



## Legislative Program

*Adopted by the 2017 KEA Delegate Assembly*

### VISION

Kentucky Education Association is the preeminent voice for quality public education.

### MISSION

We unite, organize, and empower members to advocate for themselves and to ensure a quality public education for every Kentucky student.

### **Legislative priority:**

*The Kentucky Education Association's highest priority is to ensure adequate funding and support for a high quality public education for every Kentucky student; to assure that Kentucky's students, teachers, ESPs, and retirees have the resources necessary to thrive in an ever-changing educational environment.*

### **Legislative goals:**

#### **1. Advocate for equitable and adequate funding for P-12 education.**

KEA supports:

- A. Ensuring that the SEEK formula fully funds a high quality education for every public school student in the Commonwealth.
- B. Supporting revenue enhancement including but not limited to the following provisions; increasing the tax rate in higher income categories, lowering the tax rate in lower income categories, establishing a refundable earned income tax credit (EITC) based on the federal EITC, and taxing more discretionary services.

#### **2. Advocate for a high quality education for every public school student in the Commonwealth.**

KEA supports:

- A. Ensuring all pre-K through 12 classroom instruction in Kentucky is provided by teachers certified in the subject area being taught.

- B. Providing state funded pre-school programs for all three- and four-year old children.
- C. Guaranteeing all children have access to visual and performing arts, physical education, library skills with library access, practical living and career studies classes taught by an appropriately certified teacher.
- D. Continuing to allow school districts to determine the start and end dates of their school calendar.
- E. Establishing indoor air quality standards for public schools.
- F. Requiring recycling of materials in all school districts, if available.
- G. Establishing high standards and accountability for home-schooled students.
- H. Establishing the deadline for bringing classes within maximum size at twenty (20) days after the first student attendance day.
- I. Maintaining that SBDM councils select principals and oppose the superintendent or designee serving as SBDM chair when selecting principals.
- J. Opposing adding requirements to a curriculum without SBDM approval.
- K. Opposing charter schools other than public schools authorized and overseen by existing boards of education that do not divert resources from existing schools. Charter schools must be qualitatively different than common schools and have a proven record of improving academic performance for their targeted demographic. They must be subject to all transparency, reporting and procurement requirements, accountability standards, assessments and assessment schedules as Kentucky's system of common schools. Charter schools must be non-sectarian, not for profit and must follow governance, management, employment rules, enrollment practices, and student services outlined in this legislative program.
- L. Allowing public schools and educators the greatest possible degree of freedom to design and implement curricular, instructional, and assessment innovations in Kentucky's public schools.
- M. Mandating that any new state education initiative is not required to be implemented without adequate funding and support.
- N. Advocating for a student assessment system that uses formative assessment process to improve instruction; measures higher order thinking skills; includes multiple, high quality measures of student learning; allows for timely student self-assessment; and links directly to the curriculum.
- O. Providing all school employees with adequate information and support to implement high quality assessment and accountability systems.
- P. Adopting an accountability system that is proven effective by research, does not produce unintended consequences, is easy to understand, delays consequences until its validity and reliability are established, uses multiple measures, provides appropriate information to the public, and is not dependent on any single assessment device

- Q. Providing assistance to priority schools that builds capacity at the school; provides advisory assistance; requires meaningful involvement of school staff, students and parents; preserves due process; includes significant support and professional development; provides adequate compensation for additional work and time; and is differentiated to the needs of the school, students and staff.
- R. Improving school lunches by substituting high sugar and processed foods with wholesome and nutritious foods.
- S. Ensuring that all students learn and school employees, including transportation employees, work in a safe school free from verbal or physical assault, with protection from threats to their learning and working environments and that we provide proper funding of school resource officers.
- T. Including a caseload cap on the number of preschool students with disabilities being served by any individual preschool teacher.
- U. Providing every student and school employee with personal, reliable, computing devices supported by a state infrastructure which guarantees integral internet access.
- V. Ensuring all students receive efficient and ethical special education referral and implementation services; reducing the redundancies of all special education process documentation via automation and simplification; and advocating support of great means to support collaboration of general and special education teachers.
- W. Providing students with access to world languages, both spoken and signed.
- X. Providing graduating seniors, including deaf students who show proficiency in ASL and English, the opportunity to earn the nationally-recognized Seal of Biliteracy, which grants students a special seal on their diploma for being proficient in a second language.
- Y. Advocate for inclusive curriculum that addresses the struggles and triumphs of all marginalized peoples as movements and individuals throughout history in the United States and the rest of the world.
- Z. Improving school safety by requiring all school buildings to have a limited entry access device.

### ***3. Advocate for strong professions.***

KEA supports:

- A. Requiring that the school term cannot be extended without a commensurate increase in compensation for school employees.
- B. Requiring the school council to approve any extension to the school day which shall not be granted without a commensurate increase in compensation for school employees.
- C. Securing a minimum of three days of personal leave annually, with unused days converting to sick leave.
- D. Providing financial assistance and professional support for all teachers pursuing rank change or National Board Certification.
- E. Restoring school employees' rights to participate in all levels of school board elections.
- F. Securing collective bargaining for all school employees.

- G. Securing a process by which each local board of education may confer exclusive representation to the association with the largest number of members in the district.
- H. Establishing time limits by which the Education Professional Standards Board must provide due process to certified personnel who are the subject of complaints to that body.
- I. Providing that the Education Professional Standards Board take disciplinary action based upon the standard of "clear and convincing evidence."
- J. Prohibiting the Education Professional Standards Board from taking action against a teacher when criminal charges that form the basis for a complaint to the agency are dismissed or the teacher is acquitted after a trial.
- K. Ensuring teacher contract time and student instructional time are measured by the same standard.
- L. Prohibiting abuse of teacher time and requiring that teachers receive compensation for additional work that they perform as required to meet state mandates.
- M. Establishing professional leave for all school employees to attend state level education related meetings and school related legal proceedings.
- N. Opposing any form of pay based on student performance.
- O. Adding an additional teacher and a classified employee to SBDM councils.
- P. Providing area technology center employees the same rights in decision making as local school district teachers.
- Q. Prohibiting the practice of unnecessary annual non-renewal of limited contract employees and assure recall rights for all non-renewed employees.
- R. Providing for a statewide reduction in student teaching fees for pre-service teachers.
- S. Requiring the superintendent or designated evaluator to consult with the members of the school council before completing the principal's growth plan or evaluation.
- T. Facilitating a meaningful due process procedure, with just cause for classified school employees in dismissal proceedings.
- U. Providing Professional Association leave days for all KEA members for attendance at KEA professional meetings.
- V. Removing all exceptions that allow a superintendent's spouse to work in the superintendent's school district.
- W. Opposing state and local so-called Right to Work legislation and ordinances.

**4. Advocate for adequate school employee compensation, sufficient retirement benefits and affordable health insurance for public school employees and their dependents.**

KEA Supports:

- A. Developing a compressed minimum state teacher's salary schedule with a required local contribution and equity between teachers and administrators on an index beginning at \$40,000 per year.
- B. Providing a living wage and a compressed salary schedule for all classified school employees.
- C. Increasing the minimum wage.
- D. Fully funding the annual cost of living allowance (COLA) for all retired school employees and maintaining the fiscal integrity of the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and the Kentucky Retirement System (KRS).
- E. Preventing reduction in school employee annual compensation.
- F. Providing quality, affordable health insurance for public school employees, retirees, and their dependents and spouses regardless of their age.
- G. Establishing a reasonable prevailing wage for government contracts that is no less than the statewide minimum wage.