



Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

November 24, 2020, 1:00 to 2:00 EST

Attendees

Sheila Schuster	Advocacy Action Network	Stephanie Bunge	Kentucky Department of Education
Melissa McDonald	Alliance for a Healthier Generation	Elizabeth Anderson Hoagland	Kentucky Health Promotion Program – KY DPH
Christopher Bolling	American Academy of Pediatrics – Kentucky Chapter	Lucy Senters	Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services
Shannon Smith	American Heart Association	Gannon Tagher	Kentucky Nurses Association
Joe Bargione	Bounce	Nicole Barber-Culp	KY Department for Public Health
Jessica Lawrence	Cairn Guidance	Jackie Hodgens	Kentucky Tobacco Prevention and Cessation
Wendy Morris	Dept. Behavioral Health, Dev.& Intellectual Disabilities	Emily Beuregard	Kentucky Voices for Health
Vestena Robbins	Dept. Behavioral Health, Dev.& Intellectual Disabilities	Cara Stewart	Kentucky Voices for Health
Bonnie Hackbarth	Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky	Alicia Whatley	Kentucky Youth Advocates
Amalia Mendoza	Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky	Penny Christian	KY Parent Teacher Association – 16 th District
Amanda Goldman	Gordon Food Services	Laura Beard	Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
Eva Stone	Jefferson County Public Schools	Tomara Adams	Spalding University
Rhonda Caldwell.	Kentucky Association of School Administrators	Elise Kearns	University of Kentucky
Ashley Spalding	Kentucky Center for Economic Policy	Whitney Allen	United Health Care
Jim Tackett	Kentucky Department of Education		

Meeting Objectives:

- Review funding for schools in Kentucky.
- Discuss strategies the KCHC can take related to funding for schools.

Pre-Meeting Materials:

- Report: State Budget Cuts to Education Hurt Kentucky’s Classrooms and Kids: <https://kypolicy.org/state-budget-cuts-education-hurt-kentuckys-classrooms-kids/>
- Analysis: Getting Real About Base Funding for K-12 Schools: <https://kypolicy.org/getting-real-about-base-funding-for-k-12-schools/>
 - Funding differences between school districts: <https://kypolicy.org/new-analysis-inequality-between-rich-and-poor-kentucky-school-districts-grows-again-even-as-districts-face-new-covid-costs-and-looming-revenue-losses/>

Meeting Notes

The presentation slides by Ashley Spalding from the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy (KCEP), *What’s Holding Back Investments in Our Kids?*, are attached as part of the meeting notes.



Some of the main points discussed at the meeting were:

- The Support Education Excellence in Kentucky ([SEEK](#)) funding program, while well designed, has seen the state funding portion become stagnant and in some cases cut. School districts have not been able to compensate sufficiently. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) ranks Kentucky 4th worst in the nation for school funding cuts.
- Responses to a KCEP survey sent to school districts (2018) demonstrate the impact of the cuts in SEEK state funding, which have only been made increasingly dramatic with the coronavirus pandemic:
 - 54% of the districts indicated they have fewer days in the school calendar for funding related reasons.
 - 35% had reduce music and art.
 - 14% had reduced special education funding.
 - A quarter reduced or eliminated career and technical education.
 - 35% districts increase instructional fees for students to make up for cuts.
 - 42% reduced student supports including after school programs and summer school programs.
 - 25% are spending less on health services.
- The Council for Better Education *Adequacy for Excellence in Kentucky* 2014 report ([Link KYCBE](#)) estimated an additional \$2.4 m a year was needed for adequate funding.
- Because of the insufficient increase in state funds, there is a serious equity issue related to the funding gap between rich and poor districts, which is almost at the pre KERA levels (Kentucky Education Reform Act). The inequity was what brought the initial court challenge that led to KERA. Wealthier districts (which does not mean larger districts) can generate 10 times or more revenue than poor districts based on their tax dollars.
- A question was posed about what tax rates districts were levying; last year 77 levied at the 4% rate and 49 levied at the compensating rate. Additional information on historical local district tax levies: [KDE Taxes](#).
- Investments in education are also tied to improved health outcomes for children and youth. A revenue options report provides some suggestions to improve funding: <https://kypolicy.org/revenue-options-that-strengthen-the-commonwealth/>
- Improving health outcomes through schools includes addressing some of the community issues, looking into social determinants (poverty, racial inequities, access to transportation, healthy food, etc.). Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FYRSC) can play an important role related to community outreach and coordination of school health services. Student health data provides important information: how many children are having the required physical exams (vision, dental screenings, etc.). This is good information to compare with the Medicaid measures for the same counties ([Link KDE Data](#)).
- The Steering Committee needs to select the main school funding messages to convey in the Coalition's document to be distributed to legislators during the coming session.



Next Meeting:

December 17, 2020. 1:00 to 2:00 EST.

The meeting will be dedicated to the review and discussion of the Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children document for legislators.

ⁱ Note: Ashley Spalding wanted to make a correction to something said during the presentation related to FRYSCs: the Health & Family Services line item for FRYSCs was funded in 2021. This does not change the information provided in the slides.