradley added. "For example, in kindergarten we have several lessons within the unit that discuss whether an object is moving or not moving. When



Fourth-grade students Kaaleigh Conner, left, and Madison Keaton demonstrate finding the difference in distance traveled to distance from point of origin during Crystal Thayer's class at Tollesboro Elementary School (Lewis County).

my students enter 1st grade, they have this knowledge, but they will build on it by discussing the different ways objects move and what causes them to move. Each year the student learns something new, and when they get to 5th grade, the students have a good understanding of relative position."

"The units provide formative or summative assessments leading up to a final lesson that is performance-based," Adams added. "The units are aligned vertically throughout the school so there are no gaps, and there is only repetition in content not activities."

While P2P was created to make force and motion learning for elementary students easier and more memorable, it also serves as a model to clear up misconceptions about science and teaching science.

"We found that science topics are often taught using the same activities, ideas and words, even if the students are in a different grade," Bradley said. "There is not a continual progression from grade to grade with students building on knowledge from the previous year. The idea of P2P is to create units based on the areas of science so that at each grade level teachers are teaching the same topics, but using different vocabulary words, ideas and activities, and helping the students build on their prior knowledge without creating misconceptions about the concept."

"I wanted to participate in this project so that I could accumulate new ideas and activities to help teach science within a kindergarten classroom effectively," she added. "I wanted to make sure that what I teach in my classroom allows my students not only to enjoy the activity but to understand the concept. I also found that it was important to create a document saying what we need to teach at kindergarten, 1st and/or 2nd grades, but at the same time allowing for different activities to build on previous knowledge from the year before."

MORE INFO...

www.uky.edu/P12MathScience/Grant_funded/P2P.html

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Literature podcasts 'really getting their voices out there'

By Matthew Tungate

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Book reports, old-as-time assignments in schools, have gotten a high-tech upgrade at South Oldham High School (Oldham County).

Last year, English teacher Adam Watson had his students digitally record their literature discussion using microphones and laptop computers, then posted the conversations on a Web site. Students then created a "book commercial" as their culminating project. He is doing the same with his students this year.

Watson, 35, said he didn't even own an MP3 player until just before the project started, so it doesn't take an especially tech-savvy teacher to podcast.

"Don't be afraid if the students know more about technology than you. Embrace it," the fourth-year teacher said.

While in graduate school, Watson read an article by Robert Rozema called "The Book Report, Version 2.0." While Rozema doesn't do literature circle discussions as podcasts, his students have done book commercial podcasts, and that planted the idea for Watson.

Students choose roles during their literature discussions, and each role corresponds to a thinking strategy and Core Content. They are:

Discussion Director (Thinking Strategy: Questions): RD-10-1.0.3, formulate questions to guide reading.

Summarizer (Thinking Strategy: Ahas!): RD-10-2.0.1, paraphrase information in a passage; RD-10-2.0.4, follow the sequence of information in a passage; RD-10-2.0.6, explain main ideas of a passage.

Vocab Enricher (Thinking Strategy: Monitor for Comprehension): RD-10-1.0.1, interpret literal meanings of words; RD-10-1.0.4, interpret jargon/specialized vocab

Literary Luminary (Thinking Strategy: Literary Elements): RD-10-5.0.3, analyze the use of literary devices; RD-10-3.0.3, explain author's position; RD-10-5.0.2, analyze/evaluate theme.

Illustrator (Thinking Strategy: Visualization): Visual/Spatial Multiple Intelligence.

Connector (Thinking Strategy: Connections): RD-10-4.0.1, make connections to student's lives, real-world issues or other texts.

Investigator (Thinking Strategy: Predict/Infer): RD-10-1.0.2, make predictions based on what is read; RD-10-2.0.7, make inferences from a passage.

"I won't claim to have invented student-made podcasts, literature circles, book commercials or book talks," Watson said. "However, to the best of my knowledge and Internet searching, I may be the first to combine all four in a podcast project, particularly for high school students."

Watson said he had some courses that dealt with technology at the University of Louisville while working on his master's degree, but the idea really started with the literature circles and finding ways to allow students to have honest discussions about literature.

"How can I make these literature circles more genuine, more interesting?" he said. "What if I found a way that I could record their discussions? But if I was the only one to listen to the recordings, it would have been a waste."

So he decided that he could post those digital files online.

Watson leaned on Noel Gnadinger, librarian and technology coordinator, who applied for a grant to pay for the microphones. Gnadinger, a former English teacher who still teaches a broadcast journalism class at the school, also helped assess the first group of literature circles.

"If you tell kids, 'We're going to read this book and then you're going to get together and discuss it in groups,' they are just groaning," Gnadinger said. "But if you say, 'And we're going to create a podcast and your friends and parents can listen to it. You're going to be on the Internet,' they're like, 'Cool.'"

Gnadinger received the \$1,000 grant from the Oldham County Education Foundation for eight "podcasting kits," which include microphones that plug into USB ports on a computer, bases and stands.

"It has the coolness factor," Gnadinger said. "Podcasting has all the things these digital natives get into. It's a lot different than just reading a book and writing some worksheets. It gets their voices out there. In the YouTube generation, that's what they're into. They want their 15 minutes of fame."

Gnadinger said teaching students to use the microphones and software took an entire 90-minute period at first, but now it only takes only about an hour for them to learn the entire process of recording, editing and publishing.

The podcasts are recorded as part of



Photo by Amy Wallot

Sophomore Reese Fisher talks with Will Gabay, left, also a sophomore, as they demonstrate how Adam Watson's class uses podcasting at South Oldham High School (Oldham County). The students were discussing The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson.

planned lessons during school hours, Watson said. The project involves multiple core content, both individually (with role sheets) and as a group (discussing the book in their podcast, writing and recording their book commercial).

The podcasts are actually the end result of a semester-long use of thinking strategies, which are introduced in the first week of class. Thinking strategies are ways students learn to be critical thinkers, not just fact memorizers, Watson said.

"These thinking strategies become the

fundamental language of our classroom, whether they are used in group/partner discussions on various texts or as individual assignments, such as completion of thinking logs to go with a reading," he said.

To start the literature circles, Watson tries to group students based on their interest in a book. Once the groups are formed, students set up a reading schedule. Before each meeting, students decide which of seven discussion roles they will have, each with a different responsibility within the group.

(See **Literature** on page 11)

Mathematics intervention paying off at Kingston Elementary

By Susan Riddell

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Ruth Montgomery truly believed mathematics intervention would help her school.

She was right.

The Kingston Elementary School (Madison County) principal said the school's prior year's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) data showed students had the skills required but struggled when asked to apply concepts learned at a deeper level. In her view, this indicated a possible lack of "number sense," which resulted in unsustainable growth.

Mathematics intervention began at Kingston during the 2006-07 school year, and the school is now in the third year of a Mathematics Achievement Fund grant, which was co-written by Amy Smith, a grant writer for Madison County, and former Madison County Curriculum Coach Krista Althaus.

"We have tracked the progress of these students, and the growth of the majority is very impressive," Montgomery said. "I have not had reservations about math intervention. I am a firm believer that the more we can offer a struggling student on a one-to-one basis and early in their education, the better. Students who struggle with any concept generally have very low self-esteem or a perceived aversion of the concept being addressed."

"Intervention allows for focused concentration on what is being taught for that individual student," she added. "This manner of teaching can help alleviate the fear of not understanding math and therefore builds student confidence in being able to discover math. I would love to offer it to every student at every level."

Spring 2008 CATS scores showed Kingston made a 10-point gain in mathematics from 2007. The school's free and reduced lunch population made a 13-point gain, and students with disabilities made a seven-point gain.

Mary Greene is the mathematics inter-



Photos by Amy Wallot

Mathematics interventionist Mary Greene plays a game with 1st-grade student Dalton Hatton at Kingston Elementary School (Madison County). "I love being able to sit down one-on-one with the kids," she said. Greene has been the mathematics interventionist at Kingston Elementary since 2006.

ventionist at Kingston. She had been at the school for 23 years, teaching several grade levels before beginning intervention duties in 2006.

Her work has been critical to the success of the intervention, Montgomery said.

Greene primarily works one on one with students. She videotapes all sessions with them to better see how well they are processing the lessons.

"It is part of the Math Recovery program that is used with 1st-grade students in a one-on-one setting," Greene said. "Videotaping

is critical to what I do. I watch the tapes to analyze them and determine exactly where a child is in daily development so that I can pitch the next day's lesson at the zone of proximal development. This is just out of the child's comfort zone. It 'stretches' the student without frustrating him or her."

Being able to look back at a child's body language while monitoring progress helps Greene be more reflective about her teaching to improve her questioning, instructional strategies and techniques, she said.

"I can remember a lot about a day's lesson, but to truly get at children's developmental level I need to be able to watch how they use their fingers or listen more closely to their explanation of a strategy or even watch their eye movements to determine how they keep track of counts when they add," she said. "I can pick up on patterns of mistakes or determine that a child repeatedly leaves out a certain number when he/she counts. Sometimes it's the smallest detail that makes the biggest

(See **Mathematics** on page 11)



Kindergarten student Owen North arranges flashcards in order during an assessment with mathematics interventionist Mary Greene at Kingston Elementary.

What is mathematics intervention?

Mathematics intervention focuses on students who need more experience with numeracy to become confident, successful mathematicians. At Kingston Elementary, 1st graders participate in one-on-one lessons for 30 minutes each day. Third-graders attend Math Club each day for 45 minutes. Kindergarten students see the interventionist for approximately 15 minutes each day. One

2nd-grade class is participating in the piloting of Add+Vantage Math Recovery, which consists of interview assessments that allow the teacher to more accurately meet the needs of all students whether they need additional experiences to be more successful in the classroom or need enrichment to maintain their interest and continued growth in mathematical understanding.

'Beyond the Log Cabin' exhibition available online

The Kentucky Historical Society's *Beyond the Log Cabin: Kentucky's Abraham Lincoln* is now available as an online exhibition. The Web exhibition and the one on display at the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History in Frankfort both offer a new perspective on the 16th president during the bicentennial of his birth.

Taking a broad view of Kentuckians' perceptions of Lincoln from his birth to the ongoing bicentennial commemoration, the *Beyond the Log Cabin* online and traveling exhibitions explore the complex relationship between Lincoln and his native state and feature unique artifacts gathered from repositories and collections across the nation. Adults and children will enjoy engaging imagery, artifacts and interactive activities that present the untold story of Lincoln's lifelong involvement with Kentucky and Kentuckians.

Though similar in design to the traveling gallery exhibition, the



Collections of the Kentucky Historical Society

Pocket watch owned by Abraham Lincoln, ca. 1860

Beyond the Log Cabin online exhibition offers much more to the visitor. It features an expanded number of images and interpretation, multiple interactive elements, a 360-degree viewing option that gives online visitors the ability to rotate and zoom in on select artifacts, a comprehensive search option, and several educational resources, including a teacher's guide and student worksheets. Visitors to the site will be able to view the materials through multiple perspectives and technological applications.

"We hope that Kentuckians

will take advantage of this opportunity to experience the *Beyond the Log Cabin: Kentucky's Abraham Lincoln* exhibition and to learn more about Lincoln's Kentucky connections during this bicentennial commemoration of his birth," said Kent Whitworth, executive director of the Kentucky Historical Society. "The new Web site will make commemorating the Lincoln bicentennial possible for Kentuckians

that cannot visit the traveling exhibition and enhance the experience of those that are able to view the gallery exhibition."

The exhibition will be on display at the Center for Kentucky History through June 6 and will then travel to The Speed Art Museum in Louisville for exhibition June 28 through Sept. 6. It will open at the Highlands Museum & Discovery Center in Ashland on Oct. 2, and remain on display there until Feb. 19, 2010.

MORE INFO ...
www.history.ky.gov/lincoln



Photo by Amy Wallot

Learning science together

Fourth-grade students Chelse Parks and Ethan Underwood work together separating landform types during Sharon Gatherwright's science class at Lewis County Central Elementary School.

KET introduces new resource focusing on water pollution

"Raindrops to Rivers," KET's new professional development resource for kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers, provides materials designed to help teachers educate students about Kentucky's rich water resources and the extent of pollution's impact on the quality of water in Kentucky and beyond.

"Raindrops to Rivers" uses lesson plans; activity guides; samples of student work; interviews with teachers; and footage of student activities, both inside the classroom and on outdoor field trips, to demonstrate high-quality instruction on Kentucky watersheds and nonpoint source pollution caused by rainfall or melted snow moving over and through the ground.

In addition, "Raindrops to Rivers" provides instructional videos for students: an electronic field trip to a watershed and a full-length documentary, *Common Ground and Cleaner Water*, which explores the impact of nonpoint source pollution on Kentucky's waterways.

"Raindrops to Rivers" is produced jointly by KET, the Kentucky Division of Water and the Kentucky Department of Education. It is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act. The Kentucky Division of Water directed funds for production to KET through the University of Louisville.

MORE INFO ...
www.raindropstorivers.org

Let us know

Changed your address?

If you don't want to miss an issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, please take a few moments to learn how to let us know when your address changes.

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612 Capital Plaza Tower
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Frankfort, KY 40601

Teacher from page 6

we're doing that may not be working," he said.

Leadership team participation and attendance are not mandatory, and the group may change from one meeting to the next, he said. "That's what makes it successful."

Cornelison, a member of the leadership team, said the group attended a seminar over the summer and later shared with the entire staff what they had learned.

Neeley said that is important when professional development funds are reduced.

"When professional development funds are limited, it is important to utilize the leadership team and other staff members as an effective PD resource," he said. "They share their professional development experiences with the entire faculty and staff."

Strong teachers are nothing new for White Hall Elementary, though. Justice has taught for almost 30 years, 11 of them at White Hall. "This school's always had a reputation for dedicated teachers," she said.

Neeley said there is positive peer pressure at the school. Many times at 5 or 6 p.m., he has to tell teachers to go home.

"That's an example of positive peer pressure because you have some teachers ... who may not want to put in the extra time, but everywhere they look somebody's working," he said. "It becomes habit that you stay until 5. I don't require it, but I love it."

Cornelison also credited the school district for developing a curriculum map and common assessments to help focus on Kentucky's Core Content and Program of Studies, so that each grade level consistently teaches the curriculum sequence.

"I know I've heard Mr. Neeley say that when he walks through the hallways he can go from room to room and he hears us finishing each other's sentences," she said.



Photo by Amy Wallot

Principal Randy Neeley stops and talks with 2nd-grade student Tyler Day at White Hall Elementary (Madison County).

Neeley also is personally invested in the school. His 6-year-old daughter is in 1st grade at White Hall.

"I won't do anything for her that I wouldn't do for my other 699 kids, because they're all my babies," he said. "I think that's the way our whole staff feels."

Neeley said 20 other districts have visited his school since the end of September to see what makes it successful. All of the visitors said they're teaching the same curriculum and doing some of the same things as White Hall, but the school climate puts it over the top, he said.

"That's something they wish they could scoop up and take back to their own school, but creating this kind of environment doesn't just happen overnight," he said.

MORE INFO ...

www.madison.k12.ky.us/wh/index.htm

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Literature from page 8

Watson believes the corresponding rolesheets keep students from going "cold" during the recording, as well as ensuring each one has a unique contribution to the conversation. Students then electronically record their discussions on the book, which are posted on a Web site as a podcast.

Watson said the recordings are 15-20 minutes long, so students have to focus for the whole time, not just when he is around. He said he can listen to every group's entire discussion outside of class, rather than just a few minutes during the class period.

In their final book commercials, Watson said, students try to convince others to read the book. They are required to dramatize at least one scene in the book, and they may use sound effects Watson provides.

Students use a free program called Audacity to compile the podcasts and professional-level microphones the school purchased for the project.

Teachers could podcast with just one computer and one microphone, Watson said. Regardless of the resources, teachers must be organized and "plan, plan, plan" to make podcasting literature circles success-

ful, he said.

He has even heard back from authors of some of the books his students have read.

"Thanks for the email and the nice words about Counting Coup. But more importantly, congratulations on the work you do in the classroom. Getting reluctant readers to be engaged is hard enough, but to also get them to share their work and thoughts is even more daunting. Your podcast project is a terrific idea ... and I will no doubt share it with the teachers I work with in Community of Writers," author Larry Colton wrote in an e-mail to Watson.

Watson said he is glad students have an authentic audience to hear their work.

"I was proud. I guess it would be the equivalent of seeing your son score a touchdown," Watson said. "I was really proud that the students' hard work was validated. It's the idea of validating the fact that their voice, their comments and their thoughts, broadcast as a podcast on the site, really has impact, that the author of the book they had actually read was one of those people."

MORE INFO...

<http://mrwatsonsohs.podbean.com>

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Mathematics from page 9

difference. Those minute details can't always be caught on the fly."

Greene said the classroom teachers also are a big reason the intervention students are seeing positive results.

"Grade-level trainings were provided to teachers that would help them implement best teaching practices," Greene said. "Teachers were provided with activities and resources that would help deepen the understanding of mathematics in their students. Then they came back and put that training into action. Last year I offered some additional sessions after school at least four times to reinforce that training. This year I've been meeting with teachers from each grade level at least once a month to provide resources and activities that meet the needs of their students and to answer questions they may have. This year we also implemented the use of the Everyday Math curriculum in grades K-5 because it meshed well with the training our teachers had received and with the intervention methods I use.

"The teachers here have a dedication to their students that is unparalleled," Greene added. "They have taken their training seri-

ously. They have been willing to tackle a new math series that is not a breeze to teach. We knew that changes had to be made. Change is never easy, but we met that challenge head-on and together."

Greene said that she could see results in her intervention students right away, and before long, test scores backed up what she saw.

"I was pleased that some of my former and present intervention students had scored proficient or distinguished on the CATS assessment," Greene said. "As much as that was pleasant, it was last spring. I need to know where they stand now in order to help them continue to move forward.

"The students are continuing to grow in their understanding," she added. "This is evidenced by the fact that in grades 1-5, 67 percent of the students that have been served or are being served through the intervention program and scored proficient or distinguished on the December PAS (Predictive Assessment Series). These are students who were performing drastically below their peers when they were picked up for intervention services."

MORE INFO...

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Riley teaches Bellevue students lessons in life

By Susan Riddell

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Kathy Riley's room at Bellevue High School (Bellevue Independent) is 1970s coffee shop meets 1980s chemistry lab.

There are large fabric flowers wrapped around the faucets once used in conjunction with experiments, brightly-colored rugs scattered throughout the room, colorful curtains in front of each window, two bean-bag chairs tucked in a corner for private conversation and dim pastel mood lighting.

It's only when you look closer that you see the remnants of the former chemistry lab, in particular the many sinks used for experimentation.

But masking what the room used to be for isn't the reason for the laid-back décor.

"It makes my room feel more comfortable for the students," Riley said of the changes. "When they are comfortable, they are more willing to discuss their problems. It is a way to help them relax when they are upset. It also gives them things to play with or just hold in their hands while talking."

Relaxation is critical to Riley's success reaching a student, she said, and where she helps them isn't nearly as important as how she helps them.

Riley, who has worked with special-needs students for 16 years, including the last seven at Bellevue High, was recently recognized for her efforts

with the 2008 Beacon of Hope/Excellence in Education Award from the Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) of Kentucky. The award, LDA's highest honor, is represented by a Flame of Knowledge Trophy that sits in Riley's room on a window sill.

"When I see it each day, it reminds me why I come to work each day," said Riley, who is a social worker and Family Resource and Youth Services Center (FRYSC) coordinator. "My job is to take care of the students. They come before anything else. If I can help

remove barriers to learning and watch a student become successful, then I have done a good job."

That good job begins with a tireless work ethic, according to Bellevue Principal Mike Wills.

"The halls of Bellevue High School resonate with her spirit," Wills said, noting that she serves in multitude of roles in the school ranging from National Honor Society sponsor to Toys for Tots coordinator. "This lady is truly a tireless worker who can be relied upon to bring new ideas and strategies to help the students and staff of Bellevue High School. In her official role as Youth Services Center director, one can find her counseling students, assisting teachers and administrators, making home visits, sponsoring clubs, leading committees, meeting with parents and organizing school and community events."

Bellevue High School is a small school in northern Kentucky. Of its 400 students, roughly 10 percent are special needs, making Riley's work that much more integral to the school's success.

"I teach them life skills," Riley said of the students she counsels, "by helping them to resolve peer and personal conflict, how to make the best of the environment in which they live and by setting goals for their future."

"Bellevue offers these students and every student a safe

environment in which to learn and adults that care about them as individuals," she added. "The students at Bellevue get a lot of individual attention because we are a small school. It is very easy to know every student that walks through the front door."

Riley might spend an average day talking one-on-one with a girl who is frustrated with a teacher to the point where she won't go to class, or she might have to counsel a boy who is having trouble at home and gets distracted in class. Whatever the situation is, Riley

*"If I can help
remove barriers to
learning and watch a
student become
successful, then I have
done a good job."*

— Kathy Riley, Bellevue High School (Bellevue Independent)



Photo by Amy Wallot

Kathy Riley, right, talks with school nurse Tabitha Swope at Bellevue High School (Bellevue Independent). The two collaborate about students taking medication.

strives to treat all of her students the same.

"I do not feel that you should treat any student differently from another," she said. "They all need someone who cares and wants to listen and help them work through their problems."

Her work with the students has helped attendance rates improve by 2 percent over the past two school years. Wills credits Riley for this due to her work in the development of the Campbell County Truancy Court at Bellevue High.

This pilot program, established by the Campbell County Court system and leaders such as Riley, is composed of school administrators and court officials and brings together students and parents on a bimonthly basis to reduce truancy at the school.

"Kathy works hard with the parents and students to get to the root cause of why a student is not in school and to solve the problem," Wills said. "She has been known to go to students' homes and walk them to school so they can continue in the program."

Riley also developed the Peer Mediation Program at Bellevue. This program, according to Wills, works with students who are having serious confrontational issues.

"Kathy trains older students in peer mediation techniques, then the older students work with the students who are having difficulty to resolve the problem," said Wills, who noted that the school has had an incred-

ibly low number of student altercations since the program started.

"These are all worthy endeavors and prove she truly makes a difference in our school and our community," Wills said. "However, for Kathy's most important work, numbers do not do justice. Her work on the school Climate Committee and the School Improvement Team have made sometimes large and sometimes subtle differences in the school that make it more inviting to our students and staff. Those who have been at Bellevue High for many years say the 'atmosphere' of the school has never been better, and Kathy deserves much of the credit for these school improvement efforts."

Riley added that her successes would not be possible without the collaborative efforts of the teachers at Bellevue.

"I could not do my job without the support of all of the teachers," Riley said. "They are a great group of team members and willing to help when I am on overload. My experience in the past has been that there are conflicts between social work and teaching. At Bellevue High, however, we have learned to work together. They make my job of taking care of the students' mental health and increasing their ability to learn so much easier."

MORE INFO...

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LEADERSHIP LETTER

Compiled by Susan Riddell, susan.riddell@education.ky.gov

Educators need to be aware of certification expiration

Now is the time for educators to check their certificates to make sure that no credentials are due for renewal by June 30. Although districts do make every effort to notify teachers regarding expiring certificates, each educator is ultimately responsible for keeping certifications up to date.

Each summer the Certification Division of the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) receives frantic calls from educators facing problems with expiring credentials. These cases vary widely, but three scenarios are heard most often by the five consultants within the division:

- the young teacher who has not completed the 15 hours of course work for the first five-year renewal
- the veteran teacher who has not completed the required master's degree or Fifth Year Program for the 10-year renewal
- the prospective administrator who has not renewed his or her principal statement of eligibility and, thus, cannot apply for an administrative vacancy of interest in a nearby district

EPSB reminds all educators to check certificates often and make sure they are on track to keep each of them renewed appropriately. With the busy season for the Division of Certification coming up, here are some tips and reminders to help expedite renewal or rank change experience.

- 1. Check your certificate** — It is surprising how many educators don't review their certificates. On the front, there is vital information concerning the certification area, expiration date and exactly what educators need to do to renew the certificate. This information, printed in the lower part of the certificate, is unique to the type of certificate held.
- 2. Use the EPSB Web site** — Educators can visit www.kyepsb.net any time and, after logging in with the unique username and password, receive the same, real-time information that would be received from an EPSB consultant. Information is available on current credentials and expiration dates, as well as the status of all paperwork sent to the EPSB offices. After logging in to the Web site, click on "My Profile," then click on "View Application Status" to see which materials have been received by EPSB and/or if the new certificate has been mailed.



Photo by Amy Wallot

Recognizing teachers

Gov. Steve Beshear thanked members of the class of 2008 National Board Certified Teachers for their service to the students in the state at the Capitol building in Frankfort March 3. In 2008, 232 state teachers achieved National Board Certification. Kentucky now ranks 12th nationwide in the total number of teachers (1,608) who have achieved certification over time.

- 3. Use the correct application form** — Most educators will use only the TC-1 or TC-2 form. The TC-1 is used for initial certification applications and rank changes because a recommendation is needed from a college/university. The TC-2 is used for renewals. Both forms are available from your district human resources office or at www.kyepsb.net via the "Certification" and then the "Certification Applications" links.
- 4. Look before you call** — By accessing www.kyepsb.net, teachers can view common questions and answers posed to EPSB at the "Certification Q & A" link on the "Certification" page. Teachers will find answers to the most frequently asked questions there.
- 5. Provide valid e-mail address** — When paperwork comes to EPSB, one of five consultants will review the documents to see if the case is complete. If more information is needed, an e-mail will be sent to the address provided on the application; therefore, it is vital for educators to provide a valid e-mail address where they can be reached during the summer.
- 6. Have all paperwork together** — Cases are processed faster when all materials - appropriate forms, university recommendations, transcripts and fees - can be sent together. The best way to ensure that this happens is to work with the employing school district and the university/college, if applicable, to coordinate the process.
- 7. Be aware of the "Rank Change Rush"** — Each August EPSB receives hundreds of rank change applications. Often an application is held waiting for the necessary transcript and recommendation from the college/university. Some institutions are not able to send these materials until late August, but the Division of Certification does reallocate its personnel to process all of these rank changes before Sept. 15. By using "View Application Status," teachers will get real-time information regarding paperwork and rank change.
- 8. Be patient** — The Division of Certification maintains a relatively short backlog of cases, even in the busy summer season. Once all paperwork is received, certificates are usually printed within 10 working days.
www.kyepsb.net

Cintas offering discounted AED units through September

To assist in deploying life-saving technology and drive community education, the Cintas Corporation will donate 100 automatic external defibrillators to schools across the country.

In addition, as part of its Cintas Scholastic Grant Program, Cintas is offering automated external defibrillator (AED) units at a significant discount to all public schools through Sept. 30.

Approximately one case of sudden cardiac arrest occurs every three days in organized youth sports, said Dave Bingham, director of AEDs and training for Cintas. "It is also a very serious condition for adults, claiming the lives of more than 250,000 people each year. Our grant program will give more individuals immediate access to an AED, offering them a significantly better chance of survival."

In support of pending Congressional legislation such as the Josh Miller HEARTS (Helping Everyone Access Responsive Treatment in Schools) Act, Cintas' Scholastic Grant Program is designed to increase awareness of the benefits of an AED program among primary and secondary school constituents, such as PTAs, athletic directors, athletic boosters, safety administrators, school administrators, school nurses, teachers and students.

The Josh Miller HEARTS Act is named after a 15-year-old student from Barberton, Ohio, who suffered sudden cardiac arrest during the final game of a football season. By the time his heart was shocked with an AED from the local emergency medical service, it was too late to save him. The act, which passed in the U.S. House of Representatives, will make it a priority to put AEDs into local elementary and secondary schools to help prevent such tragedies.

When groups apply for Cintas Scholastic Grant program, they are encouraged to develop an AED training program for their schools. Example programs include creating a CPR and AED certification class within the community, organizing parents of athletes to create an emergency program for after-hours events, or engaging students in a school project that teaches them about the symptoms associated with sudden cardiac arrest, the need for immediate response and how to properly use an AED.

www.cintas.com/customer_applications/HeartsGrant/request-more-information.asp

BULLETIN BOARD

Compiled by Susan Riddell, susan.riddell@education.ky.gov

Conferences & Workshops

'Safe Schools-Successful Students'

The Kentucky Center for School Safety and the Kentucky School Boards Association are calling for presenters for the 15th annual Safe Schools-Successful Students Conference, Oct. 12-13, in Louisville. Priority will be given to proposals that focus on the roles and responsibilities of students and school personnel, along with community resources that reduce threats and create a positive school culture and climate to improve student achievement. To submit a proposal or for more information, contact Tamara Stewart, tamara.stewart@ksba.org, (800) 372-2962. Proposals are due April 30.

'Life is Sweet at Your Library' conference

Hazard Community and Technical College Libraries will be hosting "Life is Sweet at Your Library" 2009 Regional Library Conference for Public, Academic and School Library Staff on May 8 in Hazard. Registration fee is \$25. For more information, contact Esther French at (800) 246-7521, ext. 73124.

Kentucky Geography Alliance workshop

The Kentucky Geography Alliance is hosting a free teacher workshop called "Navigation and Stargazing," April 24-25, at Hamilton Valley Lodge in Mammoth Cave State Park. Free educational materials will be provided to participants, as well as a certificate for 12 hours of professional development. For more information, contact Kathleen Matthew at kathleen.matthew@wku.edu or (270) 745-6321.

Aviation Teacher Institutes

Mathematics, social studies and science teachers or teaching teams in grades 5-12 can participate in the 2009 Kentucky Aviation Teacher Institutes this summer. Level I institutes will be held at Rough River State Resort Park (June 9-11), Natural Bridge State Resort Park (June 16-18) and at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park (June 23-25). Topics covered through inquiry/problem-based learning will be applied mathematics (time, speed, and distance), science-aerodynamics (forces and motion) and social studies-navigation (map skills). For more information, contact Paige Hankla at phankla@ky.gov or (502) 564-4480.

Transition fair for special needs

Designed for students with disabilities and parents of students with disabilities, attendees can meet and speak with disabilities coordinators from various colleges and universities, along with learning about valuable resources to help with post-secondary education. The fair will be held April 17 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Mason County Fieldhouse in Maysville. Contact Lisa Applegate at (606) 564-3393 or lisa.applegate@mason.kyschools.us for more information.

Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky workshops

The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky has several workshops for educators lined up including:

- Projects Learning Tree, WILD and Aquatic WILD Workshop June 11-12.

Workshops will be held on the beautiful grounds of The Arboretum, Kentucky's official State Botanical Garden. For more information, call The Arboretum at (859) 257-9339 or e-mail rburnes@uky.edu to receive a registration form.

Contests & Other Events

Steve Kimberling Youth Leadership Award

The Kentucky Center for School Safety and the Kentucky School Boards association are accepting nominations for the Steve Kimberling Youth Leadership in School Safety Award. The award will be presented at the annual Safe Schools Conference, Oct. 12-13, in Louisville. The award is open to Kentucky public elementary, middle and high school students. To submit a program for the award, contact Tamara Stewart, tamara.stewart@ksba.org, (800) 372-2962, to get an entry form. Nominations are due July 31.

State Parks 85th Anniversary contest

The Kentucky Department of Parks is announcing the State Parks 85th Anniversary Poetry Contest, open to all ages. Poem theme must be related in some way to natural, cultural or historical resources of Kentucky State Parks. Entries must be received by Nov. 2. Winners will be announced by end of the year. Mailed submissions to Kentucky Dept. of Parks, c/o Poetry Contest, 500 Mero Street, 10th floor, Frankfort, KY 40601.

www.parks.ky.gov

'Stop Bullying Now!' webcast

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), will offer a cyber bullying webcast April 22 with tools and tips for prevention and intervention. The webcast features experts in the field of bullying prevention who will discuss cyber bullying. For more information about the webcast, contact Nicolle Grayson at Nicolle.Grayson@widmeyer.com.

www.mchcom.com/liveWebcastDetail.asp?leid=371

Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation

Kentucky State University will be hosting a three-week summer internship program to introduce a select group of rising 11th- and 12th-grade students to science and engineering career opportunities. This National Science Foundation funded summer program will be July 5-24. The program is designed to increase the number of minorities pursuing careers in science, mathematics, engineering and technology. Participants will have the opportunity to take inquiry-based physical and biological science workshops, hear presentations by various scientists and researchers, and visit several research facilities. Selected students will receive a stipend of \$750 in addition to on-campus room and board. Application deadline is April 30. For more information, contact Kazi Javed at kazi.javed@kysu.edu or (502) 597-6722.

American History Teacher of the Year

The Kentucky Historical Society is seeking exemplary teachers of American history in grades K-6 for the 2009 Preserve America History Teacher of the Year competition. From the nominees, five will be chosen for the second level and will be asked to submit additional materials. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History will announce the 2009 national winner in the fall at a ceremony in New York City. For information on how to apply, contact Rebecca Hanly, rebecca.hanly@ky.gov, at (502) 564-1792, ext. 4475. First-round nomination packages must be postmarked by April 30.

Samsung scholarship for students

Samsung Techwin America wants to know what high school students think about technology advancements and how they will

(Continued on page 15)



Photo by Amy Wallot

BULLETIN BOARD *(continued)*

change the way we learn in the future. Interested students will need to submit an essay up to 500 words on what they think about technology advancements and how they will change the way we learn in the future. Is it for the better? Deadline to enter is May 1. Seven \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

www.samsungscholarship.com

Spring Fling special rates for lodge rooms

The Kentucky State Parks are offering a special lodging rate good for a \$50 a night lodge room at selected state resort parks Sunday through Thursday. The offer is good through May 21 at several parks. The coupon is available at www.parks.ky.gov. (Look for "Coupons and Discounts.") The coupon is for leisure travel only and cannot be combined with other offers. There are a limited number of rooms for this offer at each park. For online reservations, use the code "BACK-YARD" and bring the coupon with you at check in.

Summer science camp for high school students

The Thomas More College Biology Field Station is offering its summer science camp for high school students July 12-17. The camp is a unique opportunity for your students to interact with college faculty and students while spending the week in the field conducting hands-on research in aquatic biology, astronomy and chemistry. Applications are due May 29.

www.thomasmore.edu/fieldstation

Soap-making experience

The Soap Makery in Bardstown is offering an educational field trip for students throughout the remainder of the school year. Sessions include a historical explanation of soap and soap making, description on the difference between mass-produced soaps and natural soaps, an explanation of cold process soap making chemistry and a complete soap-making demonstration from mixing to cutting. Along with the demonstration, each student and teacher will receive a sample bar of handcrafted soap. For more information, contact Ben Byrd, benbyrd@thesoapmakery.com, at (502) 331-9110.

Field trips for elementary and middle schoolers

The Biology Field Station staff hosts schools throughout May and June for day-

long field trips. The program includes hands-on science activities developed and taught by students at Thomas More. Topics covered include fish, macro invertebrates, food webs and water chemistry, among others.

www.thomasmore.edu/fieldstation
fieldstation@thomasmore.edu

Resources

Lincoln materials from KET

KET has online resources for Lincoln fans of all ages. KET's "Lincoln and His Times" timeline details major events that occurred in Kentucky, the nation and the world during Lincoln's life. Visitors to the Web site can find answers to frequently asked Lincoln questions and test their Lincoln knowledge with the "Abe Across Kentucky" quiz. Especially for educators, KET has selected 31 short video segments from *Lincoln: "I, too, am a Kentuckian"* and other KET productions. Additional related resources include lesson plans and idea cards for K-12.

www.ket.org/lincoln

National Science Foundation Web site

A Web site funded by the National Science Foundation offers a better understanding about how dynamic and creative the scientific process really is. Understanding Science is a collaborative project and is accessible online at <http://undsci.berkeley.edu>. Links to teacher resources include resources targeted to primary, middle school, high school and undergraduate-level educators. Topics include how science works, the many motivations leading to exploration and discovery, the ways ideas are tested out, the role of community analysis and feedback, and possible benefits and outcomes resulting from scientific work.

Featured videos for middle school educators

Each Monday through the end of August, the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning will post a featured video on its Web site, including clips from its CD "Transforming Practice: The Middle Grades." Each Monday will bring a new clip from the CD in the categories of: Caught in the Middle; Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools; Standards-Based Integrated Learning; and Support for Learning.

www.ctlonline.org/site/news_articles/ctl-video-series-transforming-practice-the-middle-grades.html



Photo by Amy Wallot

Studying numbers

Katie King, left, Jay Anderson and Yvonne Oliver, all educators from Mercer County, work on a hands-on demonstration of the Rational Number Project during a session at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics Numeracy Conference March 5 in Louisville. The two-day conference, sponsored by the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, held various sessions, which facilitated the development of mathematical proficiency for educators and their classrooms.

Outstanding science trade books

The annual list of Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12 lets educators know which are the very best. National Science Teachers Association and Children's Book Council have refined the criteria for the highest quality, most engaging and scientifically accurate publications for children. This year's list covers everything from frogs to cars and takes students from the frigid Antarctic all the way to sunny Kenya. The full list appears in the March editions of *Science and Children*, *Science Scope* and *The Science Teacher*. The list from 2009 and previous years are online.

www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/

Primary source database

A new primary-source database, with on-site search, is now available for schools, libraries, educators and students. Its features include 15,000 images plus documents, narrations, video/audio clips and organized slide shows. Libraries and schools have permission to link to the various databases. Also incorporated into the text are second-

ary sources, such as links to Google Books. Group access to the site is free for all schools, libraries, educators and students.

www.awesomestories.com/newsletters/february-2009-highlights

'Pathways to Home Ownership' curriculum, Web site

Northern Kentucky University is launching a non-profit, "Pathways to Home Ownership" curriculum and Web site. This curriculum for high school and adult learners presents economic and financial concepts for understanding budgeting, credit, mortgages, and the benefits and costs of home ownership. The Kentucky Real Estate Commission funded the curriculum. Free copies of the curriculum are available for download on the Web site or a hardcopy is available to the first 50 teachers who request one. There also is the opportunity to review the curriculum for a small stipend. For more information, contact codek@nku.edu or (859) 572-6685.

www.pathwaystohomeownership.org



Eighth-grade student Nashon Lowery proudly shows off his facial hair to fellow 8th-grade student Kendrick Adams between classes at Frederick Law Olmsted Academy North (Jefferson County), Kentucky's only all-boy middle school.



Mathematics teacher Chris Glass helps 6th-grade student Thawng Ceu with a problem during class. The class was studying statistics. Olmsted North benefits from 20:1 student-to-teacher class ratio.

Successful focus

Single-gender school thrives in Jefferson County

Photos by Amy Wallot

This is the first of a two-part profile about single-gender public schools in Kentucky. The May issue of *Kentucky Teacher* will feature Frederick Law Olmsted Academy South, also in Jefferson County.

Frederick Law Olmsted Academy North began the transition to become the state's first all-boys' middle school in 2006. In 2008, Olmsted North started the school year as an all-boys' school for students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Classes are designed around the learning needs of young men and include lots of hands-on lessons, teamwork and team building.

Principal Bill Perkins believes that the teams approach is a feature of his school that allows students and faculty to thrive. "Teams enable teachers to get to know their students and to tailor their instruction to meet the needs of individuals," said Perkins. "With an average student-teacher ratio of 20:1 in core

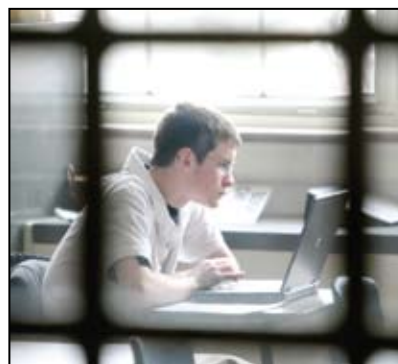
academic courses, teachers are able to spend more time supporting the learning needs of their students."

Perkins also feels this structure improves the students' achievement.

"Teams increase opportunities for cooperative learning, hands-on lessons, inquiry-based science and math programs, technology, and various intervention programs to support students' success," said Perkins.

Students who attend Olmsted North currently come from the surrounding neighborhood, but for the 2009-10 school year, any student in Jefferson County will have the opportunity to attend the school. Perkins doesn't see why other districts couldn't follow his school's example.

"I think this model or concept could be implemented anywhere with support from the community," said Perkins. "We are seeing success in the culture and academic focus of the school. I think having all boys and using research-based strategies in the classroom helps us to reach all students better and allows for more focus in our work."



Eighth-grade student Dillon Lynch, seen through a classroom door, works on an assignment on a laptop at his desk. Laptop computers, projectors and SMART Boards are incorporated into classrooms regularly to engage students in learning and to give them opportunities to learn in new ways.



Language arts teacher Chris Rasheed laughs with students after working on a lesson that incorporated different writing styles and break dancing.

Eighth-grade student Angelo Bravo practices during Mark Brogdon's orchestra class. Although the core subjects are the mainstay of the academic day, related-arts classes also are offered, including include art, band, orchestra, chorus, general music, physical education and technology.