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In addition to wrangling over the budget, legislators are addressing many other public education issues. To learn more about the status of education legislation, go to the Kentucky Department of Education’s Web site (www.kentuckyschools.org) and click on the “General Assembly” link. The link will take you to a page of summaries and status reports on proposed elementary and secondary education legislation. This page has a link to the Legislative Research Commission’s “Legislative Record Online,” a daily update of bills, amendments and legislative actions.

Another resource, the Kentucky Legislature Home Page (www.lrc.state.ky.us) provides access to schedules, visitor information, education materials about the legislative process, and a directory of legislators’ names, phone numbers and addresses.

To check the status of a bill by phone, call toll free (888) 829-0021. To leave a message for a legislator, call toll free (800) 372-7181. The TTY number for Kentuckians with hearing impairments is (800) 896-0305.

Mail a letter to any legislator at (Legislator’s Name), Legislative Offices, 701 Capitol Ave., Frankfort, Ky. 40601. Send e-mail to a legislator using this address format: Firstname.lastname@lrc.state.ky.us.

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

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Two national voices speak volumes about public education in Kentucky

By Gene Wilhoit
Commissioner of Education

Those of us with the good fortune to be living and working in Kentucky know how far we’ve come in our efforts to improve our public schools. In the past few months, two thorough and unbiased analyses of the nation’s schools have given high marks to our efforts – and our results.

One analysis came from The Education Trust, an independent, nonprofit organization with a mission to make schools and colleges work for all students. The other came from Education Week, independent national publisher of news and information about K-12 education issues.

Education Trust
In December, The Education Trust reported findings from its first state-by-state analysis of high-poverty and high-minority schools. The report identified more than 4,500 high-poverty or high-minority schools. The schools that scored in the top one-third of all schools on their state assessment in reading or mathematics – or both – in the year 2000. One hundred and thirty schools on their state assessment in reading or mathematics – or both – in the year 2000. One hundred and thirty schools on their state assessment in reading or mathematics – or both – in the year 2000. One hundred and thirty schools on their state assessment in reading or mathematics – or both – in the year 2000. One hundred and thirty schools on their state assessment in reading or mathematics – or both – in the year 2000.

The report, “Dispelling the Myth Revisited,” analyzed the reasons why students at these schools outperformed many of their peers, including those in affluent communities. We can learn much from the schools’ common characteristics:

- Extensive use of state and local standards to design curriculum and instruction, assess student work and evaluate teachers
- Increased instruction time for reading and mathematics
- Substantial investment in professional development for teachers

specific criteria – the percentage of students of specific minorities, for example, or the level of poverty – and get a list of successful schools similar in size or demographics to their own school. What a resource for low-performing schools looking for answers!

Education Week
In January, Education Week released its annual “report card” comparing public education state by state. On that report card, Kentucky was one of only three states to earn an A in learning standards and school accountability. (The others are New York and Maryland. Louisiana, Illinois, Florida and Massachusetts came close with A-minus scores.)

We didn’t score as highly in all areas. We got a B-minus in the level of accountability for student performance. (The others are New York and Maryland. Louisiana, Illinois, Florida and Massachusetts came close with A-minus scores.)

To download a copy of “Dispelling the Myth Revisited,” including state-by-state school achievement and demographic data, go to www.edtrust.org on the Internet. For the interactive database, click on “Dispelling the Myth Online” on that site.

To view “Quality Counts” online, go to www.educationweek.org/ reports/qc02/. To order print copies, check the Web site or phone (800) 346-1834.

Correction
A story in the December-January issue of Kentucky Teacher about two summer learning camps run by the Franklin County school district incorrectly identified Joy Barr of the Kentucky Department of Education as the story’s author. In fact, the author was Wayne Dominick, communications coordinator for Franklin County Public Schools. Kentucky Teacher regrets the error.
Learning takes center stage

Lynn Camp humanities students act, sing and dance their way through Kentucky’s core content

By Beth Dotson Brown
Forward in the Fifth

The students agree that Jill E. Bauer’s humanities class at Lynn Camp High School in Knox County is a lot of fun. They get to dance, put on skits, and brainstorm ideas for props and sets.

As they exercise their creativity and expand their performing talents, they also learn about Shakespeare, the Impressionists and exploration in the middle ages. The class is both fun and closely aligned with Kentucky’s core content. These students learn about important areas in the humanities, then teach others by performing variety-type shows based on what they’ve learned.

Bauer had been teaching humanities and chorus classes in traditional ways. However, since the Kentucky Core Content for Arts and Humanities requires her to present music, art, theater and dance as well, she decided to take a more creative approach to include all of those areas. She planned a new class for 2001-02 and named it “Spectrum.” She auditioned students last spring and chose students based on their interest, dependability and ability to sing. Over the summer, she wrote skits that teach the performers and the audience some of the required core content.

“It’s an enormous amount of work,” Bauer said. She coordinates the students as they learn their lines and explore possibilities for sets and costumes. Lynn Fichaud, a full-time substitute teacher at West Knox Elementary, has volunteered her time to teach students the dances they need to know for some of the skits.

One skit, “Tuxedo Timeout,” features four students and their coach as he gives them a pep talk about dancing the Cha Cha. The skit takes a comic look at how characters Metal, Bruno, Mastif and Lugnut react as the coach tries to motivate them to understand different sorts of movement (locomotive and nonlocomotive) and to dance with their female partners. The skit ends with 10 students performing the Cha Cha.

Junior Aaron Mitchell, who plays the role of the coach in “Tuxedo Timeout,” said he finds this approach to be a fun and entertaining way to learn. Mitchell portrays an artist in another skit that presents an Emmy-Award-like show that recognizes the impressionist artist of the year. “You learn about how impressionistic art isn’t exactly set by the traditional boundaries,” he said.

In another skit, “Unsolved Histories,” fictional character Fernando the Explorer is a dreamer who decides to sail off in a ship when his family in Italy still believes the earth is flat and he could sail right off the edge. Another student performer, Vicki Sullivan, said that students watching the show learn about different cultures.

The group gave its first full performance at the end of November and took the show on the road in December, performing for students in the Monticello Independent district. Other schools and districts can bring the Spectrum performers to their students. The only charge is for the cost of transportation. Spectrum students are busy raising funds for costumes and props and adjusting the skits to get their core-content messages across to their audiences.

Bauer hopes the class will go well enough to make it an annual offering as an applied humanities class. For now, the rehearsals continue as the female dancers get accustomed to dancing in high heels.

This article appeared in “Fast Forward” and is published with permission from Forward in the Fifth, an organization that provides educational opportunities in Kentucky’s Fifth Congressional District. For details about Spectrum, contact Jill E. Bauer at jbauer@knox.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global list) or at (606) 528-5429.
Community gives to students in all the right ways

Elizabethtown business leaders adopt classes to support district standards

By Marlane Youngblood
Elizabethtown Independent Schools

Through months of research, a team of more than 50 Elizabethtown parents, business leaders and educators learned that the brains of young children are enhanced when certain skills such as music, foreign language and critical thinking are introduced.

Armed with new information about the way the brain works, and with strategic planning under way, Elizabethtown Independent Schools began to shape a new program named Vision in Progress. After just two years, educators and others in the community call the program one of the most innovative education plans in the district’s 200-year history.

From the start, Vision in Progress called for an intensive community engagement plan. Since so many of the community leaders participated in the district’s strategic planning committees, it was easy to include them in recruiting local businesses to be partners with local schools. The fact that the businesses were looking for ways to give back to the community paved the way for a win-win scenario and successful partnerships.

The district’s education foundation marketing team began meeting with area CEOs. Team members included Paul Upchurch, the school district’s superintendent; Marlane Youngblood, the district’s media consultant; and arts and humanities coordinator Martha York. They asked the business leaders to come back to school, not with backpacks and schoolbooks but with briefcases and medical bags full of expertise from the world of work.

Businesses that have committed to classroom adoptions have been those in which the employees have a real love for teaching students. Focusing on lessons that are specific to the business world from which they come, the partners provide meaningful activities and rich curriculum.

Hardin Memorial Hospital adopted last year’s kindergarten class – members of Kentucky’s graduating class of 2013 – for a 13-year partnership. After the hospital’s commitment, the number of partnerships grew quickly. In a matter of months, the district had calls from four other businesses. Educators were hesitant to take on that many new partners in such a short time, but they have learned that they were right to proceed.

The school district started out with a plan to recruit one business every year with each incoming class of kindergarten students. Now it has five long-term business partners who are making a positive difference in the lives of students.

Following the hospital’s lead, the other partners – the News-Enterprise newspaper, Elizabethtown City Hall, Altec Industries and Kentucky National Bank – adopted classrooms of students. The business community brings to the schools a wide variety of expertise, interest and commitment. Upchurch said he believes the community is “witnessing a redefinition of the role of business in education.”

Students say learning in a partnership setting is fun. Lexy Hazle and her 150 “Class of 2013” classmates at Morningside Elementary School recently spent a morning with a five-person team from Hardin Memorial Hospital. Lexy said she liked taking part in their discussion about how important it is to be happy and healthy.

Shortly after Elizabethtown City Hall adopted this year’s kindergarten class, Elizabethtown police officers came to school to talk with the students about safety. Using a computer-based identification program thought to be unique to the Elizabethtown area, the officers took a digital photo and electronic fingerprint of each student. They sent the identification information home for parents to keep.

The students look forward to visits from all the various city government departments, including police, fire and engineering. City government’s main goals for the partnership are to teach students citizenship and appreciation for city government, increase student interest in lifelong learning and promote service to community, which these partners are modeling so well.

Teachers say the adoption program authentically connects students to the real world, which can be a challenge for educators.

American schools are moving into the realm of high performance at every level. The business partnerships will help Elizabethtown Independent’s students enter the future with a higher degree of preparedness. With “getting to proficiency” echoing from all corners of Kentucky, business partnerships will help Elizabethtown teachers meet this goal – maybe a long time before year 2014.

Marlane Youngblood is a community relations and media consultant for Elizabethtown Independent Schools and a member of the Kentucky School Public Relations Association. For details about this partnership, contact her at (270) 765-6146 or myoungbl@etown.k12.ky.us.
Magnets do more than attract metal objects. They attract and hold the attention of Morgan Redmond and other 5-year-olds in teacher Nancy Boyd’s science lab at Audubon Elementary in Jefferson County.

Boyd introduces entry-level primary students to science by encouraging them to satisfy their natural curiosity about the world. By exploring common objects in hands-on ways, the students are building a foundation for doing science, learning how science is used, and understanding how science is connected to other things in the world.

This year’s entry-level primary students – Kentucky’s high school graduates of 2014 – are getting off to a strong start in science. Here’s how their learning relates to some of the scientific inquiry and physical science expectations they will encounter during their school years, as outlined in “Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools”:

**Primary:** Students will ask simple scientific questions that can be answered through observations; use simple equipment, tools, skills, technology and mathematics in science investigations; and use evidence from simple scientific investigations and scientific knowledge to develop reasonable explanations. Students will understand that properties (size, shape) of materials can be measured and used to describe, separate or sort objects and that magnets attract and repel each other as well as certain kinds of other materials.

**Grade 4:** Students will design and conduct different kinds of simple scientific investigations; communicate designs, procedures and results of scientific investigations; and review and ask questions about scientific investigations and explanations of other students. Students will understand that electrical currents move through electrical circuits and that electricity in circuits can produce light, heat, sound and magnetic effects.

**Grade 7:** Students will identify and refine questions that can be answered through scientific investigations combined with scientific information; investigate characteristic properties of substances; examine chemical reactions between substances and recognize that the total mass remains the same and that substances are categorized by how they react; use science to evaluate the risks and benefits to society for common activities; and describe the effects of science and technology (such as television and computers) on society.

**High School:** Students will design and conduct different kinds of scientific investigations for a wide variety of reasons; use equipment, tools, techniques, technology and mathematics to improve scientific investigations and communications; use evidence, logic and scientific knowledge to develop and revise scientific explanations and models; analyze atomic structure and electronic forces, and examine nuclear structure, nuclear forces and nuclear reactions (fission, fusion, radioactivity).

For more about what this year’s entry-level primary students are learning, refer to “Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools.” The document is available free of charge online. Go to the Kentucky Department of Education’s Web site (www.kentuckyschools.org) and select “Program of Studies.” It is also available for purchase from the KDE Bookstore. Select “Bookstore” on the department’s Web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or wnewton@kde.state.ky.us.
Welcome back to “New to the ‘Net,” a professional development series for teachers who want to use technology effectively for teaching and learning. In this lesson, expand your skills in using the Kentucky Virtual Library. Your guide is Jeanie Fridell, resource librarian with Jefferson County Public Schools’ Greens Professional Library and Library Media Services.

When you visit the online version of this lesson, you will discover how it can help you meet Standard X of Kentucky’s Experienced Teacher Standards.

To locate this lesson online, go to www.kentuckyschools.org/newt, then click on “Lesson 2.5.”

Lesson 2.5
Kentucky teachers and students have a unique opportunity to tap the vast resources of the Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL), a great resource for research and for teaching reference and Internet skills. This Internet-based tool is available at www.kyvl.org or via the link at the bottom of the Department of Education’s home page at www.kentuckyschools.org.

Kentuckians can use the virtual library directly from any KETS-networked computer in their schools. They can also enter KYVL from their home computers by using the required “ID” and password available from any school or community librarian.

The Kentucky Virtual Library offers reference sources including encyclopedias, magazines and professional journals. From the opening gateway you can learn more about the site’s rich resources.

The Information Skills Tutorial is designed to help the KYVL users develop information literacy and formulate research questions, identify appropriate information sources, search electronic databases, evaluate information and responsibly and ethically cite sources.

The tutorial begins with a guide for individuals who are new to the World Wide Web. The basic and advanced search techniques section provides useful tips for students and adult learners.

Teachers can learn how to help students realize the importance of citing sources in this introductory tutorial.

Many elementary teachers use and enjoy the Searchasaurus search tool. This user-friendly gateway is appealing for young students and fosters creativity. Additional elementary resources include the Grolier Encyclopedia Online, magazines in Spanish and the Kentucky Digital Library of primary historical documents.

The middle school and high school gateways provide catalogs and databases from EBSCO, which features access to more than 120 magazines of interest to middle school students. The school edition includes full-text articles from more than 460 general-interest and current-event magazines. More than 159 newspapers with regional, national and international articles are available, plus health information from other online databases. Biographies and NovelList help students with school assignments and free-time reading.

The KYVL for Teachers area includes pages designed to help Kentucky’s K-12 educators locate and evaluate high-quality Web-based resources for instruction and professional development. Educators working on higher degrees will be “WOWed” with the improved features of ERIC documents. Databases available from the teacher’s area include ProQuest, FirstSearch and NovelList.

Web sites with content connections enable teachers in arts and humanities, mathematics, practical living/vocational studies, reading, science, social studies and writing to explore excellent, content-based Web sites. The KYVL for Teachers site enables teachers to locate books not in their own school libraries, select from Kentucky Library Catalogs and locate books in Kentucky public, business or university libraries.

“New to the ‘Net” started in the August 2000 issue of Kentucky Teacher. If you need copies of printed lessons, go to www.kentuckyschools.org/newt and click on the link to each Kentucky Teacher issue or send a request to Kentucky Teacher, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us.

Susan Lancaster of the Department of Education’s Division of School Instructional Technology is the mentor for this year’s “New to the ‘Net” series. E-mail your questions, comments and ideas to her at slancast@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list), or phone her at (502) 564-7168, extension 4542.

Newt’s moving! The little green mascot for the “New to the ‘Net” professional development series is leaving the Department of Education’s home page on the Web to make room for new information. To locate the complete “New to the ‘Net” series, go to www.kentuckyschools.org/newt or select “New to the ‘Net” in the drop-down menu on the home page.
Students get kicks out of HERO program

Tae Kwon Do classes teach Clark Elementary students respect and self-control

By Joy Barr
Kentucky Department of Education

Eleven-year-old Justin Garnett used to look at the ground when he was asked a question. Now he confidently looks adults in the eye when he answers, “Yes, ma’am” or “Yes, sir.”

The change in behavior came after he began taking Tae Kwon Do classes. He and 14 other students at Paducah Independent’s Clark Elementary School are members of the after-school HERO club. HERO stands for Helping Everyone Reach Outcomes. In a partnership between the school and a local business, chief instructor Ray Watkins and assistant Jason Strohkirch of Hwang’s Martial Arts in Lone Oak teach the Tae Kwon Do classes. Funding for the program comes from the Kids Company One Family Resource Center and various local sources.

“You get to exercise and learn new steps and techniques,” said Garnett, a 5th-grader. “It changed the way I act and the way I had an attitude and fought with people.”

HERO club sponsor Karen Armstrong, who teaches 1st grade at Clark Elementary, started the program by taking six students to summer classes at Hwang’s Martial Arts. Nine more students joined after-school sessions in September.

The students had exhibited discipline problems at school, noted Armstrong, who also participates in the classes. “We’re trying to prevent children from being suspended from school,” she said. “There really has been an improvement. Suspensions in this group of students have decreased about 20 percent, and much credit is given to the Tae Kwon Do program.”

She said some people mistakenly assume “that if the students get good at kicking, they’ll go to school and kick people. However, the program teaches them self-control and discipline. It is the ultimate goal to have this self-control carry over at school.”

Sara West, principal at Clark Elementary, and Jay Buckley, assistant principal, used behavior referrals to select the students who participate in the program. “We wanted to find a way to keep the students in school,” West said. “It has been noted by some of the teachers that student achievement has increased with this group of students. We also have had fewer disciplinary problems.”

Most of the students have earned the white belt, the first level of achievement, which means they have learned respect. Some have achieved yellow (second level) and orange (third level) belts.

Armstrong believes the belts signify success for the students. “I want to keep this going until all of them have black belts,” she said. “I won’t let them quit. We’re going to keep it up and add more students. Other schools have expressed interest in it, too.”

In fact, students from the district’s Cooper-Whiteside Elementary recently joined Clark Elementary students in the HERO program.

Garnett, who has an orange belt, has even higher aspirations. “I want to go as far as Instructor Ray,” he said. Ray has a fourth-degree black belt.

The students now have a touring demonstration team. Each student who receives fewer than five marks for inappropriate behavior in school for a one-week period can participate. The team goes to various schools to give Tae Kwon Do presentations. Armstrong said the students consider participation in this program a reward, “something they can work toward that the other students cannot.”

Armstrong says she sees positive results from HERO but wants to be realistic in her assessment. “We as teachers are sometimes asked to give instant proof that a program works,” she said. “I can see that some of the (participating) students have made incredible improvements in behavior and achievement, while others still have a long way to go. We will need to follow these students for years to come to see if the martial arts will make a difference over the long term.”

For more information about the HERO program at Clark Elementary, contact Karen Armstrong at (270) 444-5730 or karmstro@paducah.k12.ky.us.
A year ago, Principal Marilyn Ruth Montgomery and teachers at Middle Fork Elementary cringed when they heard the words “Level 3 school.” It was demoralizing, Montgomery said, to be identified as a faculty member at a school that scored in the lowest one-third of all schools taking the 2000 Kentucky Core Content Tests.

Today, those same Magoffin County educators are being identified for a different reason. After hitting what most agree was their lowest point as educators, the teachers – and their students – have bounced back with a vengeance.

As the saying goes, they took lemons and made lemonade. The school’s 4th- and 5th-graders posted a 24.1-point increase in test scores on the spring 2001 state tests, one of the largest increases recorded in the state.

Montgomery and the teachers at Middle Fork can’t point to one reason for the dramatic upswing in test scores. However, they do know that the state’s scholastic audit process, the audit team’s recommendations and the help of highly skilled educator Susan Nichols combined to help the staff and students make changes that resulted in higher test scores.

“The audit was good for me as a principal,” said Montgomery, now in her third year as the school’s leader, “and good for the staff. It has made us focus on the students first.”

As required, every Level 3 school in Kentucky received a scholastic audit last winter. An audit team observed and evaluated each school’s teaching practices, learning environment and academic performance. Each team recommended “next steps” for improvement.

Nichols, a middle school science teacher from the Russell Independent district, was the highly skilled educator on the Middle Fork Elementary audit team. She remains at the school to help teachers implement the team’s recommendations and to serve as a resource for the faculty.

When she arrived at Middle Fork, Nichols said, teachers were aware of Kentucky’s Core Content and Program of Studies but used textbooks rather than the Kentucky-specific curriculum documents to drive their instruction. Most teachers taught behind closed doors and rarely collaborated on instruction. They also didn’t have high expectations for their students, Nichols observed.

Intermediate teacher Melinda Owens (standing) and Susan Nichols, the highly skilled educator assigned to Middle Fork Elementary, ask students about their mathematics computations during a classroom activity.

Alexis Minix glues pieces of paper into a three-dimensional shape as upper primary teacher Dennita Patrick (kneeling) helps Middle Fork student Jenna Patrick work on a different shape.
Setting priorities for change

The faculty decided on three priorities for the 2000-01 school year:
1. teaching core content
2. setting higher expectations for students
3. making students accountable for their learning.

Teachers began making instructional changes by looking at what and how they were teaching, Nichols said. They developed lesson plans using Kentucky’s core content and program of studies.

Through this process, upper primary teacher Dennita Patrick said, “I realized I probably didn’t focus enough on core content and how I delivered the concepts to my students. This reinforced for all of us what we weren’t doing and what we needed to do.”

The faculty rearranged schedules with common planning times and found ways to embed professional development in their jobs. Content specialists now provide training after school and return the next day to work with teachers in their classrooms and during planning periods.

“We’re doing so much,” said Melinda Owens, who teaches mathematics, science and writing to 4th- and 5th-graders, “but we’re not working harder, we’re working smarter. The difference is we’re more focused in everything we do. The whole staff is working together.”

Working together led to other changes at Middle Fork. Teachers opened their doors and began sharing teaching strategies. At every grade-level, teachers took responsibility for 4th- and 5th-grade assessment. Some asked for new teaching assignments for 4th- and 5th-graders assessment. Some asked for new teaching assignments for 4th- and 5th-graders.

Owens said she had just hit a wall and needed someone like Susan Nichols, or teachers Dennita Patrick or Melinda Owens at (606) 349-3398 or by e-mail through the KETS global list. To learn more about the scholastic audit/review process, contact Tom Peterson in the Office of Leadership and School Improvement at (502) 564-2116 or tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

FEBRUARY 2002

9

Student Accountability

Everybody talks about it. Middle Fork Elementary makes it happen, with positive results.

A vital factor in an academic turn-around at Magoffin County’s Middle Fork Elementary is how teachers are excelling students about learning at high levels. Principal Marilyn Ruth Montgomery says that getting to proficiency and beyond is now a responsibility shared by everyone, including the students. Teachers and students alike “talk the talk and walk the walk.” In class, teachers discuss core content in terms of what students are expected to learn. “We were killing ourselves teaching,” said intermediate-grades teacher Melinda Owens, “and the students were just floating along. This makes them more accountable for their learning.”

Middle Fork students know what novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished work looks like, and they use that knowledge to set personal goals on assignments. Teachers show students strategies for achieving at their highest levels, becoming better writers and sharpening their critical thinking skills. Through school- and PTA-sponsored events, parents, too, are learning about core content, performance categories and academic performance standards.

“We didn’t have high enough expectations of our students,” said primary teacher Dennita Patrick. “Susan (Nichols, a Department of Education highly skilled teacher assigned to assist with the school’s improvement efforts) showed us we need to push a little harder. Now students are more excited about learning. They have a goal to reach, and they are striving to keep working toward it.”

Students agree. “You push us more, and we learn more!” explained 5th-grader Jacob Chiow.

Students want to achieve

To make students more accountable, Nichols said, “We’re really working smarter by making all of our students aware of what they will have to do to reach proficiency,” Owens said. “By the time today’s primary students are 4th- and 5th-graders, they will have been using these strategies for years.”

Knowing these strategies has paid dividends. This fall, 39 intermediate students received trophies for proficient and distinguished work on the 2001 Kentucky Core Content Tests. The school’s “Hall of Fame” lists the names of high-achieving students. Montgomery prominently displays distinguished student work on the “Principles’ Pride Board.” Photos of the honored students accompany their work.

The desire to achieve runs high at Middle Fork Elementary from the principal’s office to the Head Start classrooms, thanks to changes put in motion in response to the Level 3 designation.

“A lot of the things we’ve done were not big things that teachers couldn’t have done in their classrooms without direction from a highly skilled educator. We had just hit a wall and needed someone like Susan (Nichols) to point out places we could improve,” said Owens, the intermediate teacher. “Many of the things we did to improve our instruction were simple, like re-focusing the way we taught a concept to address different learning styles.”

Want to know more about Middle Fork?

Contact Principal Marilyn Ruth Montgomery, distinguished educator Susan Nichols, or teachers Dennita Patrick or Melinda Owens at (606) 349-3398 or by e-mail through the KETS global list.

To learn more about the scholastic audit/review process, contact Tom Peterson in the Office of Leadership and School Improvement at (502) 564-2116 or tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

Core Content Tests

Setting priorities for change

The faculty decided on three priorities for the 2000-01 school year:
1. teaching core content
2. setting higher expectations for students
3. making students accountable for their learning.

Teachers began making instructional changes by looking at what and how they were teaching, Nichols said. They developed lesson plans using Kentucky’s core content and program of studies.

Through this process, upper primary teacher Dennita Patrick said, “I realized I probably didn’t focus enough on core content and how I delivered the concepts to my students. This reinforced for all of us what we weren’t doing and what we needed to do.”

The faculty rearranged schedules with common planning times and found ways to embed professional development in their jobs. Content specialists now provide training after school and return the next day to work with teachers in their classrooms and during planning periods.

“We’re doing so much,” said Melinda Owens, who teaches mathematics, science and writing to 4th- and 5th-graders, “but we’re not working harder, we’re working smarter. The difference is we’re more focused in everything we do. The whole staff is working together.”

Working together led to other changes at Middle Fork. Teachers opened their doors and began sharing teaching strategies. At every grade-level, teachers took responsibility for 4th- and 5th-grade assessment. Some asked for new teaching assignments for 4th- and 5th-graders.

Owens said she had just hit a wall and needed someone like Susan Nichols, or teachers Dennita Patrick or Melinda Owens at (606) 349-3398 or by e-mail through the KETS global list. To learn more about the scholastic audit/review process, contact Tom Peterson in the Office of Leadership and School Improvement at (502) 564-2116 or tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).
Need more teachers? Try growing your own!

By Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

While education advocates everywhere are sounding the alarm about a dwindling supply of K-12 teachers, some Kentucky schools are taking steps toward meeting the local demand. They’re growing their own!

These schools are identifying students with the potential to become effective teachers and giving them opportunities to try teaching on a small scale. Those opportunities often come through school-based chapters of Future Educators of America (FEA).

FEA, sponsored by Phi Delta Kappa International professional educators’ organization, invites middle school and high school students to explore careers in education. Many of today’s teachers were members of another organization, Future Teachers of America (FTA), when they were in high school. That organization was so effective in recruiting students into the profession that the supply of teachers began to exceed demand. That organization was so effective that teachers and those who could become effective teachers and giving them opportunities to try teaching on a small scale. Those opportunities often come through school-based chapters of Future Educators of America (FEA).

FEA’s national focus is on two groups: students who want to become teachers and those who would become great teachers but haven’t considered the profession. Participating Kentucky schools also focus on a third group: underachieving but capable students who can succeed with the right motivation and career goals.

Last year, Madison Central High School teachers Ella Campbell and Bari Conder started an FEA chapter to introduce interested students to opportunities in teaching. A high percentage of the chapter’s participants represent minority populations.

“This is significant,” Campbell says, “because in Kentucky we have a shortage of minority teachers.”

Some participants are students who don’t join other clubs, she said.

“We call ourselves an organization, not a club, because ‘organization’ sounds more open and inclusive.”

Campbell and Conder encourage students to reach for the grade-point averages they will need to enter teacher preparation programs at Kentucky colleges and universities. The seniors mentor each other in their quest for higher grades. They visit college campuses and investigate scholarship opportunities.

Several activities introduce the students to teaching. For example, in a “book buddies” program at Daniel Boone Elementary, FEA members listen to the younger students read and then discuss the stories with them to help with reading skills and reading comprehension.

“I want them to get a feel for what teaching is really like so they can decide if teaching is for them,” Campbell said. “I want to dispel the myth that teaching is really like so they can decide if teaching is for them.”

Before they complete their second year, students mentor each other in their quest for higher grades. They visit college campuses and investigate scholarship opportunities. They visit college campuses and investigate scholarship opportunities. They visit college campuses and investigate scholarship opportunities.

The FEA members love it! At the elementary level, they read, they play, they wipe noses and dry tears. Last year, a couple of the students continued to help the teachers even after the initial experience was over. They got a great look at what teaching is all about."

At Pulaski County High School, teacher Jackie Rogers guides a group of students in the school’s second year of FEA activities. Rogers sees FEA as an opportunity to focus on the quantity and the quality of future teachers.

“We need to encourage those who would be ‘good’ teachers to take up the torch,” she said. “I want our top students to realize that teaching is a wonderful profession as worthy of serious consideration as any other career.”

Like most FEA sponsors, Rogers wants more information about chapter successes in other schools in Kentucky and the nation. For now, she strives to encourage membership by making chapter activities both instructive and fun. She took 40 students to Eastern Kentucky University’s Future Teacher Day last year.

“We are also giving our club Greek letters and putting them on rugby shirts to give it more of a college feel,” she said. “The kids love it!”

Tyresha Jackson, Magan Kenney and Jamie Hislope are three of the students at Madison Central High who participate in Future Educators of America to explore the possibility of careers in teaching.
‘Future Educators’ chapters set out to solve the teacher shortage. Along the way, they’ve become tools for boosting student learning and closing the achievement gap.

Do the math
(Kentucky data for the 2000-01 school year)

Number of public school teachers working full-time (or equivalent): 40,790
Number of teachers eligible for retirement: 13,460
Average number of teachers retiring each year: 2,500
Number of emergency certificates issued: * 1,432
Number of graduates of teacher education programs: 2,356
Projected number of teacher education program graduates:
2001-02 – 2,403
2002-03 – 2,451
2003-04 – 2,500

* The Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board issues emergency certificates to permit districts to fill positions for which no certified teacher is available.
Source: Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board

Want FEA in your school?

According to Jim Fogarty, associate executive director of Phi Delta Kappa International, Kentucky has 47 chartered FEA chapters (13 in middle schools and 34 in high schools) and more than 200 operating clubs that have not officially joined FEA. Nationally, 2,000 clubs have an estimated 45,000 members.

Want to consider FEA in your school? Start with these steps:

• Learn more about Future Educators of America by reviewing information at www.pdkintl.org (click on “FEA”).
• Talk with others locally to generate interest in starting a chapter.
• Examine local needs, discuss how a chapter can help meet those needs, and begin to involve students in planning.
• Talk with FEA sponsors and student participants at schools with FEA chapters, or contact Carol Gabbard, FEA project manager for Eastern Kentucky University, at cgabbard@email.com or (859) 623-6339.
• Contact Phi Delta Kappa International and request the 175-page handbook for advisors. The cost is $25 plus shipping. Check the Web site, write to the organization at P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789, or call (812) 339-1156 or (800) 766-1156.

‘Cheerleader’ Gabbard rallies support for future-teacher efforts in Kentucky

In Kentucky, the head cheerleader for the Future Educators of America program may be Carol Gabbard. Attracting promising secondary students to the teaching profession is both her job and her mission.

Speaking as a recruiter of education majors for Eastern Kentucky University, a member of the Kentucky Board of Education and the board’s representative on the Kentucky P-16 Council, Gabbard says two things are certain:

• Kentucky’s demand for qualified and committed teachers is bigger than the supply.
• The supply will shrink even further unless Kentucky takes immediate and effective steps to recruit and train more teachers.

“Local school districts tell me they get only a handful of applications for teacher openings when at one time they received as many as 80,” she said. “At the same time, we have the highest number of teacher retirees ever. One-third of our teaching force is eligible for retirement right now. Where will we get teachers to replace them?”

Gabbard promotes FEA as an effective tool for stimulating interest in teaching, especially in rural areas. “When young people in those communities go away to college and want to return home to work, teaching is the best – sometimes the only – professional job option they have,” she said.

She recommends a focused sequence of teacher preparation programs, starting at the middle school level. The sequence would have four tiers:

• FEA organizations encouraged or required in all middle and high schools.
• Teacher academy or high school programs offering education classes for future teachers and opportunities for field experiences, perhaps with provisions for dual high school and college credit.
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• Teacher academy or high school programs offering education classes for future teachers and opportunities for field experiences, perhaps with provisions for dual high school and college credit.

‘In a Future Issue . . .
Jefferson County Public Schools began its Minority Teacher Recruitment Project in 1986 at the college level and extended it into the high schools two years later. In the 2002-03 school year, Jefferson County will launch a future-teacher magnet program offering high school classes in education theory and practice, teacher shadowing and field experience. In a future issue, Kentucky Teacher will spotlight the success of Jefferson County’s project.

www.kentuckyschools.org

Kentucky Teacher • FEBRUARY 2002
KTLC, March 7-9
Conference expands to offer more than 300 sessions and 220 exhibits on education ideas and issues

The focus will be on success for all students at this year’s Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference, scheduled for March 7-9 at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. Under the event’s “Pathways to Proficiency” theme, more than 300 sessions and 220 vendor exhibits will offer strategies for teaching and learning in all content areas and all grade levels.

KTLC Program Chair Charlotte Chowning says this year’s event will include something for everyone, from P-16 educators and administrators to media and technology specialists, school and district office personnel, parents, school council members and student technology leaders. This year’s agenda will also cover issues such as equity, achievement gaps, reading initiatives and technology-supported learning. One strand will feature “Technology Programs that Work,” spotlighting heavily researched technology strategies that have been proven to increase student learning.

Another plus this year, Chowning said, is a more comprehensive approach to education equity and closing the achievement gap. The Department of Education’s Division of Equity has planned two mini-conferences within KTLC: Title IX Academics, Athletics, and Gender Equity: Looking Toward the Future; and The Equity Environment.

Once again, the conference will feature several nationally acclaimed education experts plus exhibits sponsored by more than 220 hardware, software and adaptive technology companies; technology and distance learning consultants; curriculum materials developers and other vendors. Agenda and registration information is available online through the conference Web site at www.kentuckyschools.org/ktlc or from Roseanne Wise at (502) 564-7168 or rwise@kde.state.ky.us.

What’s New?
Get month-by-month tips and ideas online

Each month, the Kentucky Department of Education’s “What’s New?” Web page offers links to annual celebrations, historic events and biographical information on interesting people. “What’s New?” also links to news about conferences, education publications, lesson plans and classroom activities.

The “What’s New?” editor, Faun S. Fishback, updates the page weekly. To find this resource, click on the “What’s New?” icon on the department’s home page (www.kentuckyschools.org) or go directly to www.kentuckyschools.org/shared/whatsnew/.

“What’s New?” for March will include links to resources related to these events:

• National Women’s History Month – The National Women’s History Project (www.nwhp.org/) offers biographical information about famous women. Women in History (www.womeninworldhistory.com/) has biographies, lessons and samples of curricula.

• National Nutrition Month – This year’s theme is “Start Today for a Healthy Tomorrow.” Visit www.eatright.org/nmn/nmn02fact.html.


• National Music in Our Schools Month – The National Association for Music Education offers lesson plans and activities, including the “world’s largest concert” scheduled for 1 p.m. (EST) on March 14 on PBS. Learn more at www.teachervision.com/lesson-8591.html.

• Read Across America Day – Join honorary chairperson Garth Brooks on March 1 to celebrate reading and the birthday of children’s book author Dr. Seuss. Find information and ideas at www.nea.org/readacross/.


• St. Patrick’s Day – Learn more at www.historychannel.com/exhibits/stpatricksday/.

KET program to feature Kentucky Teacher photographer McComb

A segment of KET’s “Kentucky Life” program on March 23 will feature Kentucky Teacher photographer Rick McComb and showcase his award-winning work. McComb has captured images of public education throughout the state since 1978.

In the 4- to 5-minute segment, McComb tells why he sometimes “takes pictures” without any film in his camera and how he selected the photos for his “Faces of Reform” award-winning exhibit. A KET crew follows McComb on the job as he photographs students in their classrooms.

KET broadcasts “Kentucky Life” each Saturday at 8-30 p.m. (ET). Check local listings to determine the correct television channel in your area.
Science Center announces two teacher institutes

The Louisville Science Center will offer two summer institutes to help teachers teach science content through hands-on labs that stimulate creativity and learning. Both institutes provide content aligned with Kentucky’s Core Content for Assessment and student performance standards.

The Early Childhood Institute, designed for teachers of students in the 4-8 age range, will be July 15-19. The Teacher Institute, for teachers of grades 3-8, will be July 22-26.

Teachers can attend as many days as they want and may choose from various content areas in the life, health, physical, space and natural sciences. The institute faculty will include board members of the Kentucky Science Teachers Association, local chemists, meteorologists, classroom teachers and science coordinators from the Louisville Science Center.

To request more information or register, phone (800) 591-2203, extension 6567, and ask for the workshop coordinator. Information is also available at www.louisvillescience.org.

www.kentuckyschools.org

Kentucky Teacher • FEBRUARY 2002
Certification records now posted online

Educators and the general public now have online access to certification records held by the Education Professional Standards Board.

Through the board’s new “Teacher Certification Inquiry” (TCI) service, the public can search certification records by educator name, school or district. TCI lists valid certificates and endorsements held by a teacher or administrator and what jobs those certificates allow that educator to do in Kentucky’s public schools.

Using the new service, parents and others can easily check a teacher or administrator’s certification record online. While this information has always been public record, citizens previously had to request it by phone or in writing.

The service also simplifies the process for district personnel seeking certification information for hiring and assignment purposes. TCI lists the subjects and grade ranges a teacher or administrator has the board’s permission to teach or oversee.

The site does not release to the public any personal information such as addresses, Social Security numbers, telephone numbers or certification test scores. A secure portion of the site includes details administrators need for hiring and assignment purposes, but that portion is accessible only through a log-in code supplied by the Education Professional Standards Board staff.

For public access to this new service, click on the TCI link on the board’s home page at www.kentuckyschools.org/otec/epsb.

For access to secured information, school district administrators may request a log-in code from Paula Kinsolving at (502) 564-9479 or pkinsolv@kde.state.ky.us. TCI is not the board’s official record. To request an official record, contact Allison Weber at (502) 573-4606 or aweber@kde.state.ky.us.

An educator who finds an inaccurate listing may contact Janet Banta at (502) 573-4606 or jbanta@kde.state.ky.us to request a comparison with official records.

66 Kentucky teachers earn national certification in 2001

Sixty-six Kentucky teachers took and passed a rigorous process to earn certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) during 2000-01. According to the state’s Education Professional Standards Board, Kentucky now has 145 teachers with NBPTS certification.

Candidates for this credential develop portfolios demonstrating their teaching and students’ work, and they complete a daylong assessment center process. NBPTS evaluates teachers on their content knowledge, effectiveness in teaching, and ability to manage and measure student learning. Candidates generally spend 200-300 hours completing the certification process while continuing to teach full-time.

In 2000, the Kentucky General Assembly provided incentives to support experienced teachers pursuing national board certification. These incentives include a $400 stipend and five release days during the school year for them to work on their portfolios and prepare for the assessments and, for successful candidates, a 75 percent reimbursement of the $2,300 application fee and a $2,000 annual salary supplement.

Kentucky’s goal is to have at least one NBPTS-certified teacher in every public school by 2020.

For more information, including state-by-state lists of teachers with NBPTS certification, visit www.nbpts.org on the Internet. (Note: The site lists 141 NBPTS-certified teachers for Kentucky. Four others who now teach in Kentucky are listed with the states in which they taught when they received national certification.) Information is also available from Kevin Skeeter of the Education Professional Standards Board. Phone (502) 573-4606 or send e-mail to kskeeter@kde.state.ky.us.

Beijing to host two education conferences

Education professionals from the U.S and China will gather for two conferences in Beijing in July to exchange ideas and best practices in K-12 education:

• The First China–U.S. Conference on Physical Education – July 16-19
• The Sixth China–U.S. Conference on Education. July 24-27

Deadlines have passed for submitting papers and presentation proposals for these conferences, but organizers encourage interested professionals in Kentucky to contact them immediately to inquire about deadline extensions.

For details about the conferences and related travel and lodging packages, contact Global Interactions at (602) 906-8886, check the Web at www.globalinteractions.org, or send e-mail to info@globalinteractions.org.
New exhibit looks at 200 years of fashion

The Kentucky History Center in Frankfort features a new exhibit, “A Dressing Change: Clothing and Fashion in Kentucky,” on view from Feb. 23 through June 9. The exhibit illustrates how fashion has changed over the past 200 years and explores the factors that led to those changes, from technological innovations to evolving gender roles. The exhibit includes interactive elements. To schedule a school group visit, contact Carol McGurk at (502) 564-1792, ext. 4416, or carol.mcgurk@mail.state.ky.us. Learn more about the History Center by visiting the Kentucky Historical Society’s Web site at www.kyhistory.org.

Stock Market Game training available online

The Kentucky Council on Economic Education offers Stock Market Game training for teachers through online professional development offered by the Kentucky Virtual High School (www.kvhs.org). The game is an investment education tool that can be integrated into most core content areas for students in grades 5 through 12. The cost of the online session is $100. For information about the training, contact Carol McGurk at (502) 893-4229 or info@econky.win.net. Learn more about Kentucky Virtual High School professional development courses, contact Bob Fortney at bfortney@kvhs.org.

KYSGRA spring retreat set for April

This year’s Kentucky School Public Relations Association spring retreat will be April 25 and 26 at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort in Lexington. Deadline for registration and room reservations is April 1. A fee of $50 for members and $75 for non-members covers participation and three meals. To register or request details, go to www.kyspra.com online or contact Lauren Roberts, Jefferson County Public Schools, at (502) 485-3357 or lroberts1@jefferson.k12.ky.us.

Science Center has health education program

The After School Physical Improvement Regional Effort (ASPIRE) invites Kentucky middle schools to send up to 100 students each to the Louisville Science Center to increase their knowledge about cardiovascular and physical health. A daylong program includes access to the new life sciences, health and wellness exhibit “The World Within Us”; viewing of the IMAX film “The Human Body”; a hands-on cardiovascular laboratory experiment; a physical activity of yoga, dance or kickboxing; and a healthful snack. For more information, contact Lindsey Tucker at the Louisville Science Center at (502) 561-6100 or lindseyt@louky.org, or visit www.louisvillescience.org on the Internet.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is recruiting teacher-ambassadors

In conjunction with the 20th anniversary of The Wall, the national memorial to those who served with the U.S. Armed Forces in Vietnam, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund hopes to recruit two teachers from each state to serve as ambassadors in their home states. Selected teachers will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington D.C. for a four-day conference on creative ways to teach students about Vietnam-era history. The teachers will then share what they learn with other teachers in their home states. The application deadline is March 22. For details, visit www.vvmf.org online. To ask questions or obtain an application, contact the Memorial Fund at (202) 393-0090 or tedwards@vvmf.org.

Arts education showcases set for March

The Kentucky Center for the Arts has planned arts education showcases at several sites in March. These one-day events familiarize Kentucky educators with performing and visual artists, arts organizations and cultural institutions available as resources for schools. Participants will see stage performances and exhibits and receive an arts education resource directory. The registration fee is $7 per person. The showcases will take place at the following sites:

- March 6 - Bomhard Theatre, Louisville
- March 11 - Singletary Center for the Arts, Crestview Hills
- March 12 - Thomas More College, Crestview Hills
- March 15 - Ashland Community College, Ashland
- March 18 - Appalshop, Whitesburg
- March 25 - Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green

Showcase planners have mailed registration brochures to all school principals. For additional brochures, contact Jeffrey Jamner at (502) 562-0703 or jjamner@kca.org. For information and a registration form, view www.kentuckycenter.org/education/artseducation.asp on the Web.
Kentucky Teacher

In this issue ...

Education funding remains a priority ................. 1
Two national voices speak highly of Kentucky schools 2
Learning takes center stage at Lynn Camp ............. 3
E-town leaders adopt K-12 classes ....................... 4
Class of 2014 gets strong start in science .............. 5
New to the ‘Net Lesson 2.5: Let’s revisit the Kentucky Virtual Library .......... 6
Paducah students get kicks out of HERO program ... 7
Test scores rebound in a big way at Middle Fork .... 8
Need more teachers? Try growing your own! ......... 10
More news and opportunities for teachers ............ 12-15

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NATURAL ATTRACTION – Eric Burman explores the mysteries of magnetism at Audubon Traditional Elementary School in Jefferson County. He and his primary classmates are getting off to a good start toward learning what they need to know in science. See Page 5.

“Those of us with the good fortune to be living and working in Kentucky know how far we’ve come in our efforts to improve our public schools. In the past few months, two thorough and unbiased analyses of the nation’s schools have given high marks to our efforts — and our results.”

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit on Kentucky’s positive showing in two recent national reports. See Page 2.