



## KEA Legislative Program 2021-2022

### KEA Vision:

KEA is the preeminent voice for quality public education.

### KEA Mission:

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

**The Kentucky Education Association's (KEA) highest legislative priorities are:**

- **Ensure a free and appropriate public education for all of Kentucky's students**
- **Increase state revenue through non-regressive tax reform and other appropriate means**
  - **Fully fund all public pension plans**
  - **Maintain a defined benefit in all public pension plans**

### Legislative goals:

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

KEA supports:

1. Ensuring that the SEEK formula fully funds a high-quality education for every public-school student in the Commonwealth.
2. Advocating for a direct revenue stream to support all Kentucky public schools and/or public pension systems.
3. Prohibiting/not establishing vouchers, scholarship tax-credits, or any other means by which public dollars or resources are taken from Kentucky public-schools and used to fund private or charter schools.

#### B. Advocate for a high-quality education for every public-school student in the Commonwealth.

KEA supports:

1. Ensuring all pre-K through 12 classroom instruction is provided by teachers certified in the subject area being taught.
2. Providing state funded pre-school programs for all three- and four-year old children.

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3. Guaranteeing all children have access to visual and performing arts, physical education, library skills with library access, world language and world cultures education, practical living and career studies classes taught by an appropriately certified teacher.
4. Continuing to allow school districts to determine the start and end dates of their school calendar.
5. Establishing indoor/outdoor air quality standards for public schools, including, but not limited to prohibiting the use of tobacco and vaping products by students and adults on school premises, within school sanctioned vehicles, and at school sanctioned events.
6. Requiring recycling of materials in all school districts, if available
7. Establishing high standards and accountability for home-schooled students.
8. Establishing the deadline for bringing classes within maximum size at twenty (20) days after the first student attendance days.
9. Maintaining SBDM council authority to select principals.
10. Opposing any changes to the composition of SBDM councils which would dilute the voices of educators, parents, or other key stakeholders.
11. Opposing the superintendent or designee serving as SBDM chair when selecting principals.
12. Opposing adding requirements to a curriculum without SBDM approval.
13. Opposing the involuntary transfer of any educator after election to or during service of a term on the SBDM council.
14. 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 the governance, management, employment rules, enrollment practices, and student services outlined in this legislative program.

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15. 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.
16. Mandating that any new state education initiative is not required to be implemented without adequate funding and support.
17. Advocating for a student assessment system that uses formative assessment process to improve instruction; that measures higher order thinking skills; that includes multiple, high quality measures of student learning; that allows for timely student self-assessment; and links directly to the curriculum.
18. Providing all school employees with adequate information and support to implement high quality assessment and accountability systems.
19. 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.
20. 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.
21. Ensuring that all students learn and school employees, including transportation employees, work in a safe school environment.
22. Providing sustainable, adequate funding for the hiring and retention of school resource officers, mental health professionals, and health care professionals including, but not limited to, nurses and/or nurse practitioners.
23. Including a caseload cap on the number of preschool students with disabilities being served by any individual preschool teacher.

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24. Including a caseload cap on the number of students being served by an individual school counselor and/or mental health professional.
25. Providing every student and school employee with personal, reliable, computing devices supported by a state infrastructure which guarantees integral internet access.
26. 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 for collaboration of general and special education teachers.
27. Providing students with access to world languages, both spoken and signed.
28. 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.
29. Advocating 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.
30. Ensuring local, state, and federal policies eliminate institutional racism and injustices in schools and communities.
31. Partner with community and educational stakeholders to eradicate policies of discrimination to protect every person's right to be respected, supported, and live in a free and just society.
32. Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy, curricula, diversity and inclusion training, and bias (implicit and explicit) training in education.
33. Improving school safety by requiring all school buildings to have a limited entry access device.
34. Providing a focus on human trafficking training for all school employees.
35. Providing and supporting trauma informed and other qualified mental health professionals as well as educators who are trauma informed to better assist

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students with social emotional needs.

36. Implementing restorative practices at the school and district level which seek to improve school climate, foster healthier relationships between educators and students, decrease disciplinary disparities, engage students and families, and support social-emotional learning.
37. Implementing digital citizenship into curriculum in all school.
38. Ensuring that all legislation involving students and the criminal justice system focuses on restorative justice practices and effective, research-based interventions as opposed to increasing incarceration.
39. Providing ELL educators sufficient training and professional development opportunities to improve professional skill.
40. Preserving the ability of local school boards to levy compensating and four percent tax rates without the threat of recall and maintain the current standards for the recallable nickel tax and other school taxes subject to recall.

### **C. Advocate for strong professions.**

KEA supports:

1. Requiring that the school term cannot be extended without a commensurate increase in compensation for school employees.
2. 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.
3. Securing a minimum of three days of personal leave annually, with unused days converting to sick leave.
4. Providing financial assistance and professional support for all teachers pursuing rank change or National Board Certification.
5. Restoring school employees' rights to participate in all levels of school board elections.

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6. Securing collective bargaining for all school employees.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Opposing any measure that limits or removes due process for educators engaged in the disciplinary process.
10. Providing that the Education Professional Standards Board take disciplinary action based upon the standard of “clear and convincing evidence.”
11. Prohibiting the Education Professional Standards Board from acting 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.
12. Maintaining the Education Professional Standards Board as an impartial and independent agency removed from the influence of the Commissioner of Education and/or Governor.
13. Ensuring teacher contract time and student instructional time are measured by the same standard.
14. Prohibiting abuse of teacher time and requiring that teachers receive compensation for additional work that they perform as required to meet state mandates.
15. Establishing professional leave for all school employees to attend state level education related meetings and school related legal proceedings.
16. Opposing any form of pay based on student performance.
17. Adding an additional teacher and a classified employee to SBDM councils.
18. Providing area technology center employees the same rights in decision making as local school district teachers.

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19. Prohibiting the practice of unnecessary annual non-renewal of limited contract employees and assure recall rights for all non-renewed employees.
20. Providing for a statewide reduction in student teaching fees for pre-service teachers.
21. Requiring the superintendent or designated evaluator to consult with the members of the school council before completing the principal's growth plan or evaluation.
22. Facilitating a meaningful due process procedure, with just cause for classified school employees in dismissal proceedings.
23. Providing Professional Association leave days for all KEA members for attendance at KEA professional meetings.
24. Opposing state and local so-called Right to Work legislation and ordinances.
25. Ensuring transparency by advocating to make publicly available the semiannual report on Equal Employment Opportunity, as required by KRS 18A.138.
26. Ensuring all students have a safe learning environment by supporting school campuses as gun- free zones for students and staff and opposing school employees (excluding certified peace officers) from serving a dual role as educators and school safety personnel with weapons during school days and /or at school sponsored activities.
27. Clearly defining and admonishing nepotism in Kentucky public school hiring practices.
28. Supporting the evaluation of ESPs according to established criteria and providing feedback, training, and professional development opportunities that support continuous improvement in performance.
29. *Advocate for racial diversity in the teaching profession by supporting our Commonwealth's HBCU teacher preparation program, greater minority participation in teacher preparation programs throughout the Commonwealth, and other state-wide minority educator recruitment efforts.*

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

KEA Supports:

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1. 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.
2. Providing a living wage and a compressed salary schedule for all classified school employees that supports the costs of basic needs and is indexed to inflation.
3. Increasing the minimum wage.
4. 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) of Kentucky and the Kentucky Retirement System (KRS).
5. Maintaining the nomination, election, and governing practices of the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Board of Trustees and opposing any changes to the composition of the Board of Trustees that would diminish KEA member voice on the board.
6. Preventing reduction in school employee annual compensation.
7. Providing quality, affordable health insurance for public school employees, retirees, and their dependents and spouses regardless of their age.
8. Establishing a reasonable prevailing wage for government contracts that is no less than the statewide minimum wage.
9. Maintaining defined benefit pensions for all future hires.
10. Advocating that our state leadership and federal congressional delegation continue to fight for the repeal of GPO-WEP legislation.
11. Oppose all forms of privatization/outsourcing of ESP job classifications designed to reduce employee benefits, a practice that puts student safety at risk and undermines the continuity, quality, and cost-effectiveness of services.

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