

# First Quarter Report 2013/2014



# Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children Mission

We are committed to the belief that all children can learn and have a right to quality education.

KECSAC protects and assures this right by accessing resources and providing support to programs that educate State Agency Children.

Those children who do not receive an education of quality cannot realize their greatest potential.

We believe these goals are achieved through the process of interagency collaboration.

To accomplish the mission, all members of this statewide partnership must exemplify and publicly promote collaborative relationships with its partners and other associates.



## Interagency Advisory Group

**Doug Bennett**, *Laurel County School District*

**Sherri Clusky**, *Department of Education*

**Kara Fresh**, *Department for Behavioral Health,  
Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities*

**Barbara Hamilton**, *Department of Juvenile Justice*

**Janice Johnston**, *Department for Behavioral Health,  
Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities*

**Chrissy Jones**, *Franklin County School District*

**Sylvia Kuster**, *Department of Juvenile Justice*

**Sonny McManus**, *SACSAA President, Mayfield YDC*

**Melissa Rogers**, *SACSAA President-Elect, The Academy*

**Paula Saenz**, *Department for Community Based Services*

**Denise Weider**, *Department for Community Based Services*

*“Working Together  
to Educate All of  
Kentucky’s Children”*

In accordance with the KECSAC regulations, 505 KAR 1:080, the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children, has a governing structure that includes oversight by an Interagency Advisory Group (IAG), composed of representatives of the state agencies, KDE, the State Agency Children School Administrators’ Association (SACSAA) and a superintendent from a school district that provides education to state agency children. This group is to provide recommendations for policy and procedure development for KECSAC. The independent representatives of the state agencies, including KDE, are appointed to serve on the IAG by their respective commissioners. The president and president-elect of SACSAA serve on the IAG and are elected to those positions by the membership of the independent organization. The superintendent member of the IAG is selected by standing members of the IAG, based on recommendations or nominations by SACSAA membership. All members of the IAG serve without compensation from KECSAC.

# A Message from KECSAC Director Dr. Ronnie Nolan

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## *My Fellow Kentuckians,*

Education certainly seems to be on everyone's mind these days. No matter the particular circle you are in, you will hear countless experts extolling the virtues of a quality education. Whether it is our local legislators talking about the critical importance of providing appropriate levels of funding or our Commissioner of Education promoting best practice schools across the Commonwealth, people are talking about education with passion and urgency. For those of you who are familiar with our professional development series or have attended one of our many programs, you know that KECSAC is committed to providing opportunities for all of us to discuss the educational needs of state agency children, and how we can work together to ensure they have a future of boundless opportunity.

Education is essentially how we communicate with each other, on various levels and in multiple ways. It is how we prepare, inform, counsel, and inspire those who are most vulnerable, yet who will eventually replace us as guardians of our institutions and in our society. This means every single educational decision we make today matters, not merely on a personal level, but on a collective societal level. The decisions to implement national standards or to fund education at appropriate levels will have lasting impacts on the services we provide our children and on society. It's a responsibility that we all share, not just teachers, not just legislators, not the Commissioner alone, but all of us. That's why it is so critical that KECSAC continue our work to ensure every child receives a quality education. We know firsthand that education is the societal equalizer and the key to a future filled with unparalleled promise. That is why we are committed to working together for the benefit of our state's most vulnerable student population; those children in the care or custody of the Commonwealth.

During the first quarter of this fiscal year, we have experienced many great accomplishments while continuing to share the needs of our children with our state agency partners, legislators and policy makers. Our professional development series continues to impress our educators while providing much needed, hands-on, implementable skills for our teachers and administrators. More than 300 of our teachers and administrators participated in the largest alternative education conference in Kentucky, hosted by KECSAC and sponsored by DJJ, DCBS, the Kentucky Center for School Safety and the Kentucky National Guard. They had the chance to learn from other teachers who are actively implementing challenging and rigorous academic offerings in their programs across the Commonwealth. In addition, our new educators training provided smaller group discussions with current practitioners and large group instruction with experts in various fields of education. We are also actively engaged with our local school districts in meeting the educational needs of our children while collaborating with partnering private child care agencies, the Department of Juvenile Justice and behavioral health professionals from across the Commonwealth.

These accomplishments, and many others, are highlighted in this quarterly report. You will find enclosed a summary of our work and accomplishments, as well as details related to our ongoing initiatives. The ambitious action agenda we are highlighting here could not happen without the broad base of support we have formed with our state agency partners, our local school districts and the teachers and administrators working on behalf of state agency children. We appreciate your continued support as we work to enhance the educational services provided to our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronnie Nolan', written over a white background.

Ronnie Nolan, Ed.D.  
Director, KECSAC

# Professional Development Updates

## KECSAC Kicks Off 2013-14 School Year with Successful At-Risk Conference

KECSAC's 12th Annual Alternative Strategies for Educating Students At-Risk Conference had a very special focus – our students and what becomes of them when educators and caring adults go the extra mile to ensure their success!

The conference opened on July 24 with dynamic speaker and peer advocate, Ian Rosser. Ian recently graduated from Eastern Kentucky University, works in radio and is pursuing a career in music. But what makes Ian so relevant to the KECSAC audience is that he was a state agency child who overcame severe educational obstacles to become a college graduate and youth advocate, speaking and working on behalf of students still navigating the system and dealing with difficult transitions. Ian shared his personal story of life in foster care, adult advocates who encouraged his education and his current work on Kentucky's Youth Leadership Council. He did so with humor and touching honesty. Ian left the audience both in stitches and ready to dive into the two day "At-Risk" Conference.

The conference consisted of 30 different break-out sessions for participants to choose from. Topics ranged from core content strategies and youth panels to behavioral health interventions and addiction issues. One session was facilitated by the Commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services, Teresa James. Ms. James shared the importance of permanency goals as they relate to educational needs. The Commissioner also presented plaques

during the annual SACSAA awards luncheon held on day one of the conference. Each year the State Agency Children School Administrator Association honors outstanding KECSAC teachers, administrators, support personnel and students. SACSAA president Sonny McManus highlighted the accomplishments of each award winner as Commissioner James presented them with plaques. Winners included:



*Ian Rosser opened the conference on July 24, speaking about his time as a state agency child and the obstacles he overcame.*

### Support Staff of the Year

Emma Tade | Lincoln Trail Behavioral Health, Hardin Co. Schools  
Joy Duvall | Green River YDC, Butler Co. Schools

### Teacher of the Year

Hannah Scott | Safe Harbor Academy, Woodford Co. Schools  
Crystal Culp | McCracken RJDC, McCracken Co. Schools

### School Administrator of the Year

Anthony Young | Warren County Day Treatment, Warren Co. Schools  
Lucinda Mills | McCracken RJDC, McCracken Co. Schools

Following the educator awards, outstanding students were recognized. The audience learned a little bit about the struggles each student has faced and celebrated their accomplishments as they met and received awards from Commissioner James. Keyontrez Johnson and Jason Lee of Green River Youth Development Center were both award winners. Ana Garcia-Luna of Ramey-Estep High School received an award and spoke briefly to the audience. Her words touched the group and offered encouragement that their work is important and has real impact.

## Professional Development Updates



*George Duvall shared poignant and comedic stories about the trials of his childhood and growing up in Kentucky's foster care system.*

If Ian Rosser represented the recent graduate of Kentucky's out-of-home care system, the closing keynote speaker represented a man with a similar background who has had years to reflect on that journey through foster care and youth facilities. George Duvall told the story of a seasoned motivation speaker, youth advocate and proud father who uses the experiences of a difficult childhood to inform his work on behalf of students like him throughout Kentucky and the nation. George's engaging and comical delivery leaves room for the audience to know the heartbreak of a child who felt he did not belong. This inspired the audience to return to their classrooms and make a connection with each child whose lives they will touch in the coming year.

KECSAC would like to thank the conference planning committee and generous sponsors, including the Department of Juvenile Justice, Kentucky Department of Education, Department for Community Based Services and Kentucky Youth Army National Guard Youth Challenge Program, for making this year's conference a success. Over 300 educators from all over Kentucky gained new strategies and motivation for working with one of Kentucky's most vulnerable populations of students. We look forward to seeing everyone back next year!

### New Educators in State Agency Programs Learn Valuable Skills

KECSAC welcomed new teachers and administrators in state agency programs to Eastern Kentucky University for New Educators' Training on August 28, 2013. Last year KECSAC piloted a new format for "New Educators' Training" – a one day professional development focused on learning what it means to work in a KECSAC program with state agency children. That pilot was a success and the format was repeated for this year's training, thereby reducing the strain on programs by requiring less time away from the classroom.

The day focused on strategy sharing by experienced KECSAC educators and small group sessions with KECSAC and state agency staff. Forty participants took advantage of the opportunity to get to know their KECSAC Program Improvement Specialist and what they could expect from monitoring visits and to talk with DJJ representatives about working with state agency children. When the group was not separated by region or state agency, they came together to learn about the unique behavioral health needs of KECSAC students, strategies for differentiating in multi-grade classrooms and tips for utilizing the Individual Learning Plan and Career Cruising. Presenters and facilitators included staff from the Department for Behavioral Health, Kentucky Department of Education and successful state agency programs throughout the state. The day ended with a presentation of Where the Heart Is, a transition program aimed at understanding the difficulties our kids face and making their adjustments easier.



*Participants access career cruising during an interactive training by KDE staff April Pieper and Amy Patterson.*

KECSAC would like to thank all those who helped make this day a success!

# Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

## Unified Juvenile Code Task Force

The Unified Juvenile Code Task Force has entered into a partnership with The Pew Charitable Trusts to review juvenile services in Kentucky. The Pew Charitable Trusts previously worked with Kentucky lawmakers in 2001 to address concerns with the adult corrections system and have now been contracted to work with the Task Force on juvenile services. Representative John Tilley, D-Hopkinsville along with Senator Whitney Westerfield, R-Hopkinsville co-chair the Task Force and are committed to a complete review of the juvenile system in Kentucky. Both have noted they plan to have legislation presented in the 2014 legislative session to address concerns and recommendations raised by the Task Force and the Pew Charitable Trusts. One of the primary concerns of the Trusts and the Task Force are services provided to status offenders within the juvenile system. The goal is to “make the juvenile justice system more efficient, fair and less costly,” Representative Tilley said.

## National Dropout Prevention Conference 2014

KECSAC continues to partner with the National Dropout Prevention Network to host the 2014 national conference in Louisville, Kentucky, November 2-5, 2014. Members of the executive planning team have worked with the national center to begin planning for the conference which will feature outstanding keynote speakers from Kentucky. Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner, Hasan Davis, will serve as the opening keynote speaker for the national event and will be paired in keynote speaking duties with Dr. Gene Wilhoit from the National Center for Innovation in Education. We are excited to offer this wonderful opportunity for professional development with our colleagues from across the Commonwealth and from around the world. Kentucky was selected to host his national event in large part due to the recent passage of the graduation bill which raised the minimum dropout age to 18 years old in Kentucky. Mrs. Jane Beshear, First Lady of Kentucky, continues to be a strong educational advocate and will serve as a key member of the planning team.



## Interagency Advisory Group

KECSAC's Interagency Advisory Group (IAG) met during the first quarter on August 13, 2013 at the Audubon Youth Development Center Campus in Jefferson County. Members of the KECSAC IAG discussed updates with the Uninterrupted Scholars Act and the Teacher Professional Growth Evaluation System (TPGES), as well as changes in status of KECSAC programs for the new school year and other KECSAC updates.



During the meeting, the IAG welcomed the new superintendent representative Doug Bennett from Laurel County Schools. After the discussion, members were able to tour Audubon Youth Development Center. A big thanks goes to Audubon and its staff for welcoming the IAG to their program!

*Above: the IAG discussed many updates in alternative education issues. Below: after the meeting members were able to tour Audubon YDC where they saw murals the residents had painted.*

# Policies and Ongoing Initiatives

## Annual Fall Statewide SACSAA Meeting

The State Agency Children School Administrator Association (SACSAA) met for their annual Fall meeting during the first quarter on September 13, 2013 at the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau in Elizabethtown, Ky. The meeting followed a different format than in the past by allotting time for administrators to network and discuss issues based on the types of programs they work with. Once in groups, administrators had an



*Administrators met in groups based on the type of program they're with, to network and discuss issues relevant to their programs.*

hour to discuss topics and issues relevant to their programs and were also asked to report back with improvements they thought would help KECSAC operate more efficiently in the future.



*School Administrator Dustin Howard with the Phoenix Academy in Clark County, accepted plaques of recognition for three Best Practice Strategies his program has implemented.*

A training for the new Alternative Education Regulation by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) was also offered that included training on how this regulation would affect how information is entered in Infinite Campus. During the meeting, Director Ronnie Nolan acknowledged SACSAA School Administrator of the Year Award winners and presented plaques of recognition to administrators whose programs were recognized by KDE as implementing Best Practice Strategies in Alternative Education.

KECSAC Teaching in Action Series  
Adair Youth Development Center  
Adair County Schools

November 1, 2013

401 Appleby Drive  
Columbia, KY

Join us to learn strategies from the teachers, administrators and students of a program using innovative strategies to promote student achievement.

Earn EILA Hours  
Network with Colleagues  
See "Teaching in Action"

Contact Katie Helton to register.  
katie.helton@eku.edu  
859-622-8538



## KECSAC Announcements

### KECSAC Welcomes ECU College of Education Dean

Dr. Verna Lowe, assumed her position as new Dean of the College of Education at ECU. Dr. Lowe, who was named to her current position in May, was previously the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning at Asbury University. She holds a bachelor's degree in special education and elementary education from Southern Wesleyan University (Central Wesleyan College) in South Carolina, a master's degree in school psychology and a doctoral degree in special education personnel from the University of Kentucky. Dr. Lowe is committed to supporting KECSAC's mission and we are excited to welcome her as our Dean!



*Dr. Verna Lowe, ECU College of Education Dean.  
Photo by ECU Public Relations/Salem Peters.*

### Dr. Ronnie Nolan Named IATDP's 2013 Person of the Year

Ronnie Nolan, director of the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC) housed in the College of Education, has been selected as the 2013 "Person of the Year" by the International Association of Truancy and Dropout Prevention (IATDP).

IATDP is an association of educators, government officials and stakeholders whose history of truancy and dropout prevention efforts date back to 1911. IATDP's mission is to create a partnership that facilitates the dissemination of information, emerging practices and research designed to support learning and increase high school graduation rates. This award recognizes persons in the field of truancy and dropout prevention and related work who have significantly contributed to the field through their work, education, or service.



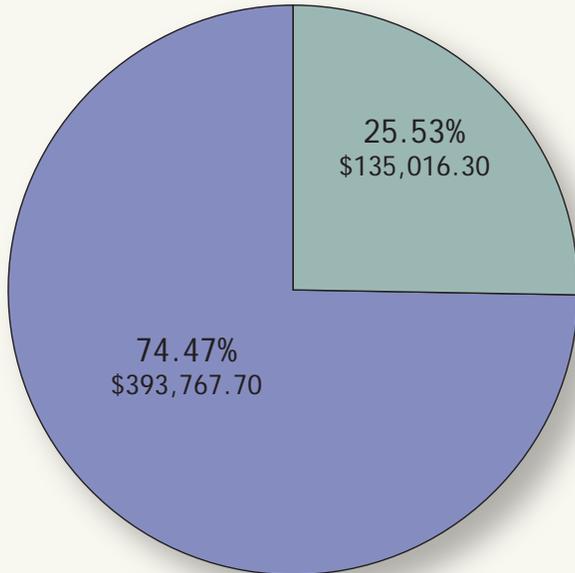
An ardent supporter of children at risk, Nolan noted that credit for the award shouldn't be his alone. "It is the hard work and dedication of our teachers, administrators and staff, the support of local school district superintendents, and the collaboration with state partners that makes our unique model for state agency children truly successful," he said. Acknowledgment for this award is also credited to KECSAC's partners, the Kentucky Departments of Education, Juvenile Justice, Community Based Services and Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Eastern Kentucky University, as well as local education agencies across Kentucky.

To view KECSAC's current and past publications including our newsletter "The Collaborative" and our Annual Reports visit [www.kecsac.eku.edu](http://www.kecsac.eku.edu).

# KECSAC Quarterly Budget Updates

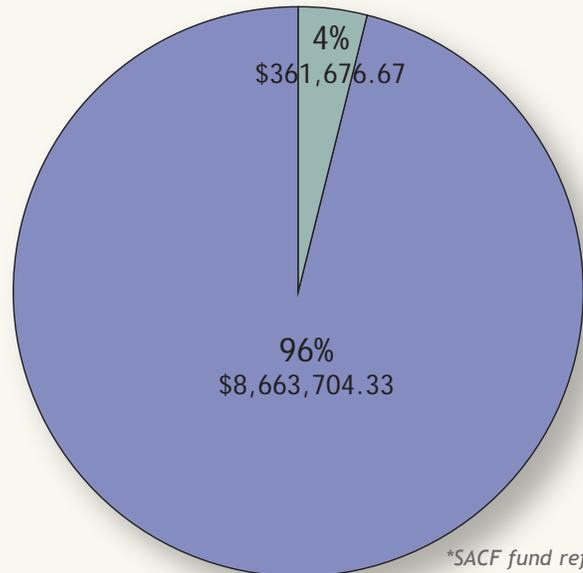
## Administrative Budget

● 1st Qtr ● Remaining



## State Agency Children's Fund \*

● 1st Qtr ● Remaining



*\*SACF fund reflects budget information totals submitted as of 10/10/13*



### KECSAC Teaching in Action Series The Phoenix Academy Clark County Schools

November 11, 2013

100 Vaught Road  
Winchester, KY

Join us to learn strategies from the teachers, administrators and students of a program recognized by the Kentucky Department of Education for Best Practices in Alternative Education.

Contact Katie Helton to register.  
katie.helton@eku.edu  
859-622-8538

Earn EILA Hours • Network with Colleagues • See "Teaching in Action"



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“Working Together to Educate All of Kentucky’s Children”

Kentucky Department of Education  
Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice  
Kentucky Department for Community Based Services  
Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities  
State Agency Children School Administrator Association  
Local Education Agencies  
Eastern Kentucky University/College of Education

