**The top 10 facts you should know about K-12 education in Kentucky**

* Kentucky’s 4-year cohort high school graduation rate is among the top 10 in the nation;1 Kentucky graduates more of its low income students than any state in the nation, and has the smallest gap between the percentage of low income students and more affluent students who graduate on time.2
* Kentucky elementary and middle school students have registered greater gains in reading and math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the past decade than students in almost all other states;3 Kentucky elementary and middle school students now outperform the nation as a whole at most levels in reading, mathematics and science on NAEP.4
* In the last five years, Kentucky students have made significantly greater gains on the ACT than the rest of United States.5
* More Kentucky students are taking Advanced Placement tests and are scoring higher than ever before.6
* Kentucky has essentially the same academic standards in English/language arts and mathematics as the majority of the top 10 performing states in the country. 7 In an open survey, 88 percent of Kentuckians support the English/language arts and mathematics standards as written. 8
* Significantly more Kentucky public high school students are graduating from high school college/career-ready. College-ready means students are prepared to take entry-level, credit-bearing, college classes without remediation or additional coursework. Career-ready students earned an Industry-Recognized Career Certificate or a passing score on a Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment. 9
* On average, administering Kentucky’s state-level assessments take less than 1 percent of the total instructional time in a given school year. 10
* Nearly 90 percent of Kentucky teachers are engaged in the school improvement process. 11
* Kentucky ranks 7th in the nation in the percentage of its teachers who hold National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. 12
* Kentucky’s adjusted per-pupil expenditure (PPE) is $1,260 less than the national average. Only 15.8 percent of students go to school in a district with the PPE at or above the national average. Nationally, the number is 41.5 percent. 13

1 <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2013-14.asp>

2 <http://www.gradnation.org/report/2015-building-grad-nation-report>

3 <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2016/shr/16shr.ky.h35.pdf>, page 7

4 <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/statecomparisons/>

5 <http://education.ky.gov/comm/news/Documents/R%2015-091%20ACT%202015%20grads.pdf>

6 <http://education.ky.gov/comm/news/Documents/R15-097AP-SAT.pdf>

7 <http://www.corestandards.org/standards-in-your-state/>

<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/statecomparisons/>

8 <http://education.ky.gov/comm/UL/Pages/Kentucky-Core-Academic-Standards-Challenge.aspx>

9 <http://applications.education.ky.gov/SRC/AccountabilityByState.aspx> >Learners>CCR

[http://applications.education.ky.gov/SRC/CareerTechEducationByState.aspx](http://applications.education.ky.gov/SRC/CareerTechEducationByState.aspx%20) >CTE Specific College/Career-Readiness

10 <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Documents/Kentucky%20State%20Assessment%20time.pdf>

11 <http://www.tellkentucky.org/>

12 <http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/certification_2015/2015_staterankings_all_nbcts_percent_of_teaching_population.pdf>

13 <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2016/shr/16shr.ky.h35.pdf>, page 9

***Overall, how does Kentucky stack up against other states?***

* Buoyed by increased student achievement and a higher graduation rate, **in 2016 Kentucky moved up two places in the annual *Quality Counts* State-of-the-States Report Card** produced by *Education Week*, a national publication that focuses on P-12 education.
* The report tracks 39 indicators in three areas: K-12 achievement, school finance and chance for success. States earn points based on their performance on the indicators and are assigned grades and a ranking. **Kentucky received an overall grade of C, the same as the nation, putting it in 27th place, up from 29th place last year.**
* **Kentucky’s highest ranking came in K-12 Achievement at 16th place in the nation**. Within the category, **Kentucky’s strongest showing is based on its improvement over the past 12 years** in 4th-grade scores in math (2nd in the nation with a 13-point gain) and in reading (5th in the nation with a 9-point gain) on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The assessment, often referred to as the nation’s report card, is given in every state to a random group of students. In addition, Kentucky’s 4th-grade students ranked 9th in the country on the 2015 NAEP reading assessment.
* **Kentucky ranked in 6th place nationwide with a 12.2 percent gain in the improvement in its graduation rate between 2002 and 2012.**
* In addition, the state saw a dramatic increase in the number of high scores on Advanced Placement (AP) tests.
* One of the state’s biggest challenges in K-12 achievement is closing the achievement gap. Specifically, the 2016 *Quality Counts* report looked at the gap in performance between students who are eligible for free/reduced-price (F/R) meals – in Kentucky 60 percent of the student population – and those who are not. While a wide achievement gap between low-income students and their wealthier counterparts exists in every state in the nation, **the poverty gap in proficiency rates is lower in Kentucky than in the majority of states.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2015 COMBINED PROFICIENCY RATES REGIONAL COMPARISON** | | | | |
|  | F/R meal non-eligible | F/R meal eligible | Poverty Gap | Ranking |
| West Virginia | 40.2 | 22.2 | 18 | 1 |
| **Kentucky** | **51.6** | **25.3** | **26.3** | **18** |
| Indiana | 54.8 | 27.9 | 26.9 | 21 |
| Missouri | 49.1 | 22.1 | 27 | 23 |
| Tennessee | 49.6 | 21.6 | 28.1 | 29 |
| U.S. | 51 | 20.9 | 30.1 | n/a |
| Illinois | 51.6 | 20.6 | 31 | 39 |
| Ohio | 54 | 21.8 | 32.2 | 41 |
| Virginia | 54.8 | 20.7 | 34.1 | 46 |
| District of Columbia | 56.6 | 13.3 | 43.4 | 51 |

* This year the state put in place a strategy to reduce the number of novice learners and raise achievement for all students, especially in math.
* The School Finance category has two subcategories – equity and spending – and presents mixed news for the state. With the exception of one indicator, Kentucky scores in the top 15 of states in equity of school finance with the highest ranking in the relationship between district funding and local property wealth. The state ranks 45th in the country on the actual spending as a percent of the amount needed to bring all students to the median per pupil expenditure level in the state.
* In spending, the state ranks below the middle on most indicators. Kentucky’s adjusted per-pupil expenditure (PPE) is $1,260 less than the national average. However, of greater concern is the fact that only 15.8 percent of students go to school in a district with the PPE at or above the national average. Nationally, the number is 41.5 percent.
* The Chance for Success index captures the importance of education in a person’s lifetime from cradle to career. Its 13 indicators span a variety of factors including preparation in early childhood, the performance of public schools, and educational and economic outcomes in adulthood. Kentucky ranked lowest, at 35th in this area, primarily due to high poverty, low parental employment and the relatively low numbers of adults in the state with more than a high school education.

The full 2016 *Quality Counts* report is available on the Education Week [website](http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2016/01/07/index.html?intc=EW-QC16-LFTNAV).

The Kentucky-specific report is available at the following link: <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2016/shr/16shr.ky.h35.pdf>.

***Other Kentucky K-12 education facts:***

**GRADUATION RATE**

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2013-14.asp), the state’s 2013-14 **graduation rate of 87.5 percent ranks Kentucky ninth overall and far exceeds the national graduation rate** of 82.3 percent. The state’s grad rate increased in the 2014-15 school year to 88 percent. A national comparison is not yet available.

The [2015 Building a Grad Nation](http://www.gradnation.org/report/2015-building-grad-nation-report) report released annually by the Alliance for Excellent Education, America’s Promise Alliance, Civic Enterprises and the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University called **Kentucky “a beacon to all other states.”** Even though more than half of the state’s students are considered low-income, **Kentucky’s graduation rate for low-income students** (85.4 percent) **is nearly identical to its graduation rate for middle/high-income students** (86.8 percent) and well above the national average for all students. According to the report, **nationwide, low-income students are graduating at a rate 15 percentage points behind their more affluent peers.**

**STANDARDS**

In 2013, more than 6,700 Kentucky teachers responded to an anonymous online survey about Kentucky’s Academic Standards conducted by the Kentucky Department of Education.

* 77 percent were enthusiastic about teaching the new standards in their classrooms
* 86 percent felt they were prepared to teach new English/language arts and mathematics standards
* 90 percent agree that the standards are more rigorous than previous standards
* 67 percent believe the standards will have a positive impact on college/career-readiness of students; 25 percent don’t’ think there will be much change.

In 2014, as **part of its regular standards review process, the Kentucky Department of Education created a website for public input on the English/language arts and mathematics standards.**

* Nearly 4,000 people took part in the online standards feedback process, which was widely publicized by the Kentucky Department of Education, education partners and the media.
* Almost 50 percent of those who weighed in on the standards were teachers or retired teachers; about 20 percent were parents; 8 percent were administrators or school district staff; and about 8 percent represented business or the community at-large. The remainder were students, professors and state agency partners.
* Overall, 88 percent of the respondents gave the standards a “thumbs up” and did not indicate any changes were needed.
* About 12 percent of respondents indicated they would like to see some sort of change in one or more of the standards. Of those who wanted to see a change, 71 percent wanted to see one or more of the standards moved to a different grade level; 32 percent suggested a rewrite of a standard and about 8 percent wanted to see a current standard broken into two or more standards. Respondents could suggest more than one change to the standards.
* Teams of content experts, teachers from K-12 and postsecondary, and education stakeholders are working with agency staff to review all of the feedback collected as part of the challenge and propose revisions that have merit for improving the overall quality and appropriateness of the standards to promote college/career readiness for all students.
* Proposed changes will be shared with educators for clarity before going to the Kentucky Board of Education for consideration. Any changes to the standards would not be implemented until the 2016-17 school year or later.

Kentucky has essentially the same academic standards in English/language arts and mathematics as the majority of the top 10 performing states in the country.

**TEACHERS**

* Kentucky has a total of 3,273 teachers who have earned National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification, the 9th most in the nation. Nearly 8 percent of Kentucky’s total teaching force is board certified, putting the state in 7th place nationally.

**TESTING**

* On average, administering Kentucky’s state-level assessments take less than 1 percent of the total instructional time in a given school year.

**ACHIEVEMENT**According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the Nation’s Report Card, **Kentucky students outperform their peers at most levels in reading, mathematics and science.**

**NAEP READING**  **NAEP MATHEMATICS**

**NAEP SCIENCE**

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**In the last five years, Kentucky students have made greater gains on the ACT than the rest of United States.**

**Kentucky Public High School Graduates’ Average ACT Scores**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | **2015** | **KY 5-year gain** | **US 5-year gain** |
| English | 18.7 | 19.0 | 19.2 | 19.4 | **19.6** | **+.9** | **--** |
| Mathematics | 18.8 | 19.1 | 19.2 | 19.3 | **19.6** | **+.8** | **-.1** |
| Reading | 19.6 | 19.8 | 19.8 | 20.2 | **20.3** | **+.7** | **+.2** |
| Science | 19.3 | 19.5 | 19.7 | 20.0 | **20.1** | **+.8** | **+.2** |
| Composite | 19.2 | 19.5 | 19.6 | 19.9 | **20.0** | **+.8** | **+.1** |

In 2015**, more Kentucky public high school students took rigorous Advanced Placement (AP)   
tests and scored higher than ever before**.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Tests**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of Test-Takers** | **Number of Tests** | **Number of Scores 3-51** |
| **2011** | 23,443 | 37,818 | 17,336 |
| **2012** | 26,451 | 43,079 | 20,264 |
| **2013** | 28,066 | 45,419 | 21,854 |
| **2014** | 30,133 | 48,734 | 23,519 |
| **2015** | **31,658** | **50,593** | **24,311** |

**1** Students must earn at least a 3 to earn college credit for the course. Five is the highest score possible.

AdvanceKentucky is a statewide math-science initiative designed to expand access to, and participation and success in academically rigorous coursework such as AP classes. A total of 101 Kentucky public high schools in 74 districts have participated since its inception in 2008. **The AP participation and performance of various student groups in Kentucky’s public high schools has increased significantly** under AdvanceKentucky’s mission to engage many more students traditionally underrepresented in AP, including minority and low income students.

**CAREER EDUCATION**Kentucky has adopted a comprehensive plan to modernize Career and Technical Education with an emphasis on integration of rigorous academic standards, 21st-century skills (such as communication, collaboration, analytical ability, critical thinking and problem solving), project-based learning and the establishment of full-time career and technical education programs aligned with state and regional workforce needs. This effortrecognizes career and technical education as a viable pathway for students with the understanding that some sort of postsecondary training or education is normally required.

**COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS**

**In 2015, 66.8% of Kentucky public high school students graduated college- and/or career-ready.**

College-readymeans students were prepared to take entry-level, credit-bearing, college classes   
without remediation or additional coursework.   
  
Career-readystudents earnedan Industry-Recognized Career Certificate or a passing score on a   
Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment, aligned to a Career and Technical Education Career Pathway.

According to the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics, **students who graduate from high school having reached the Kentucky college/career-readiness benchmarks realize more success their first year in college than those who are not**.

* They have a higher GPA – 2.6 versus 1.7.
* They complete more college hours – 22 versus 11.
* They return for a second year of postsecondary at higher rates –85 percent versus 65 percent.

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

* **More than 44,900 Kentucky educators (89 percent) completed the 2015 TELL Kentucky Survey which includes questions in the areas of:**
  + Community Engagement and Support
  + Teacher Leadership
  + School Leadership
  + Managing Student Conduct
  + Use of Time
  + Professional Development
  + Facilities and Resources
  + Instructional Practices and Support
  + New Teacher Support
* **Their opinions will help inform improvement plans in schools and districts across the state and guide policy decisions at the state level.**
* Of the 36 Priority Schools assessed during the 2014-15 school year, 11 schools exited Priority status, four scored in the Distinguished category, nine scored in the Proficient category and nine were categorized as Progressing.