Board proposes some limits for snacking during school day

By Cathy Lindsey
cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

Kentucky students soon may have limited opportunities to purchase snacks high in fat and sugar content during the school day. The change in the type of snacks offered in public schools is part of a proposed state regulation the Kentucky Board of Education approved at its August meeting.

A public hearing will be held on the proposed regulation on Sept. 23 at 11 a.m. in the State Board Room of the Capital Plaza Tower in Frankfort. Individuals interested in being heard at this meeting shall notify the Kentucky Department of Education in writing five working days prior to the hearing. (For more information about the hearing, go to www.education.ky.gov and enter “Legal and Legislative Services” in the keyword/search box and click.)

The proposed regulation must then receive legislative approval before it takes effect.

In an effort to curb childhood obesity in the state, the 2005 Kentucky General Assembly passed a school nutrition law mandating healthier choices in school cafeterias and vending machines.

The law also limits the sale of retail fast foods in elementary schools to one day a week and requires elementary schools to develop a daily physical activity plan for students.

In the proposed regulation, the Kentucky Department of Education developed minimum nutritional standards for food and beverages sold outside the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs. This includes items in vending machines, school stores, canteens or the a la carte line in cafeterias.

The proposed standards would stop the sale of certain beverages from 30 minutes after lunch to the end of the school day. Low-fat milk, 100 percent fruit juice and plain or flavored water that is non-carbonated and non-caloric would be permitted. The regulation would allow students access to drinks with caffeine.

Food items that have more than 30 percent calories from fat, 10 percent calories from saturated fat and/or 32 percent calories from sugar would no longer be available to students, according to the proposed regulation. Students would still be permitted to bring such items to school from home.

Teachers still would be permitted to give food items to classroom treats.

In a continued discussion of restructuring high schools, the board reviewed high school graduation requirements. The board considered the need to expand and strengthen those requirements to meet

K TLC ’06 offers Kentucky educators ‘Pathways to Proficiency’

The Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference’s reputation as the primary professional development event for Kentucky educators remains intact as the conference planning team gears up for K TLC ’06. The three-day event, March 9-11, 2006, in Louisville, will offer meaningful and useful learning opportunities for teachers, principals, superintendents and other educators.

Sessions and workshops at the conference will address a wide range of topics and issues that have an impact on teaching and learning. National and state education experts will showcase best practices in schools.

Staff from the Kentucky Department of Education’s Office of Teaching and Learning (formerly called the Office of Academic and Professional Development) will conduct several sessions around the refined Core Content for Assessment. There also will be sessions on the department’s reforming secondary education initiative to showcase innovative middle and high school programs and to provide schools and districts with the information they need.

In response to a recent survey, the conference is adding more hands-on workshops and sessions to help educators integrate technology throughout the curriculum. Teachers who are effectively using technology in their classrooms will be sharing their strategies at the conference, said Thelma Whiteside, conference coordinator.

Educators interested in sharing about their successful teaching practices are encouraged to submit a proposal to present at the conference. Each main presenter receives one complimentary conference registration.

The deadline for submitting a proposal to present at the conference has

You will notice a different look to the e-mail addresses for Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) employees in this issue of Kentucky Teacher. The department has upgraded its e-mail system, and all KDE e-mail addresses have changed. E-mail addresses now are configured firstname.lastname@education.ky.gov. The “old” e-mail addresses will continue to work until December 2006. The department is piloting the upgrade for the entire Kentucky Educational Technology (KETS) e-mail system to improve access speed, junk-mail management and virus protection.

The new e-mail service also will provide better, more user-friendly access to Outlook Web Access (“Webmail”). After the conversion is complete across the state, all KETS users will have access to their e-mail accounts from any computer anywhere in the world using this Web-based e-mail system.

“Overall the department’s pilot project has been very successful,” said Bill Heise, operations manager for the department’s Customer Service Center for technology.

Only the address has changed ...

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Think Inc.
High school teachers can participate in the Think Inc. conference, sponsored by the Kentucky Society of CPAs and the Kentucky Council on Economic Education, on Nov. 3 in Louisville. Participants will receive free resources to use in economics and business education curriculum at the daylong event.
Contact: Jenni Buckner, toll free at (800) 292-1754, j buckner@kycpa.org

KYSGRA
The Kentucky School Public Relations Association will hold its annual fall summit Nov. 3-4 at Louisville’s Marriott Downtown.
www.kyspra.org/

Gifted convention
The National Association for Gifted Children has set Nov. 9-13 for its annual convention in Louisville. “Setting the Pace” is the theme.
www.nagc.org

School Safety Week
“Safe Schools Begin With Me” is the theme for Kentucky’s School Safety Week, set for Oct. 16-22. Schools should design activities for the week to promote healthy choices and healthy lifestyles for Kentucky youth.
www.kysafeschools.org/ssweek/safeschoolswEEK.html

American Character Week
Oct. 16-22 is American Character Week. Character Counts, the national sponsoring organization, provides online resources for teachers that include ideas for school activities and community service projects.

Fulbright Program
The Fulbright Program arranges direct one-to-one classroom exchanges to more than 30 countries for elementary and secondary teachers, as well as two-year and four-year college educators. Administrators can participate in six-week shadowing experiences in nine countries. The application deadline is Oct. 15 for the 2006-2007 academic year.
www.fulbrightexchanges.org/

Legislators’ Back-to-School Week
Members of the Kentucky General Assembly participate in the America’s Legislators Back-to-School program by visiting Kentucky classrooms during the third week of September. State lawmakers share ideas, listen to concerns and help students better understand the legislative process and how it develops public policy. Lesson plans for grades 4-12 are available online from the National Conference of State Legislatures at www.ncsl.org/public/backsch.htm.
For information about the event in Kentucky, contact the state coordinator, Sheila Mason, at the Legislative Research Commission, (502) 564-8100 or by e-mail at sheila.mason@ lrc.ky.gov.

Science exhibit
The Louisville Science Center will open “The World Around Us” on Sept. 4. The center’s newest permanent exhibit explores natural and earth sciences. The center offers two other permanent exhibits, “The World We Create,” which covers physical sciences and the material world, and “The World Within Us,” which focuses on life science and health.
For teacher materials or to schedule a field trip, visit www.louisvillescience.org/.

Melody program
The Melody program of the Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation provides musical instruments and instrument repairs to existing K-12 school music programs that have no other source of financing to purchase additional musical instruments and materials.
www.mhopus.org/apply.htm

Register for selective service
Federal law requires every 18-year-old male to register with the Selective Service System. Those who fail to do so may be ineligible for federal student loans and grants, student financial aid, federal job training, most federal and many state jobs, and U.S. citizenship (in the case of immigrants).
Students can register online at www.sss.gov.

BULLETIN BOARD IS COMPILED BY JOY BARR
Commissioner’s Comments
State board shares sense of urgency about 2014 goals

By Gene Wilhoit
gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov

This summer, members of the Kentucky Board of Education put all of us on notice. You see, the board believes no educator should make excuses for not closing the achievement gaps that exist between certain student populations in Kentucky public schools.

The board’s sense of urgency to close the gaps and move all schools to proficiency was issued first in a letter from Board Chair Keith Travis and me in mid-July. The letter went to all superintendents, principals and local school board chairs.

At its August meeting, the board reiterated the goals it has set for Kentucky public schools and the importance of every school reaching those goals. The board spoke passionately — and at times with a loud voice — about its praise for those educators who have made tremendous gains in student learning and about its concern for those educators who might be tempted to ignore the goals, disregard offers of assistance from the department and generally refuse to be accountable for student achievement.

My column this month is a direct result of that very unique and poignant conversation with the board. My column serves as a very direct message to the adults in those schools and districts that aren’t getting the job done for the children of Kentucky.

We are now 15 years into education reform. The Kentucky Board of Education is most serious about all public schools serving the needs of each individual student and assuring that all students will be working at the proficient level or beyond by 2014.

While this message goes out to educators in all 176 districts and all 1,265 schools, I certainly hope it is being received loud and clear by those who have not yet internalized a strong commitment to the children with whom they work. The board’s message is clear: Kentucky public schools must provide a high-quality education to every student, every day.

After 15 years of reform, we know from our better schools and districts and from research that Kentucky schools have greater potential for getting students to high success. We know there are better ways to get things done. We know that certain practices will get our schools to proficiency, and certain practices will block our way.

We know that adults in the schools making steady progress toward Kentucky’s goals are not afraid to question their instructional practices and eliminate those practices that aren’t working for their students. They have made remarkable changes for the better. Thank you for your courage and commitment.

We know those educators are not satisfied with providing an inferior education to their students. They are working to expose every student in their schools to a rigorous curriculum — even those who struggle and are not ready. They have high expectations for each student’s success.

Are you and other members of your faculty living up — in practice — to the commitment of getting all students to proficiency or are you avoiding the tough issues? Your answer is a direct statement about what you are willing to do and what you are not willing to do.

Three words are guiding our work in the state’s refocusing secondary education initiative. However, those three words — rigor, relevance and relationship — should be touchstones for all educators at all levels who are interested in challenging students and moving them to higher academic levels.

How can you institute changes to make every moment of the next nine school years count for your students? I encourage you to start conversations inside and between your middle and high schools around these questions:

**Rigor**
Kentucky educators must be very deliberate about what they are teaching students — intervening with students who are not ready and pushing those students who are ready to move on to the next level. We must provide individualized instruction.

**Do all children in your school have access to a rigorous curriculum?**

- **If not, what are you doing about it?**
- **How are you making the necessary changes to provide more rigor?**
- **Do you have intervention strategies in place for those children who are not quite ready for a rigorous curriculum?**
- **Are you pushing those students ready to move on to other levels?**
- **Are the interventions research-based?**
- **Do you show promise of success?**
- **Are teachers trained to use the interventions, and are they intervening for those children who need additional help?**
- **Is your school moving from putting all students in the same curriculum during the same time with the same expectations or is the faculty beginning to think about what it will take to move every student to a higher level?**

This means a shift from thinking about the time a student spends in the classroom to assisting each student in reaching a performance goal.

Are you depending on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) assessments to make instructional decisions about students? CATS is the test used in Kentucky to measure school accountability. The best assessments and policies for making decisions about students are set at the school level.

- **Do teachers have appropriate classroom assessments that really tell where students are before teachers begin instruction?**
- **Are those assessments aligned to Kentucky’s Core Content for Assessment and the Program of Studies?**
- **Do you assess students on a regular basis?**
- **Do you record the results?**
- **Do you base instruction on what students show?**
- **Do those educators who might generally refuse to be accountable for their students’ learning be touched by these results?**
- **Do you use classroom assessments to help individualize instruction according to the needs of each student?**

**Relevance**
Relevance means engaging students in minds-on learning activities that allow them to apply knowledge and skills to real-world problem-solving activities and having them work with other students in problem-solving. It also means developing learning opportunities around what students perceive as the important issues they are going to face or that they see in the world.

Are teachers still lecturing about content without drawing a parallel to what it means to students or the world they face?

- **How can you improve your instruction to better connect to student interests?**
- **Can you redesign your course to engage students in active learning?**
- **Can you bring people into your school to help you make the necessary instructional changes?**
- **Are you effectively using resources outside the school to enhance learning?**
- **How well are teachers merging the curriculum so there are more meaningful patterns for learning?**
- **Do you just solve problems in isolated ways?**
- **Do you make the necessary instructional changes?**

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and Kentucky Board of Education member Hilma Prather of Somerset testify before a legislative committee about the state’s Request for Proposals that will be used to determine the state’s next testing contractor. The board has worked during the past year to institute changes that will enhance the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).
Kentucky teachers now have new online multimedia resource

Whether you’re an elementary teacher planning a unit on desert biomes or a high school English teacher whose students are reading “The Red Badge of Courage,” finding good instructional resources isn’t always easy. A new, single online source can help you find hundreds of related instructional resources — full-length videos, brief video clips, digital photographs and clip art — to easily incorporate into your lessons.

Kentucky teachers have free access to KET EncycloMedia, a new Internet-based comprehensive learning service, for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years. The result of a partnership between Kentucky Educational Television (KET) and the Kentucky Department of Education, KET EncycloMedia offers teachers more than 4,000 videos, 40,000 video clips and thousands of digital images. All are searchable by keyword, content area, grade level and Kentucky’s Academic Standards.

You and your students can use KET EncycloMedia in a variety of ways:

• to introduce a unit
• to visualize an unfamiliar place or concept
• to supplement independent or small group learning
• to create dynamic presentations

The service also offers a wealth of “teacher features” — a calendar with links to historical, cultural and scientific milestones that occurred on the current day’s date; a Quiz Center where you can download, modify, create and share quizzes; a site for creating and sharing lesson plans; and much more. All resources correlate to Kentucky’s Academic Expectations, Core Content and Program of Studies.

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) engineers and the Kentucky Department of Education, KETS EncycloMedia pass codes to district technology coordinators and chief information officers at the start of this school year.

In addition, member clubs can participate in statewide activities. Teachers who sponsor student groups in their schools get opportunities to share ideas and resources that can be used during club meetings and in the classroom, according to Melissa Earnest, a former Caldwell County club sponsor. “I cannot tell you how many project ideas and lesson plans I have used in my history classes from contacts that I have made through KJHS,” Earnest said. “I honestly feel it has been a vital part of my personal and professional life these past few years ...”

KJHS membership dues are only $3 per student. Membership entitles students to free admission to state historic sites and subscriptions to the “Timeline” newsletter and a student magazine, “Kentucky Heritage.”

In addition, member clubs can participate in statewide activities. Regional rallies occur at historic sites around the state each fall, and an annual convention is held in Frankfort each spring. At the state convention, students showcase their work and compete with members from across the state in categories as diverse as art, research papers, photography and media.

Educators interested in learning more about KJHS or who would like to start a club this school year can contact Annie Voelkert at (502) 564-1792 or e-mail at Annie.Voelkert@ky.gov.

Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

E-mail: kyteacher@education.ky.gov
Phone: (502) 564-3421 or (800) 533-5372 (toll free in Kentucky)
Fax: (502) 564-6470
Write: Kentucky Teacher 1914 Capital Plaza Tower 500 Mero St. Frankfort, KY 40601
History Day offers hands-on approach to teaching history

Are you looking for a hands-on approach to teaching history? National History Day is a year-long education program that engages students in grades 6-12 in discovery and interpretation of historical topics.

As part of the program, individuals or groups of students research a topic around an annual theme, learning the skills and techniques of a historian. The program engages all kinds of learners and allows students to express what they have learned through creative performances, multimedia documentaries, research papers or three-dimensional exhibits.

National History Day (NHD) “…fits perfectly into Kentucky’s Core Content and offers teachers the opportunity to teach beyond books and videos. NHD allows real-world learning and research to occur in Kentucky’s classrooms,” said Melissa Singleton, a teacher at Rockcastle County Middle School. National History Day can easily work within a teacher’s curriculum, if teaching about primary sources, interpretation of historical events and historical perspective.

Topics for projects are not limited to a specific time period or type of history. Students choose topics based on their interests. Topics may pertain to local, state, United States or world history.

Students utilize primary sources, secondary sources, artifacts and timelines. Doing their own research and analysis allows students to interpret history for themselves.

National History Day is a method of teaching history that allows students to do in-depth research on one topic, so that they take ownership of that topic. Becoming experts, students gain confidence in themselves and their work.

As part of the program, students compete in the junior division (grades 6-8) or the senior division (grades 9-12) at the district, state and national levels for cash prizes and scholarships. In Kentucky, there are five district competitions held in March and April.

Finalists from the district contests advance to the state contest during April in Frankfort. Finalists from the state contest are eligible to compete at the national contest held at the University of Maryland in June.

At the contests, historians, scholars and other professionals in the history field interview the students. The judges give positive written comments as well as constructive criticism about each research project. Students are encouraged to improve their work between district, state and national contests. The program develops students’ life skills, as well as their research and writing skills, helping prepare them for high school and college.

The Kentucky Historical Society sponsors National History Day in Kentucky. For more information, contact Kate Hesseldenz at (502) 564-1792, Ext. 4477, kate.hesseldenz@ky.gov, or visit http://history.ky.gov/Teachers/National_History_Day.htm on the Internet.
Chenoweth Elementary students encouraged to ‘wonder why’ about their environment

By Joy Barr
joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Darleen Horton has created a classroom of science wonders to involve her students in learning at Chenoweth Elementary School in Jefferson County. She discovered that providing hands-on outdoor learning has improved the test scores and environmental awareness of her students.

The rigorous and challenging environment in which her K-5 students succeed is one reason Horton received the 2004 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. The award is the nation’s highest for science teaching.

Horton, the science lab teacher at Chenoweth, instructs 600 children — more than half of them considered at-risk. “So, obviously you have every reading level and you have to engage them in hands-on, inquiry-based learning in order to level the playing field,” she says.

Horton’s desire to teach began with an intense hunger to learn. “I literally grew up in a log cabin,” she said. “Despite our poverty, my mother instilled in me a love of reading, but there was no library, no easy access to books. The outdoors was a natural library for me.”

To this day, she says she gets “excited about tadpoles and dragonflies and rocks.” Her students share that excitement.

In 2003, Horton started searching for money to develop an outdoor classroom at Chenoweth. She found money through programs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District. With grants in hand, Horton transformed the space outside her classroom in two years.

The goal of the outdoor classroom was to provide Chenoweth students with educational experiences that would enhance and impact their quality of life and to create lifelong learners.

“I want to create an excitement in children about their world, motivate them to wonder and to ask, ‘why,’ and to instill a love of learning,” said Horton.

“I use this setting to teach science across the curriculum. The hands-on inquiry-based science makes learning real and allows children to make connections that will hopefully carry them into a globally responsible adulthood,” said Horton.

Today, Chenoweth’s outdoor classroom includes a one-eighth mile walking trail, a pond, seven gardens, two compost bins, a worm bed, a Kentucky geological map created from concrete, rocks and fossils, and a sculpture crafted by the students. There also are bird and bat houses and feeders.

There is a classroom seating area, constructed of logs and boulders, where the students can discuss and write about things they are learning. Indoors, the science laboratory center is home to a variety of animals, birds and amphibians.

Principal Penny Beatrick said, “Darleen has a passion for children to be touched by and interested in their environment. She wants children to understand how they can affect their environment.”

Beatrick also stated that the greatest reward for the school’s hard work has been improved science indices on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). In 2002, Chenoweth’s science index on the state test was 64. Its science index jumped to 88 in 2003 and to 95 in 2004. Kentucky’s goal is for every school to reach an overall academic index of 100 in all content areas by 2014.

“When learning is real, it stays with you,” Horton said. “You own it.”

In Horton’s science classes, students work collaboratively in groups to investigate questions and to use higher-order thinking skills. They demonstrate their ability to connect prior learning to their new explorations. They demonstrate and communicate their understanding to others using a variety of materials. They remain interested and engaged throughout lessons, she said.

The students communicate the findings of their investigations and organize the data in a way that would show learning.

Horton uses questions to give direction and focus to conversation and discussion. This strategy helps students develop problem-solving skills that stimulate and challenge them to higher-level thinking.

“It is certainly a privilege to be honored with the presidential award, but the greatest joy comes from the faces of my students. They challenge me every day to do my very best,” said Horton.

Contact: Darleen Horton by telephone at (502) 485-8227 or send e-mail to dhorton1@jefferson.k12.ky.us.

Teachers receive national honors for excellence

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching (PAEMST), sponsored by the National Science Foundation, is the nation’s highest honor for science teaching. Teachers who are elementary and secondary teachers (grades K-12) receive the award in odd-numbered years, while middle and secondary teachers (grades 7-12) receive the award in even-numbered years.

The award recognizes the contributions K-12 teachers make to America’s legacy of progress by encouraging young people to study and understand mathematics and science. Elementary and middle-secondary teachers (grades K-12) receive the award in odd-numbered years, while middle-secondary teachers (grades 7-12) receive the award in even-numbered years.

Award recipients receive a $10,000 gift from the National Science Foundation, the independent federal agency that administers the awards program. They participate in an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., for a week of celebratory events and professional development activities.

Established by Congress in 1983, the annual presidential award is administered by the National Science Foundation. The 2006 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching will be awarded on September 14 in Washington, D.C. Teachers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, as well as teachers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa, will be honored.

The 2006 Presidential Award nominations are currently open. Teachers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, as well as teachers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa, will be honored. Teachers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, as well as teachers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa, will be honored.

For more information on nominating a teacher, go to www.paemst.org.
Walker Elementary students gain skills in classroom rich in mathematical language

By Joy Barr  joy.barr@education.ky.gov

"Where Learning Begins" is the message printed on the walls at Walker Elementary, an early primary school in Monticello. Kindergarten teacher Cynthia Woods' classroom is where many students learn beginning concepts that they will use throughout their lives.

"I try to instill a love of learning early in children," said Woods. "I strive to provide a classroom rich in mathematical language where thinking is encouraged, uniqueness is valued and exploration is supported." This inspiration and passion for teaching helped Woods attain a 2004 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the nation's highest honor in mathematics teaching.

Woods began her professional career as an accountant, but "soon got bored with it," she said. Her husband, mother and sister are all teachers. They influenced her new career choice by constantly telling her how interesting teaching was.

"They were right, although teaching is much harder than I expected — much more difficult than accounting," said Woods.

Fifteen years later, Woods is still teaching. She believes teaching is what she should have been doing all along. "It's so rewarding to watch your students learn and grow. I never anticipated that part," she said.

Woods is oftentimes the first teacher for many of her kindergartners. She helps them learn to love mathematics by linking their learning to the real world. "Kids need to understand why they need to learn things, and parents need to be involved. I use a lot of connections with home life," she said.

Woods has her kindergartners analyze collections of items, such as shells and erasers. They track the weather and plot their age changes on a graph. "Each time we have a birthday, the picture changes, and the students use this early form of data analysis to understand graph representations," she explained.

Kevin Jones nominated Woods for the presidential award. Jones also teaches in Wayne County schools and has had a daughter in Woods' classroom. "I don't think there is one specific reason why I nominated Cynthia — there are several," he said. "The most obvious reason was the emergence of all of these mathematics skills my daughter was bringing home and sharing. Sorting, graphing, counting, etc., all these new skills and my daughter was just taking off with it. As a parent, it is a joy to see your living and dining rooms transformed into a classroom every afternoon after school. My daughter was bringing all of these skills home and teaching them to her class of dolls and stuffed animals. I still tease Cynthia that she brainwashed my child and that she is destined to become a teacher."

Woods targets concepts in her classroom that are consistent with mathematics teaching standards. She formulated questions that her students can address with data and collection. The youngsters sort and classify objects according to their attributes and use concrete objects, pictures and graphs.

Woods encourages her students to be active learners by allowing them to learn "by talking about what they are thinking," collaborating and sharing ideas.

"Cynthia personifies the qualities of an excellent teacher. Her talents and creativity — along with her tremendous energy and knowledge base — are incredible," said Winona Griggs, principal at the Wayne County school. "Woods brings a classroom to life with hands-on approaches integrated into every lesson to promote the learning and development of her entry-level students. She finds ways to creatively make learning fun with developmentally appropriate activities such as inquiry learning, role-play and self-expression through play. Students are excited each day as Cynthia challenges them using 'higher-order thinking questions' to stimulate the desire to know more."

Woods selects tasks and resources that accommodate a wide range of abilities. She also uses strategies that capitalize on the different levels of her students' abilities and interests. She typically has about 24 students in the classroom. Many of her students participate in the free- and reduced-price lunch program.

"Cynthia has been instrumental in formulating curriculum, establishing reading and mathematics programs for children within our school, and making the school a special place where children want to be. She is a mentor to colleagues as they trust her insight and feel comfortable communicating with her," said Griggs.

Woods has been a resource teacher for several new teachers and shares her knowledge with them. She is on the school's instructional leadership team and works with the community to reduce the achievement gaps of students at the Wayne County school. She currently serves on the school based decision making council. "Simply, she is a leader," said Griggs.

Contact: Cynthia Woods by telephone at (606) 348-4251 or send e-mail to cwoods@wayne.k12.ky.us
Mayfield Elementary finds way to involve parents and community in student learning through the arts

By Cathy Lindsey
cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.” This dilemma caused Pablo Picasso concern some 70 years ago and remains a challenge today for artists and educators alike.

As the Kentucky Board of Education explores new ways to assess Arts and Humanities content, students at Mayfield Elementary in Madison County are taking advantage of the School-Community-Arts-Parents Partnership (SCAPP) program to make connections across the curriculum using the arts.

The SCAPP program, a project of the Kentucky Arts Council, provides funds to secure artists in residence to work with students. It also enables schools to form partnerships throughout the community that will work together to promote arts integration and arts programming in the school and community.

“We must show the students and the community that art has value,” said Mayfield art teacher Sharla Davidson.

Art educators have long believed that learning through art cultivates self-expression, imagination and creativity, as well as critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

“The arts are basic human communication tools,” said Philip Shepherd, Kentucky Department of Education Arts and Humanities consultant. “They have been primary forms of communication from the beginning of the human experience.”

Understanding and creating art also can teach students how to work together to achieve a goal, he added.

“This not only makes students better learners, but it also builds self-esteem,” said Davidson, Mayfield Elementary art teacher. “You can really see the children in new ways.”

By funding the SCAPP grant, the Kentucky Arts Council’s main goal is to encourage making connections among parents, schools, community arts resources and artists.

“The result is that the artists can show teachers techniques for incorporating their arts into the classroom experience,” said Shepherd. “Teachers also learn how to take advantage of community arts resources to enhance their instructional programs. This helps build confidence in teachers for using arts in their classrooms and connects the arts with learning other academic disciplines.”

The SCAPP program is unique in that the initial application is not judged on the strength of the planned project or projects. Rather, it is judged on the strength of the partnership and each partner’s potential to contribute to its success.

The development of Mayfield’s plan for this school year’s program occurred during a summer planning session at the 4-H Leadership Center in Jabez. All of the partners — teachers, artists, parents and community sponsors — met to discuss how to involve the entire community in strengthening the arts program in the school and community.

“It’s so important to have input from each member of the team,” Davidson said. “They each bring different backgrounds and gifts.”

The team discussed the importance of parent and community involvement. This could include parents learning arts with the students, providing opportunities for parents to meet the artists, seeking community volunteers and resources, and taking the program outside the school to help reach more people.

“Research shows that the quality of the educational experience is greatly enhanced when parents are involved in their children’s education,” Shepherd said.

“The arts provide a natural avenue for parents to become more directly involved in the process of education.”

In past years, Mayfield students have participated in a variety of arts projects. For example, students took photos at Fort Boonesborough and later painted from them to learn about foreground, middle ground and background. Local watercolor artist Pat Banks led mural painting seminars in the cafeteria while working on a scene from Fort Boonesborough.

For another schoolwide activity, students brought family heirlooms and told one another stories about the objects. Artist Jennifer Rose used the stories to write a cultural theater play that included folk dances and songs. Visual artist Alfredo Escobar and students created canvas backdrops for the play.

Parents and residents of the Richmond community have helped with other arts projects:

Merwyn Jackson, the leader of Madison Dulcimers, taught students two songs using dulcimer kits that were donated by members of the community.

Marsha Maupin, an employee of Resource Technologies, taught students to use software that allowed them to create an electronic portfolio showcasing their artwork.

Students performed an original play about Daniel Boone written by parent and Drama club leader Lorri Moore.

Ron Yoder, Eastern Kentucky University Web administrator, led technology seminars for students and taught them to use animation software.

According to Davidson, the diversity of the art projects is helping to involve more students in the learning process.

“Different learning styles are addressed,” she said. “Children really get involved because it is fun and interesting to them.”

Davidson encourages more schools to explore new ways to bring the arts into all classrooms. “Reaching a child that’s never been reached before is a huge benefit,” she said. “You cannot negate a child who’s shining.”

For instructional materials focusing on integration of the arts across the curriculum, check out the ArtsEdge Web site at http://artscouncil.ky.gov/Education/aiehome.htm on the Internet.

Arts Council grants

The Kentucky Arts Council has a variety of grants to help bring the arts into schools and communities. The Council offers many professional development opportunities for teachers to learn how to incorporate the arts into their instruction. The summer Arts Academies, sponsored by The Kentucky Center in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, place teachers with artists just for this purpose, said Philip Shepherd, Kentucky Department of Education Arts and Humanities consultant.

Arts professional organizations, such as the Kentucky Music Educators Association, the Kentucky Art Educators Association, the Kentucky Theatre Association and the Kentucky Alliance for Arts Education, offer conferences that include sessions and workshops designed to help teachers learn to integrate the arts.

For more information about the Council’s grants, go to http://arts council.ky.gov/Education/aiehome.htm on the Internet.
Most Kentucky public schools make adequate yearly progress

By Lisa Gross

Nearly three-fourths, or 868, of Kentucky’s public schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act for the 2004-2005 school year. The Kentucky Department of Education released the 2005 AYP results to schools and the general public in early August.

AYP results are based on the Kentucky Core Content Tests’ (KCCT) items in reading and mathematics. Schools are required to have specific percentages of students reaching proficiency in reading and mathematics each year and to meet other criteria in order to make AYP.

The Kentucky Board of Education adopted the approach of establishing two, three-year plateau of performance toward the goal of 100 percent proficiency by 2014. For 2004-2005, the reading and mathematics reading and mathematics goals will remain at 2004-2005 levels through the 2006-2007 school year, then rise again in 2007-2008.

According to the data, 868 Kentucky public schools met 100 percent of their NCLB goals for AYP, while 304 schools did not. Of the 304 schools, 193 made 80 percent or more of their goals. Statewide, 64 percent, or 16, of the 25 target goals were met.

Schools and districts that are funded by the federal Title I program will be subject to federal consequences if they do not make AYP in the same content area in any subgroup for two or more consecutive years. The Title I program provides funds to ensure that disadvantaged children receive opportunities for high-quality educational services.

Statewide, 54 Title I schools are in Tier 1 of consequences; 69 Title I schools are in Tier 2; 4 Title I schools are in Tier 3 and 6 Title I schools are in Tier 4. Consequences for the tiers increase each consecutive year that a school does not make AYP. The consequences range from parent notification at Tier 1 to district oversight of Tier 4 schools.

In Kentucky, 856 of the 1,198 schools participating in the state’s assessment and accountability system are funded by Title I. All but two of the state’s 176 school districts receive some Title I funding. Anchorage Independent and Beechwood Independent did not receive Title I funding in 2004-2005. (NOTE: Because some schools are designated as “joint” schools for accountability purposes, the combined numbers of those making AYP and those not making AYP only reach 1,172.)

School districts also are held to the requirements of AYP under the federal education law. Of Kentucky’s 176 school districts, 76, or 43.2 percent, met 100 percent of their target goals. Overall, 141 of 176 districts met 80 percent or more of their goals. For NCLB requirements, school districts are gauged on the total student population. This can mean that, even if every school within a district makes AYP, the district may not make AYP because of the total size of subpopulations and their performance.

Signed into law in January 2002, NCLB requires states to provide only students on schools’ and districts’ progress toward proficiency by 2014. Each state uses its own standards and assessments to make the annual determinations. Kentucky used data from the 2004-2005 Academic Testing System (CATS) to provide 2005 AYP information for schools and districts.

Students at this Jefferson County Spanish immersion school write each day as part of the bilingual program.

connections across the curriculum?
• How many teachers are working together to develop lessons and integrate what they are teaching so that they have more meaningful patterns?

Relationship

I think every school has to break itself down so that adults are working with individual students and small groups of children over time around their goals, their ambitions, their learning styles and their curriculum to build strong, caring relationships with students and their parents.

Is your faculty organized in a way that allows adults to have conversations with students on a regular basis about their learning and career goals?

• Does your school still rely on the old structure of having one counselor for 500 students and asking that one adult to assume full responsibility for the social, emotional and the academic needs of all those children?

• How can educators, students and parents benefit from an advisor-advisee program in your school?

• How many conversations are teachers having with parents about academics and student career goals? Are they partners in making adjustments to each child’s education?

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• Are teachers, parents and students making decisions about students’ futures? Do they have the information to make those decisions?

Working together for success

I hope these questions give you a point of reference to your practice. I hope, also, that you will begin talking with other faculty members, leadership and administrators about what needs to be done to move students to proficiency and beyond.

A sense of urgency is appropriate as we get closer to 2014. Some schools need to take more aggressive positions or make more changes beyond what have been made thus far.

I make these suggestions and offer these guiding questions knowing that it’s going to be a difficult activity for many Kentucky educators. Making changes will mean radically different behaviors on the part of many educators. However, the Department of Education staff and I stand ready to work with each school and district to provide support and resources to help schools accomplish the board’s goals.

The question is not whether schools will work more aggressively to close gaps and get students to proficiency by 2014. The more productive conversation will be how can we work together to achieve the goal.

The best people to guide us in determining how this can be done are our teachers. I encourage you to let me know — or any department staff member — what’s missing in the support system or resources that will move practice in these more promising directions.

We are here to listen, and we will respond to the guidance we get from you. I look forward to hearing from you by e-mail at gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov.

Changing your address? Let us know about it.

Kentucky Teacher receives mailing addresses for all active Kentucky certified classroom teachers and administrators from the Kentucky Teachers’ Retirement System. If you are employed by a Kentucky public school, you can change your address or mailing information in one of two ways:

1. Complete a change of address form that can be downloaded from the retirement system’s Web site at http://ktrts.ky.gov/ktrtsresources/MEMinfo/chgaddnew.htm.
2. Submit a written request that includes your old address, new address, Social Security number and signature. Mail the form or written request to: Kentucky Teachers’ Retirement System, ATTN: Tammy Brown, 479 Versailles Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601

If you are not a current teacher or administrator, e-mail your change of address to kyteacher@education.ky.gov or send your change of address information in writing to: Kentucky Teacher, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601
Department reorganizes to provide better service to schools and districts

On June 20, the Kentucky Department of Education was restructured to provide better and more focused service to Kentucky’s schools and districts. The following is an updated list of the department’s bureaus and offices, with a brief explanation of what each handles. You may contact any of these offices by calling (502) 564-4770.

**Office of the Commissioner** – Gene Wilhoit, commissioner

**Bureau of Operations and Support Services** – Kevin Noland, deputy commissioner

**Office of Communications** (Hunt C. Helm, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: communications activities, including media relations, publications, the Web site, School Report Card and video/multimedia services

**Office of Education Technology** (David Couch, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: network engineering, management, operations and services

**Office of Internal Administration and Support** (Robin Kinney, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: internal administrative functions of the department (purchasing, human resources, etc.)

**Office of Legal and Legislative Services** (Kevin Noland, deputy commissioner) – Responsibilities: providing legal counsel to, and legislative liaison for, the department

**Bureau of Learning and Results Services** – Linda France, deputy commissioner

**Office of Assessment and Accountability** (Pamela Rogers, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: assessment implementation, communications and support for data management

**Office of District Support Services** (Kyna Koch, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: pupil transportation, facilities management, school finance, nutrition and health services, and data, data policy and research

**Office of Leadership and School Improvement** (Steven Schenck, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: leadership and instructional support, scholastic assistance, and educator quality and diversity

**Office of Special Instructional Services** (Johnnie Grissom, associate commissioner) – Responsibilities: career and technical education, exceptional children services (including the Kentucky schools for the Blind and Deaf), and federal (title) programs

**Office of Teaching and Learning** (Starr Lewis, Associate Commissioner) – Responsibilities: all curricular issues, secondary and virtual learning and early childhood development

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**K TLC from Page 1**

been extended to Oct. 1: Teachers and administrators can access and submit an application to present online at www.kentuckytlc.org.

The conference also serves as a convenient time for statewide groups to convene meetings. For example, the Instructional Support Network (ISN) members will meet during the conference. Throughout the year, ISN provides information, resources and tools to support the work of district administrators, especially in the areas of instructional leadership and planning for professional development. “I encourage Kentucky educators to make plans now to attend KTLC '06,’ Whiteside said. “Watch future issues of Kentucky Teacher to learn what’s new and upcoming at KTLC. Check out the conference Web site at www.kentuckytlc.org for information about lodging, registration, sessions and workshops.”

For more information, contact Thelma Whiteside toll free at (800) 533-5372 or thelma.whiteside@education.ky.gov.

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“We’ve been able to resolve problems that will enhance installation of the new e-mail system in the districts.”

Kentucky is the first education system in the nation to provide an e-mail upgrade of this magnitude, Heise added.

The upgrade of the e-mail system for schools and districts is scheduled to begin this September and continue through December 2006. The chief information officer/district technology coordinator and school technology coordinators are leading the upgrade work in each district. Members of the department’s Office of Education Technology project team will be in each district to observe the changeover, Heise said.

Although the old e-mail addresses will be recognized for another 16 months, Heise advises district employees to update their personal contact lists and distribution lists that contain Department of Education e-mail addresses.

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**Board from Page 1**

strengthen those requirements to meet the expectations of today’s postsecondary institutions and the workplace.

Staff from the Kentucky Department of Education will study graduation requirements in other states regarding the need for more rigor at the high school level such as requiring a mathematics credit every year. In the coming months, staff will make recommendations based on data collected.

After hearing a review of the department’s activities and efforts to improve the achievement gap, the board indicated that it wasn’t enough. The board directed staff to take more aggressive action to narrow the achievement gaps that still exist among these subpopulations of students.

The board has long been concerned about eliminating the achievement gap for all students including those with disabilities, limited English proficiency (LEP), economically disadvantaged, African American, males and state-agency children.

Also during the meeting, Wynn Long Radford III, president and co-owner of Higgins Insurance Agency in Hopkinsville developed, implemented and funds the James White Scholars Program. The program matches community volunteers with local minority students in Christian County. The volunteers provide assistance and mentoring as the students prepare for college admission.

The scholars program is named for James White, who graduated from University Heights Academy in Hopkinsville and Harvard University. White, who works as a recruiter for a college in Boston, also holds workshops for the program and serves as a motivator for local minority students.

The Joseph W. Kelly Award was created to honor Kelly, who chaired the Kentucky Board of Education from 1991 to 1998. Kelly’s efforts and expertise were crucial to the development and implementation of Kentucky’s school improvement efforts.

The state board presents the annual award to businesspeople who have offered outstanding leadership and service toward promoting school improvement and equitable educational opportunities for all Kentucky children.

The next meeting of the state board will be Oct. 5 and 6 in Frankfort. More information about the board is available at www.education.ky.gov. Click on “KDE QuickLinks” in the upper right-hand corner. Scroll down to “State Board of Education” and click.
Online administration certification available

The University of the Cumberlands offers administration certification online for principals, directors of special education, directors of pupil personnel, supervisors of instruction and superintendents. Students with a master's degree in an education field can become certified (Level 1) in as little as 18 hours.

For more information about the program, visit www.cumberlandcollege.edu/elearn or contact the Office of Adult and Extended Programs toll free at (800) 343-1609 or e-mail elearn@cumberlandcollege.edu.

Lottery revenue to fund scholarships

Beginning July 1, all Kentucky Lottery revenue will go directly to education — specifically to fund college scholarships. Students who meet financial criteria will get larger awards, and more students will receive both need-based and merit-based scholarships. Lottery officials say the scholarships will help keep the best students in Kentucky and help ensure that lower-income students can afford to go to college.

Kentucky’s ‘outperforming’ school districts named

Eighteen Kentucky school districts are among Standard & Poor’s list of Outperforming School Districts. The report analyzed 171 of Kentucky’s 176 public school districts in reading and mathematics proficiency for two consecutive years to determine which ones outperform districts with similar levels of poverty.

To be labeled an outperformer, a school district had to have a significantly higher percentage of students score proficient or above on state mathematics and reading tests compared to demographically similar districts.

The 18 districts are Bowling Green Independent, Daviess County, Fort Thomas Independent, Graves County, Hancock County, Johnson County, Marion County, Mason County, McLean County, Murray Independent, Oldham County, Owensboro Independent, Paducah Independent, Russell County, Walton-Verona Independent, Warren County, Williamsburg Independent and Wolfe County.

www.schoolmatters.com

Administrators receive 2005 KASA awards

Graves County School Superintendent Brady Link, Harrison County High School Principal Robert Barr and Martin Luther King Jr. Academy (Fayette County) Principal Mark Sellers received 2005 Administrator of the Year awards from the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) at its annual conference. The awards are given to school administrators who have demonstrated outstanding educational leadership and contributed to the effectiveness of KASA.

Ethics training in October

Ethics training for educators will be presented by Educational Development Associates Oct. 28-29 in Frankfort. This professional development program is designed to ensure participants gain a clear understanding of the basic ethical responsibilities defining best professional practice for Kentucky public school educators. For a registration brochure or more information, call (859) 572-5536.

Efforts to ‘beef up’ history education

Legislation that would expand national testing in U.S. history was introduced in the U.S. Senate last spring. The American History Achievement Act, as the legislation is called, would budget $14 million for 10 states to test eighth and 12th graders in history during 2006.

The legislation is designed to draw national attention to American students’ lack of knowledge about their own country. National history and civics assessments show that most fourth graders cannot identify the opening passage of the Declaration of Independence and that most high school seniors cannot explain the checks-and-balances theory behind the three branches of U.S. government.

“I think we are sadly failing our children, and have been for a long time,” David McCullough, American historian and two-time Pulitzer Prize winning biographer of American presidents. “I think to bring test assessment of performance in the grade schools and high schools of public schools is long overdue.” If the legislation is enacted, testing would be conducted under the auspices of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a federal test administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

The American History Achievement Act could be the second law in two years aimed at improving students’ grasp of American history. A 2003 federal law allotted $25 million to create summer academies for teachers and students of history and civics.

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Educators realize the value of a question

By Cathy Lindsey
cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

If you visited the Louisville Science Center this past summer and saw a room full of adults playing with rubber bands, magnets, sand and string, you probably assumed they were having way too much fun to be learning.

For a week, these 30 classroom teachers, Highly Skilled Educators and community educators from the Science Center and the Louisville Zoo, became serious students of inquiry-based learning. They studied the value of this teaching method that encourages students to explore their own natural interests in the content being presented.

“When students want to know the answers, they are more motivated and more likely to be successful learners,” said Amy Lowen, director of education at the Science Center.

Inquiry is a hands-on method of learning. It encourages students to form questions, plan and conduct investigations to answer the questions, and then defend and communicate their conclusions to others. Educators can use this type of student exploration to deepen students’ comprehension of material.

In order to get a better grasp on how inquiry-based learning works, educators at the Inquiry Summit became the students by exploring their own questions about magnetism. The educators performed various experiments to gain a first-hand view of what students would experience in the classroom for that particular lesson.

“I learned that inquiry builds focus,” said Tara Hengartner, a seventh-grade teacher at Noe Middle School (Jefferson County). “It’s going with what I need to do and what the students want to do.”

Inquiry addresses the question, “How do you get students engaged in an activity?” by involving the students at every step – collection, discovery, re-collection, experiment and discussion.

Inquiry is designed to engage the learners to be critical observers. It is used to build good investigative practices. Students can predict and hypothesize various outcomes of experiments. It also can foster better communication skills because the students must share what they’ve learned with others.

“The Science Center is moving toward more inquiry here and in the classroom,” said Science Center educator Jennifer Cross, “so that we can engage the visitors to be more curious not only about science, but also about things in the world around them.”

Highly Skilled Educator Robin Lipsey agrees. She believes that she needs inquiry-based learning in her toolkit to teach other teachers. “It gives both the student and the teacher the opportunity to get out of the textbook. Students can ask questions and perform hands-on experiments to get to the next step in all subjects.”

Science Center Education Director Amy Lowen believes the Inquiry Summit taught the educators the value of students’ questions and their quest to answer those questions. As participants of the week-long event, each agreed to help create a network to further the practice of inquiry-based learning and make it an integral part of classroom instruction.

“Inquiry is a natural fit for young students,” said Anchorage School (Anchorage Independent) early primary teacher Tina Kingsbury. “It only makes sense that we should key on the natural curiosities and instincts of young minds.”

For more information about inquiry-based learning or to apply for the 2006 Louisville Inquiry Summit, contact Amy Lowen at (502) 560-7165 or amy.lowen@loukymetro.org.