



March 3, 2023

The Honorable Matt Lockett
Kentucky House of Representatives, District 39
702 Capitol Avenue, Room 329D
Kentucky Capitol Annex Building
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

The Honorable John Hodgson
Kentucky House of Representatives, District 36
702 Capitol Avenue, Room 351D
Kentucky Capitol Annex Building
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Representative Lockett and Representative Hodgson:

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence appreciates your concern regarding education outcomes for Kentucky students. The Prichard Committee stands ready to assist you in ensuring that all Kentucky students are put on the path to a larger life with education at the core. A key component in returning Kentucky to a place where education outcomes are improving is by ensuring that the needs of students, their families, and their local communities are at the forefront of local decision-making. It is paramount that local needs tied to the ability to grow education outcomes are placed ahead of any other consideration.

A key component in ensuring success for Kentucky students is the ability of the Commonwealth's local boards of education to remain non-partisan. Local boards of education must be permitted the ability to make decisions in the best interests of students and families irrespective of partisan considerations.

Kentucky paved the way for removing politics from education in the landmark 1989 Kentucky Supreme Court Case, [*Rose v. Council for a Better Education, Inc.*](#) *Rose* ordered the Kentucky General Assembly to “assure [common schools] are operated with. . . **no political influence.**” Kentucky’s *Rose* decision became a model for education governance across the nation and created the conditions needed for Kentucky to rise in national education rankings. Even prior to *Rose*, in *Wooley v. Spalding* (1956) Kentucky’s highest court stated, “The fundamental mandate of the Constitution and Statutes of Kentucky is that there shall be equality and that **all public schools shall be nonpartisan** and nonsectarian.”

Additionally, 41 states require non-partisan elections for school boards. Only four states, Alabama, Connecticut, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania require partisan school board races to appear on the ballot. Kentucky must not abandon its historical and constitutional commitment in ensuring that local boards of education remain non-partisan.

The Commonwealth must keep its commitment to improving education outcomes for students. Kentucky must ensure that education policy reflects a laser-like focus on reading, mathematics, science, the arts, and civics to provide a high-quality education for all. Partisan school boards will only further distract local officials from their critical task at hand: returning Kentucky to a place where education outcomes are improving.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brigitte Blom".

Brigitte Blom
President & CEO
The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence