



The Prichard Committee

Building a Groundswell for a Big Bold Future

March 21, 2024

Kentucky State Capitol
700 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Members of the Kentucky General Assembly:

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence appreciates your dedication to providing Kentucky students with a high-quality education that is reflected in their academic success, careers, and quality of life. Your leadership is essential in guiding all students toward a brighter future, with education at the core. Recent investments in early literacy, higher education, and full-day kindergarten demonstrate your commitment to improving educational achievements in Kentucky.

While your efforts have put Kentucky on the path to a brighter tomorrow, more action is needed to reverse Kentucky's downward trend in education outcomes. In the last decade, Kentucky has fallen to:

- 29th in the nation fourth-grade reading — a fall from 22nd in 2019 and a high of 8th in the nation in 2015
- 28th in the nation in eighth-grade reading — a drop from 25th in 2019 and a peak at 12th in 2011
- 34th in the nation in fourth-grade math — a fall from 30th in 2019 and 21st in 2015
- 41st in the nation in eighth-grade math — down from 36th in 2019 after reaching 33rd in the nation in 2011

In the remaining days of the 2024 legislative session, the General Assembly can take meaningful legislative action to facilitate lasting positive impacts on the quality of education in Kentucky. The Prichard Committee urges passage of the following bills to address current education needs across the commonwealth:

The Horizon Act – [SB 203](#)

Senator Danny Carroll (R-02) filed SB 203 in an effort to help reignite and stabilize our child care system, which carries with it many benefits to Kentuckians, including increasing our workforce participation rate and boosting the Kentucky economy. The bill outlines funding for innovation, education, and startup grants, as well as continuing the ongoing Child Care Assistance Program. The act supports an investment of \$150 million annually (\$300 million total) into Kentucky's early learning sector.

Numeracy Counts Act - [HB 162](#)

Chairman James Tipton (R-53) filed HB 162 to provide for research-based approaches for improvements to K-3 mathematics instruction, teacher preparation, professional development, and parent engagement. The bill aims to reprioritize math education in Kentucky by providing quality education and support for student success to improve math proficiency in Kentucky.



Access to Advanced Placement (AP) and Advanced Coursework - [SB 360](#)

Chairman Stephen West (R-27) filed SB 360 to provide for the automatic enrollment of qualified secondary students into AP classes and advanced coursework, in addition to providing a monetary incentive for AP teachers and students and establishing a statewide online platform to increase AP course credit and opportunities.

Access to Dual Credit Coursework – [HB 399](#)

Chairman James Tipton (R-53) filed HB 399 to allow for increased access for secondary dual credit coursework, especially for students who may not have had traditional access opportunities. Additionally, the bill broadens the class of eligible students able to receive dual credit scholarships to include sophomores and freshmen and removes cost barriers to students, which will translate to postsecondary success and degree attainment for Kentucky students.

Career and Technical Education – [HB 499](#) and [SB 192](#)

Representative Bobby McCool (R – 97) filed HB 499 and Senate President Pro Tempore David Givens (R-09) filed Senate Bill 192 as companion bills to provide a fairer allocation of funds between state and locally managed Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, ensuring equitable support across the board. The bill ensures every student, no matter their location, benefits from equal access to high-quality education resources and prioritizes performance-based funding.

Adaptive Kindergarten Readiness Pilot Project – [HB 695](#)

Representative Kevin Jackson (R-20) filed HB 695 to establish an adaptive kindergarten readiness pilot project within the Kentucky Department of Education. The pilot will use curriculum that aligns with state standards and national guidelines to improve kindergarten readiness in the commonwealth.

Postsecondary Performance Based Funding Reforms – [SB 191](#)

Senate President Pro Tempore David Givens (R-09) filed SB 191 to include nontraditional age students to close the achievement gaps at the postsecondary level, adjust funding percentages for public universities based on student success outcomes, and more closely align credentialing with economic needs.

Maternal and Child Health – [HB 10](#)

Representative Kimberly Moser (R-64) filed HB 10 establishing the Kentucky Maternal Psychiatry Access Program (the Lifeline for Moms), expanding and enhancing maternal and infant health services, and providing other essential services to promote the health and well-being of mothers and their infants. Investing in maternal, infant, and children's health is essential to Kentucky's future.

The Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) Task Force – [HCR 60](#)

Representative Timmy Truett filed HCR 60 to establish the SEEK Task Force to study various components of the SEEK formula to evaluate whether changes are necessary to the base, tiers, or add-ons to maintain the original goal of SEEK. This bill could determine the need for funding structure changes, reduce funding gaps between economically advantaged and disadvantaged school districts, and ensure excellence in educational outcomes for all Kentucky's students.



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Thank you for your commitment to making Kentucky a leader in education outcomes. Kentucky will continue to make progress in this critical goal until all students are put on the path to a Big Bold Future.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Blom
President & CEO
The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence