

KEA President's Points

February 17, 2020



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

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

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Dear Member:

Last week we welcomed members and staff from Fifth District, KESPA, KEA-Retired, and Fayette County to KEA HQ and the Capitol for a Day of Learning.

Days of Learning began as an intentional way to inject educators' voices into the legislative process. Our ability to petition elected officials on behalf of our students, our professions, our districts, and our communities is essential in making sure public education moves forward in Kentucky. Thank you for continuing to invest your time and energy into this impactful program.

Last Week on the Hill

Senate Bill 7 - Update

Known as the SBDM bill, SB 7 was assigned to the House Education Committee on Monday, February 10. We will continue to work with Chair Regina Huff, members of the House Education Committee, and other key leaders in the House let them know that we have serious concerns about the bill. We urge all supporters of public education to take a moment to participate in the virtual action and speak up for SBDM's by clicking [here](#).

House Education Committee- The House Education Committee met on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, and moved the following bills to the full House for consideration:

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>	<u>KEA</u>
HB 20	Rep. Lewis	Appropriation for teachers	SUPPORT
HB 278	Rep. Koch	Postsecondary readiness	SUPPORT
HB 312	Rep. Meade	Foster children records and enrollment	TRACK
HB 331	Rep. Heavrin	Kentucky Educational Savings Plan	SUPPORT

Senate Education Committee- The Senate Education Committee met on Thursday, February 13, 2020, and moved the following bills to the full Senate for consideration:

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Issue(s)</u>
SB 101	Sen. Wilson	AN ACT relating awarding of credits under articulation agreements

House Local Government Committee- The House Local Government Committee met on Wednesday, February 12 and heard HB 272 for discussion only. KEA has no position on the bill, but we did mobilize members out of concern that the wording of the legislation could take away dental and vision insurance for more than 70,000 school employees. Because of the quick actions of our members and lobby team, the bill was heard in committee but not voted on pending new language that would alleviate the concern.

House State Government Committee- The House State Government Committee met on Thursday, February 13, and voted on [House Bill 402](#). House Bill 402 is part of two "clean-up" bills (the other is HB 401) that TRS has been working to get passed for a few years.

HB 402 would:

- Provide that breaks in service are required before returning to work for the employer even if in a position not covered by the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS);
- Begin running breaks in service from date of retirement;
- Prohibit prearranged agreements between a retiring member and employer for member to return to work after retirement and require certification thereof;
- Require retired members returning to work for public universities and community colleges to comply with the separation from service requirements;
- Reduce the \$500 minimum monthly disability benefit by benefit payments from all state-administered retirement systems for part-time employees and substitute teachers participating in the TRS who apply for disability benefits on or after July 1, 2020;
- Provide that part-time employees and substitute teachers are not eligible to apply for a disability retirement allowance if they are eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit;
- Provide that members who begin participating on or after July 1, 2020, shall not be eligible for a disability benefit if they are eligible for any unreduced benefit and that they shall have their \$500 minimum monthly disability benefit reduced by benefit payments from all state-administered retirement systems.

We will continue to track this bill.

[House Bill 401](#) would:

- Permit the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) to use and accept electronic signatures as deemed appropriate;
- Require all public employers to grant paid leave to teacher trustees serving on the TRS board;

- Specify the types of remuneration included in retirement incentives and that costs billed to employers for retirement incentives shall not be an obligation of the state;
- Provide that retirement incentives shall not increase final average salary or annual compensation;
- Add insurance to the items for which TRS may contract and delete requirement for the procurement of fiduciary bonds for board trustees and the executive secretary and add that the board may expend funds as necessary for indemnification and self-insurance;
- Automatically designate a TRS member's spouse as beneficiary for an active member's account balance upon employment until changed by the member;
- Declare the member's spouse as beneficiary of the active member's account balance in the event all named beneficiaries predecease the active member or the member fails to designate a beneficiary;
- Address service credit for contracts exceeding 185 days;
- Reference new retirement factors for out-of-state service purchases;
- Specify eligibility requirements for including annual leave credit in the retirement calculation for calendar-year contracts;
- Provide that full-time sabbatical leave by university staff participating in the TRS shall be deemed full-time employment for retirement purposes;
- Require employee and employer contributions to be paid during the period of sabbatical leave;
- Adjust the cost schedules of providing statutory benefit improvements for annuitants;
- Adjust the methods by which participating employers shall file contribution data and set penalties for noncompliance that TRS may impose;
- Require a refund of prior installment payments and a reduction in service credit for a member in default on installment payments;
- Include mediation awards as a method of dispute resolution that may be binding for the adjustment of a member's account;
- Authorize TRS to require more frequent submission of annual reports on reemployed employees by participating employers;
- Automatically designate a TRS member's spouse as beneficiary for a retired member's remaining account balance at the time of death unless changed by the member;
- Declare the member's spouse as beneficiary of the retired member's remaining account balance in the event all named beneficiaries predecease the retired member or the member fails to name a beneficiary for the account balance;
- Automatically designate a TRS member's spouse as beneficiary for the life insurance benefit available to

active and retired members unless changed by the member;

- Declare the member's spouse as beneficiary of the life insurance benefit available to active and retired members if, upon the death of the member, all named beneficiaries predecease the member or the member fails to name a beneficiary; and

KEA is tracking this bill, which has not yet been heard in committee.

Election Legislation Passed/On the Move

[HB 37](#)-HB 37 would require 100 hours of student instruction in the visual and performing arts. KEA SUPPORTS this bill.

[HB 278](#)- HB 278 would require the inclusion of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test as a measurement for postsecondary readiness for the state accountability system. KEA has no position on this bill.

[HB 312](#)-HB 312 would make it easier for the student data for children in the foster care system to be made available to new school districts when the student moves. KEA has no position on this bill.

This Week in Frankfort

Today is Presidents Day and a General Assembly holiday. The General Assembly will reconvene on Tuesday, February 18th at 4:00 p.m. Due to the holiday, the House Standing Committee on Education will not meet on Tuesday.

- Wednesday, February 20th: Senate State & Local Government- Noon (EST), Annex Room 154
- Fourth District & Fayette County Day of Learning on Thursday
- Thursday, February 21th: Senate Education Committee- 11:30 a.m. (EST), Annex Room 149

To see information on newly filed legislation, please click [here](#).

For more information and one pagers on KEA 2020 Legislative Issues, please click [here](#).

2020 Census - We Count

The importance of the U.S. Census to the well-being of children and the strength of their public schools cannot be overstated. Using census data, the federal government allocates tens of billions of dollars in education funds to states and localities annually using formulas that factor in population and poverty levels. An accurate census count is the critical first step to helping educators address the needs of every child who walks through their doors. The census count happens only once every 10 years; when we undercount young children, the consequences can last most of their childhood. [Click here for more information on the census and free resources for your school.](#)

KEA Scarf - Get Yours Today!

Members have been asking "where can I find/get a #RedforEd KEA Scarf?" Well look no further! You can order a #RedforEd KEA Scarf (and other KEA items) by visiting the KEA online store. All items are shipped directly to your home. [Click here to start shopping.](#)

Member Benefit

Are you in the process of preparing your taxes? Our NEA Member benefit partners have information and discounts to assist with your tax preparation needs. [Check out this article on educator tax deductions and discounts on tax preparation services.](#)

Save the Date



February 21 & 22	KEA Board of Directors Meeting
February 24	Public Pension Oversight Board Meeting - Capitol Annex 154
March 2	Read Across America Day
March 13 & 14	NEA Leadership Summit
March 20 & 21	NEA Education Support Professional Conference

Sincerely,

Eddie Campbell

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