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Kentucky Education Facts

Published: 1/9/2013 1:26 PM

Basic statistical information about Kentucky's schools, including number of schools, numbers of teachers and students, statewide education funding and other items.

For national statistics, visit the National Center for Education Statistics at <http://nces.ed.gov/> (<http://nces.ed.gov/>).

The Legislative Research Commission's Office of Education Accountability produces Kentucky District Data Profiles, which can be seen here (<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/lrcpubs/RR382.pdf>).

Kentucky's public school system is directed by state statutes and regulations.

*all numbers are for the 2011-12 school year unless otherwise noted

Number of school districts

174 (38 female superintendents; 136 male; 1 minority)

Number of public schools (Does not include dependent districts Ft. Campbell and Ft. Knox, alternative schools or the Kentucky School for the Deaf and Kentucky School for the Blind)

1,233

Elementary -- 669

Elementary/middle -- 77

Middle -- 217

Middle/high -- 20

High -- 202

Elementary/Middle/High -- 12

Preschool -- 36

These figures include two 6th-grade-only and two 9th-grade-only schools.

Although Kentucky does not mandate the use of specific labels for schools, in general, the figures above represent these labels:

- Preschool – pre-kindergarten, including Head Start
- Elementary – any combination of grades lower than and through 6th

- Elementary/Middle – any combination of grades lower than 6th and through 8th
- Middle – any combination of grades 6 through 8
- Middle/High – any combination of grades lower than 8th and through 12th
- High – any combination of grades 9 through 12

Number of public school teachers (actual headcount)

43,767 (White -- 96%; Minority -- 4%; Male -- 22%; Female -- 78%)

Number of public school students

675,530

Ethnicity of public school students

White - 81.4%

African American - 10.7%

Hispanic - 4.2%

Asian - 1.4%

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander - less than 1%

Native American - less than 1%

Other - 1.3%

Length of school year

187 days (includes 177 days of instruction; four days of professional development; four holidays; two planning days)

Number of employed certified staff, minus teachers (actual headcount)

7,965

Average teacher salary

\$50,428

Number of teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

2,449 (5.6% of the total teaching force)

Kentucky's rank in the number of new nationally certified teachers

11th nationwide [2011]

Number of teacher interns

2,391 [2010-11]

Number of principal interns

0 (Program was not funded in the current biennium.)

Total number who hold Kentucky-issued certifications

142,399 (excludes conditional, adjunct, emergency and temporary certificates, as well as statements of eligibility)

NOTE: Number not comparable to previous years due to a change in the data included.

Number of classified staff (actual head count)

41,794

Average per-pupil current expense spending (excludes debt service, facilities and fund transfers)

\$9,246 [FY 2011]

Total SEEK budget
\$2.9 billion [FY 2013]

Total P-12 state education budget
\$4.6 billion [FY 2013]

Total P-12 federal education revenue
\$1.129 billion [FY 2011]

Total P-12 local education revenue
\$2.202 billion [FY 2011]

Number of local school board seats
872 (Five for each district; Jefferson County has seven because of its size.)

Gender breakdown of local school board members
Male - 517 (59%) Female - 351 (40%)

Racial breakdown of local school board members
White - 818 (94%) Non-White - 35 (4%) Not reported - 19 (2%)

Number of schools served by councils
1,177 (21 granted exemptions -- 7 because of accountability status; 14 in one-school districts)
NOTE: 703 KAR 5:040 mandates that schools classified as "A1" schools are eligible for SBDM councils. A1 schools do not include preschools, alternative schools, vocational-technical or special education schools.

Number of alternative SBDM models
18 (This number declined from the previous year due to councils rescinding their alternative models and returning to the traditional model.)

Parents serving on SBDM councils
2,481

State dropout rate
3.19% [2009-10]

State retention rate
2.36% [2009-10]

State attendance rate
94.05% [2009-10]

State graduation rate
78% [2010-11]
(Averaged Freshman Graduation rate; not comparable with prior years due to a change in calculation.)

Percentage of high school graduates attending college, vocational/technical schools, entering the military, employed or a combination of the above (successful transition rate)
94.37% [2009-10]

Pre-kindergarten (preschool) children enrolled in state funded programs

25,119 (includes children who meet eligibility criteria and children served through district funds or tuition)

Number of students enrolled in Kentucky Head Start programs

14,665

Pre-kindergarten state budget

\$71.3 million [FY 2013]

Types of kindergarten programs offered by school districts

Full day - 161

Half day - 8

Both - 5

Percent of individuals eligible for free or reduced-price meals in public schools (includes K-12 students; preschool/Head Start students; some adults who qualify through the National School Lunch Program)

56% [as of October 2010]

Number of exceptional children ages 3-5

17,963 [as of December 2010]

Number of exceptional children ages 6-21

84,407 [as of December 2010]

Number of students qualifying for Gifted & Talented services

97,770 [2010-11]

Primary Talent Pool (K-3): 21,301

Formal ID (4-12): 76,469

Gifted & Talented state budget

\$6.6 million [FY 2013]

Students taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams

23,507

AP exams given

37,923

Number of exams with scores of 3 or higher

22,649 (59.72%)

Number of public schools operating federal Title I programs

870

Number of public schools operating schoolwide Title I programs (those that serve all students in a school)

846

Number of Title I targeted assistance programs

24

Title I, Part A funding
\$223.4 million [FY 2011]

Title III funding for immigrant services
\$151,578

Districts receiving Title III immigrant funding
5

Students receiving Title III-funded immigrant services
552

Title III funding for limited English proficiency (LEP) services
\$3.5 million

Districts receiving Title III LEP funding
Not yet determined

Students receiving Title III-funded LEP services
Not yet determined

State funding for LEP students
\$5.9 million

Number of students qualifying for state-funded LEP services
15,720

Languages, other than English, spoken at home by students with limited English proficiency

Total -- 116
Spanish (57%)
Arabic (4%)
Bosnian (2%)
Japanese (2%)
Mandarin Chinese (2%)
Mai Mai (2%)
Others (approximately 31%)

Students to modern high-performance computers ratio
2.56-1 [as of December 2011]

Teachers to modern high-performance computers ratio
0.84-1 [as of December 2011]

Percentage of networked schools with Internet access, e-mail and direct dial-in/out telephone access
100% (all 174 district offices have access to e mail and Internet)

Percentage of Intelligent Classrooms (classrooms having components of an interactive, collaborative learning environment)
94%

Students with computers at home
78.8% (72.8% with Internet access)

Teachers with computers at home

95.4% (92.4% with Internet access)

Number of students accessing the technology enabled Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

More than 337,000 accounts created for students in grades 6-12 (88% updated or completed annually)

Amount of federal e-Rate funding available to Kentucky school districts for technology in FY08

\$21.4 million [FY 2011]

Number of family resource/youth services centers

819 (420 family resource; 269 youth services; 129 combined)

Number of schools served by FRYSCs

1,195

Number of students served by FRYSCs

621,630

Number of students served in extended school services programs during the school year (not including summer programs)

109,459

Funds allocated for ESS programs

\$12.3 million [FY 2013]

Number of Community Education directors

98

Number of school districts served by Community Education programs

144

Number of school buses

10,058

Number of licensed school bus drivers

11,252

Number of homeschools

10,252 [2010-11]

Number of homeschooled students

16,493 [2010-11]



(<http://www.outlook.com/education.ky.gov>)



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Saturday, September 21, 2002

28 Ky. schools rated as failing**Latonia Elementary to get extra attention****The Associated Press**

FRANKFORT - The state on Friday identified 28 schools, including Latonia Elementary in Covington, whose performance has lagged badly enough that their students must be given other options, including a chance to transfer at public expense.

These are the "failing schools" that President Bush and others have talked about and the first use of vouchers to allow the market to help education improve.

They were among more than 8,600 schools nationwide that were targeted by the U.S. Department of Education for failing to make "adequate yearly progress" for two consecutive years.

Kentucky's statewide test scores were released Thursday. The 28 schools, all of which receive federal funding, fell far enough short of state performance goals to require maximum state assistance.

"These 28 schools will receive extensive help, both on the state and federal level," Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit said.

Each will have to undergo a "scholastic audit" - a complete examination of its operation - and will be assigned an expert consultant. Each school also will have access to a state school improvement fund.

On the federal side, the schools will get supplemental educational services designed to raise student achievement. Both state and federal requirements call for review of schools' Comprehensive School Improvement Plans."

Jack Moreland, superintendent of Covington Independent Schools, learned of Latonia Elementary's inclusion on the list in a Wednesday phone call from Judy Tabor, director of the division for federal program resources with the Kentucky Department of Education.

Within two or three weeks, Kentucky schools on the list should learn how much of the federal Title I improvement funds they will receive, Mrs. Tabor said Friday.

AT THE BOTTOM

Schools lagging badly enough that their students must be given other options, including a chance to transfer at public expense, under federal law. Listed by district:

- Barbourville Independent: Barbourville Elementary
- Bourbon County: Millersburg Elementary
- Bowling Green Independent: Dishman McGinnis Elementary, L.C. Curry Elementary
- Christian County: Pembroke Elementary
- Covington Independent - Latonia Elementary
- Fayette County: Cardinal Valley Elementary, Tates Creek Elementary, Tates Creek Middle, Yates Elementary
- Fleming County: Ewing Elementary
- Fulton County: Fulton County Elementary
- Hardin County: Parkway Elementary
- Harrodsburg Independent: Harrodsburg Middle
- Jackson County: Jackson County High
- Jefferson County: Hazelwood Elementary, Okolona Elementary,

"My guess is that Latonia parents will not be inclined to transfer their children," Mr. Moreland said. He added Latonia Elementary has enjoyed a reputation as a good school and he characterized the latest test scores as "an aberration," because of a series of unusual circumstances.

Those included the Covington school board's decision in June 2001 to reassign the 120 advanced placement students at Latonia Elementary to their home schools. The school also experienced a 35 percent turnover in faculty and lost its principal and assistant principal in the 2000-'01 school year. Still unknown is the effect a fatal shooting of a parent outside Latonia Elementary a year ago had on students.

Besides notifying Latonia Elementary parents of the federal designation by letter, Mr. Moreland said that the administration will likely meet with them to explain what the school's inclusion on the federal list means to them.

"There should be plenty of room if any kid would want to go to another (Covington elementary) school," Mr. Moreland said.

Within the next month, the U.S. Department of Education is expected to release a list of all schools that qualify for the transfer options and other federal assistance, said Dottie Howe, a spokeswoman for the Ohio Department of Education. In July, that department began notifying some districts that they would have schools on the list, but it later retracted that. Ms. Howe said Ohio education officials "made a miscalculation in the formula itself" and had to remove 203 of the 412 schools from the list.

In Kentucky, 62 other schools also fell short of performance goals but were not reported to the federal agency because they get no federal Title I funding or require less state assistance.

Districts with schools on the list must quickly notify parents and offer students an option to transfer to another public school within the district. The option must be implemented no later than the beginning of the second semester.

In addition, affected districts must implement supplemental educational services for low-income children who have academic difficulties. They also must provide technical assistance in developing or revising school improvement plans.

Kentucky law has included a transfer provision since 1992, but the Department of Education has no record of a parent choosing to exercise it.

In Bowling Green, L.C. Curry Elementary School is on the list, but Michelle Overton says her 9-year-old daughter, Alexis, is staying put.

Alexis had behavior problems at schools in Tennessee but has stayed out of trouble this year at L.C. Curry.

Enquirer reporter Cindy Schroeder contributed.

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Southern Middle, Thomas
Jefferson Middle

- Knott County: Cordia High
- Lee County: Lee County
Middle

- Magoffin County: John T.
Amett Elementary

- Martin County: Inez Middle

- Perry County: Buckhorn
Elementary, Lost Creek
Elementary

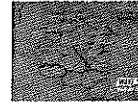
- Pike County: Majestic

- Knox Creek Elementary

- Providence Independent:

- Broadway Elementary

- Webster County: Sebree
Elementary



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Bluegrass Institute issues report on Kentucky's failing schools

Published: Monday, August 24th 2009, 3:20 pm EDT

Updated: Tuesday, September 8th 2009, 9:03 am EDT

By Chris McGill - [bio](#) | [email](#)Posted By Charles Gazaway - [email](#)

LOUISVILLE, KY (WAVE) - A free-market think tank and research group, released a report on Monday outlining what they believe is the Kentucky Department of Education's failure to implement promised changes to address continual long-term poor performance in the state's worst schools. The Bluegrass Institute, report entitled "No Child Left Behind-Tier 5 Schools" was released at a news conference in front of the VanHoose Education Center and cites 22 of the 34 tier 5 schools in Kentucky are in Jefferson County.

A tier 5 school in the No Child Left Behind program is a school that has consistently failed to meet adequate yearly progress requirements mandated by the NCLB program for at least six years.

Richard Innes is an education analyst with the Bluegrass Institute and authored the report. He says change is needed in principals and teachers in the schools that consistently fail. "What we are concerned about is there doesn't seem to be any orderly programmed plan to review the performance of these people, taking a look at other factors which may bear on what they're really doing, and then to make some hard choices where it's necessary to bring some new talent in." Change he claims was promised by the Kentucky Department of Education but never happened, even in Jefferson County.

The Bluegrass Institute has joined with a number of black pastors and other groups to form the Kentucky Education Restoration Alliance (KERA) to provide proven solutions to the greatest challenges facing our public schools. Chairman of KERA, Jerry Stephenson, blames the teachers union in Louisville for not allowing the Superintendent to do his job in making changes for the better. "We can no longer allow the influence of the teacher's union to hog tie public education of our children."

Bob Rodosky, JCPS Director of Planning, Research and Accountability, thinks the problem lies within the program itself not within the school board or the unions. "The no child left behind law itself is flawed because it's an all or nothing thing. They're asking schools to basically meet a goal that is twice what the average progress is of an average school like in Kentucky. And so schools don't have a chance because of the arbitrariness of the goals set and the way things are measured."

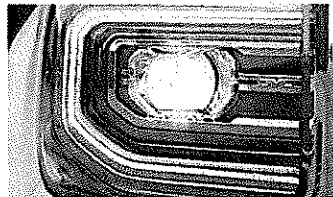
You can see the full Bluegrass Institute report [here](#).

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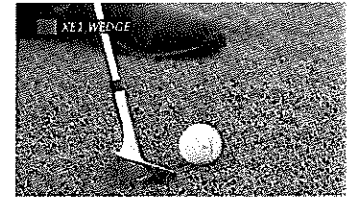
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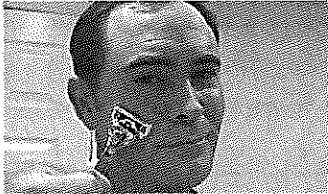


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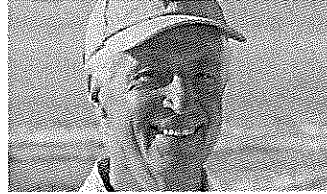


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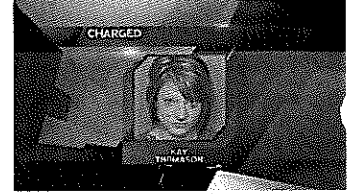


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KY teens watch out: Failing grades means no license

Reporter: [Stuart Peck](#)
New Media Producer: [Rachel Beavin](#)

It's back to the books for students in several Kentucky counties.

A new law takes affect that could affect how they get to school. It's called "No pass, no drive", and may push 16 and 17-year-old students to hit the books a little harder.

Matthew Hudson and Hillary Taylor are both starting their junior year at Daviess County High School. Both Hudson and Taylor agree, they like the idea of a new law that denies students doing poorly in school the right to drive.

Hudson says, "I think it's a good idea, it teaches responsibility it will get students doing what they have to do, because they know they'll have to do it."

Taylor says, "I think it's a really good idea, because it makes kids think twice about how important school is to make good grades."

Under the new law, students will be required to pass the majority of their classes and have fewer than nine unexcused absences to get a drivers license.

David Johnson from Owensboro Public Schools says, "We think it's a great incentive to keep kids not only in school, but to keep them achieving and striving to learn at high levels, and make sure they pass all their classes."

If you already have a drivers licence, you can lose it if you don't make the grade.

Johnson says he knows that driving is a big deal to teens, "I think most of us remember being 16, 17, 18 years old. The license, the drivers license is a big step in their life, it's one of the pieces of freedom that kids really have at that age."

Hudson says athletes have had incentives for years to keep their grades up so why shouldn't all students?

Students will have the ability to appeal their particular situation before a judge if they chose to.

New Media Producer: [Amanda Lents](#)

The "No pass, no drive law" starts Wednesday for teen drivers in Kentucky.

Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds who are identified for academic deficiency, have nine or more unexcused absences from school or who have dropped out will no longer be able to get a driver's permit or license.

Under the new law, teens who already have their permit or license can have it revoked.



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Charter schools offer disproportionate help for the disproportionately needy

MARCH 6, 2016 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



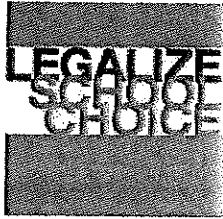
In [this recent op-ed](#) published by Louisville's WLKY-TV as part of a series on public charter schools, Bluegrass Institute president Jim Waters describes these schools as: public, publicly funded, unique, open, inclusive, accountable, autonomous, voluntary, diverse and successful.

See WLKY reporter Ben Jackey's two-part series on charter schools.

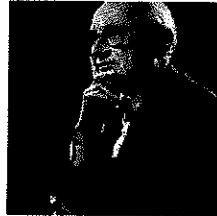
FILED UNDER: [EDUCATION](#) TAGGED WITH: [LEGALIZE SCHOOL CHOICE](#), [PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS](#), [WLKY-TV](#)

Celebrate Friedman's legacy: Go to bat for school choice this Thursday @ Louisville's Slugger Field!

JULY 27, 2015 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



If you haven't registered for the Bluegrass Institute's Friedman Legacy Night at Louisville's Slugger Field, 401 E. Main St., this Thursday, July 30, you may still do so [here](#).



While Dr. Milton Friedman won the Nobel Prize for economics, he and his wife Rose Friedman dedicated much of their lives and treasure to championing the cause of educational liberty, particularly in promoting school

choice for children from low-income families.

Join us for a fun night of baseball, food, fellowship and school choice! It all begins at 6:30 p.m. We will answer your questions about the performance of Kentucky's public-education system and the need for school choice in the Bluegrass State.

One of the characteristics of Dr. Friedman's life that has always impressed me is that while he was a great champion for freedom who was very effective in making the case for free markets and free people, he also *enjoyed* his journey.

So, we the Institute thought it would only be appropriate this year to celebrate the life and legacy of this happy warrior for freedom by having *fun* while we promote the great cause of school choice in Kentucky.

Again, you may register [here](#).

See you at the ballpark!

FILED UNDER: [EDUCATION](#) TAGGED WITH: [FRIEDMAN LEGACY EVENT](#), [LEGALIZE SCHOOL CHOICE](#), [LOUISVILLE SLUGGER FIELD](#)

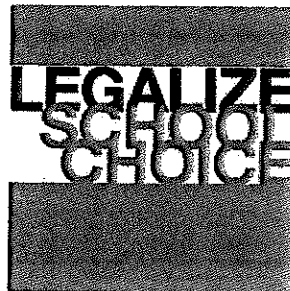
Education reform: Kentucky's 'most urgent priority'

MAY 10, 2014 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

"By almost any measure, children in Kentucky are in an educational crisis and that crisis is most profound for black children." writes new Black Alliance for Educational Options state director Mendell Grinter in today's Lexington Herald-Leader.

Certainly, the Bluegrass Institute's analysis of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicates that, as Grinter puts it: "In the face of such staggering data, the status quo is hard to defend."

While empowering parents — especially low-income, minority parents — to have choices in where they send their children to school might not be the silver bullet that fixes all of Kentucky's education woes, he rightly observes



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that “the current system lacks charters’ ‘do-or-die’ push to succeed.

“Absent any sense of genuine urgency, too many traditional schools have failed to meet students’ needs — year after year — and the students themselves bear the only real repercussions.”

Minter joins the Bluegrass Institute in urging lawmakers to put passage of public charter school legislation on their radars, noting that increasing the educational quality afforded to all children “is our most urgent priority.”

“It’s time we stop propping up failing schools and worrying about adults in the system and started focusing on our children. We need bold, decisive leaders who are willing to put politics and fear aside and put children first,” Minter writes.

Send

FILED UNDER: EDUCATION TAGGED WITH: BAEO, LEGALIZE SCHOOL CHOICE, MENDELL GRINTER, PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Good news! 200 charter schools closed last year

MARCH 7, 2014 BY JIM WATERS [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

The news that 200 public charter schools closed across the nation in 2013 is almost as good as the fact that 600 new such schools — adding 300,000 more students to charter-school classrooms — opened.

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Why?

Because, as Nima Rees, president of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, points out: “it means low-performing charters cannot continue to take students and tax dollars.”

When anti-choice members of Kentucky’s public-education establishment play up the closing of charter schools, they unknowingly make a great case for school choice in the Bluegrass State and answer their own claims that charters are not held accountable.

After all, what speaks of accountability more than closing a failing school? (Incidentally, how many traditional public schools would be forced to close if the same level of accountability were applied to their performance?)

And what speaks to a fear of accountability more than Kentucky educational labor unions’ resistance to bringing charters to the commonwealth, despite support from education Commissioner Terry Holliday?

<http://eagnews.org/charter-school-enrollment-climbs-13-percent/>

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New Report: Does Kentucky’s ‘Unbridled Learning’ school accountability program leave minorities behind?

DECEMBER 6, 2013 BY KELLY SMITH [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

New Report: Does Kentucky's 'Unbridled Learning' school accountability program leave minorities behind?

(LOUISVILLE, Ky.) — A new Bluegrass Institute report reveals evidence that Kentucky's school accountability program provides inconsistent and sometimes unreliable assessments of school performance.

The report, "*Kentucky's 'Unbridled Learning,' Unrigorous School Accountability for African-American Students?*," examines math performance for whites and African-American students in all of Kentucky's schools. Some of the findings are surprising:

- Fayette County's Scapa at Bluegrass' has an African-American middle school math proficiency rate of 9.1 percent is a rate less than half of the statewide rate for this racial group, and far below the 82.1 percent proficiency rate turned in by the schools' white students. Yet despite its dismally low African-American math proficiency rate, Scapa at Bluegrass received a superior Unbridled Learning classification of "Distinguished," ranking the school among the top 10 percent of all schools in Kentucky.

Supposedly, even with overall high scores, Unbridled Learning will tag a school with serious achievement gap problems as a "Focus" school. However, Scapa somehow avoided "Focus" school flagging despite the poor math performance for its African-Americans. This raises concerns that the "Focus" mechanism needs work.

- Latonia Elementary School in Covington was not only identified as a "Proficient" school, a top 30 percent classification, but it also was shown as a "High Progress School" under Unbridled Learning. That is hard to reconcile with the fact that this school's African-American math proficiency dropped from an already dismal 8.8 percent in 2012 to 0.0 percent in 2013. Still, Latonia just got praise from Unbridled Learning. It didn't get a "Focus" flag.
- Danville High School got a "Proficient" rating from Unbridled Learning, supposedly placing this school's performance among the top 30 percent in Kentucky. But Danville's African-American students' math proficiency tumbled from 33.3 percent last year to a depressing 0.0 percent proficiency rate in 2013. The school still dodged becoming "Focus" school, raising more concerns about what Unbridled Learning tells us about this school.
- Overall, the report shows three elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools had 0.0 percent math proficiency rates for their African-American students in 2013. Only five, less than half, of those 11 schools got a "Focus" flag.

"After 23 years of KERA reforms, the idea that Kentucky still has schools turning in single digit, indeed sometimes zero, math proficiency rates is incredibly disappointing," said Richard Innes, staff education analyst at the Bluegrass Institute and author of the new report. "The fact that Unbridled Learning isn't identifying those problems is highly problematic."

Innes called on the Kentucky Department of Education to address such a dramatically low performance by making changes to the Unbridled Learning assessment policy before the next round of results are released after the current school-term ends.

For more information, contact Richard Innes at dinnes@freedomkentucky.com or 859-466-8198 or Bluegrass Institute President Jim Waters at jwaters@freedomkentucky.com or 270-320-4376.

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Is an 'illegal' charter school the secret of Taylor County superintendent's success in reducing dropout rates?

SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 BY [BIPES](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

Taylor County Superintendent Roger Cook proudly announced to everyone's surprise during a recent meeting of the Interim Joint Education Committee that *he is operating an illegal charter school in his district.*

Will the politicians try to stop him – especially considering the fact that not a single student has dropped out of his district during his four years as superintendent, and that more than 60 districts nationwide have already contacted him to find out how he's doing it?

Cook's track record in preventing kids from dropping out cannot be credited to some governor's campaign to spend additional millions of tax dollars to force kids to stay in school until they are 18 years old. Rather, his



success is based on the fact that he doesn't easily give up on a single kid.

Instead the superintendent from Taylor works to tailor the education they receive to the way they learn.

"Nobody for two years has come to ask to drop out at all -- and if they did, I would say 'No, you can't' and I'd put them in my charter school," Cook told the surprised committee members. "Yeah, I have a charter school; it's illegal but we still have all the rules and regulations."

(But just imagine if they didn't "have all the rules and regulations.")

In the past, whenever students have come to him wanting to drop out, Cook told the committee he put them "in this special school -- it's Taylor County Virtual School," where the educational program is created and adapted with children's interests in mind. [Read more...]

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School choice: 'The best chance a poor black kid has to get ahead'

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

In his recent Lexington Herald-Leader op-ed, Dr. Cameron S. Schaeffer offers a litany of actions by big-government progressives and their unintended consequences on minorities from low-income homes and neighborhoods.

Schaeffer writes: "Progressives run the public school systems in this country. At every turn they block school choice, the best chance a poor black kid has to get ahead."

It's certainly true in Kentucky, where failing schools disproportionately affect our most at-risk students.

Yet too many of our legislature's black leaders -- including House Education Committee chairman Derrick Graham, D-Frankfort -- are the very ones standing in the way of allowing parents in poor, minority communities across the commonwealth the opportunity to choose a better education for their children.

That's why the Bluegrass Institute has launched its "Legalize School Choice" campaign to move the school-choice ball down Kentucky's field.

We are distributing fliers in Kentucky neighborhoods with failing schools, which ask parents to contact their elected officials and ask Graham quit preventing a vote on charter schools in the House Education Committee, which also denies all parents in the Bluegrass State the kind of school-choice option available to families in 42 other states and the nation's capital.

Fifty-four percent of children enrolled in charter schools are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. Many of them are getting ahead in places where opponents of school choice have lost the battle, thus confirming Dr. Schaeffer's assertion.

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What happens in Chicago shouldn't stay in Chicago; it should come to Louisville!

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

We often hear from apologists for failing public schools that the reason for low graduation rates is poverty and broken homes. Don't tell that to the successful faculty and student body at Chicago's Urban Prep Academy for Young Men, the nation's first all-male charter school.

For four consecutive years, not only have 100 percent of Urban Prep students graduated from high school, but 100 percent have been accepted at four-year colleges and universities.

More than 120 colleges and universities hand out \$6 million in scholarships to 2013 graduates of Urban Prep academy.

Pretty impressive, isn't it, considering most of these students came from broken homes in impoverished, violent and gang-ridden neighborhoods in the Windy City.

Imagine what could happen with an Urban Prep Academy for Young Men in, say, the city of Louisville's West End -- where results would, no doubt, drown out the excuses that we too often hear.

**LEGALIZE
SCHOOL
CHOICE**
The time is now, Kentucky.

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Frankfort's charter-school roadblock: You can make a difference

SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 BY [JIM WATERS](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

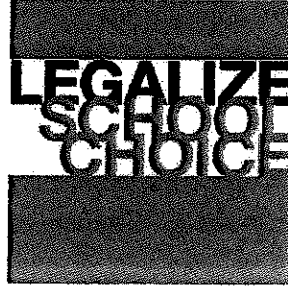
Committee chairmen in the Kentucky House of Representatives can keep the entire body from voting on a bill by not allowing their committees to vote on that bill — an action that must occur before a bill can be voted on by the entire body.

That means House Education Committee Chairman Derrick Graham, D-Frankfort, who has made it unequivocally clear that he opposes public charter schools, can deny all elected representatives the opportunity to vote on charter-school legislation.

Thus by extension, *one politician can deny all Kentucky parents the opportunity* to provide a better education for their children.

That politician needs to hear from your elected representative, which will probably happen after your elected representative hears from you.

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Another school choice option: education debit cards

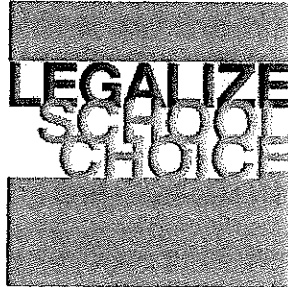
SEPTEMBER 16, 2013 BY [LOGAN MORFORD](#) [1 COMMENT](#)

The most common form of school choice discussed are charter schools. There are other forms of school choice available though, sadly, none of them are legal within Kentucky's borders.

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice just published a [research piece](#) on Arizona's use of Education Savings Accounts.

From the executive summary:

With Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, Arizona has created a model that should be every state policymaker's goal when considering how to improve education: funding students instead of physical school buildings and allowing that funding to follow children to any education provider of choice. Such control over education funding ensures parents have access to options that meet their children's unique learning needs and ultimately can move beyond the worthwhile goal of school choice to choice among education service providers, courses, teachers, and methods.



I don't know about you but **that sounds like a heavy dose of common sense to me.**

You can download the report [here](#). You may also want to [forward this on to your state representative](#).

It is time for Kentucky to **legalize school choice.**

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