Outstanding teachers in KECSAC programs and schools across the Commonwealth continue to vary their lesson plans, teachings styles and assessments in order to best teach state agency children whose learning styles often require more hands on activities when learning Kentucky’s Core Content. Two programs, Maryhurst in Louisville and Laurel County Day Treatment in London, are making strides in varied instruction and assessment models.

Jill Tabor, principal at Maryhurst reports that the teaching staff has focused on varying assessments to meet the wide range of learning needs Maryhurst students have. She remarked, “Maryhurst teachers understand that a paper/pencil test does not always demonstrate what a student fully knows and understands.” The faculty has implemented various assessment strategies which allow students to demonstrate their learning. For example, three times per year, the students engage in a Learning Showcase. The Learning Showcase enables students to present Core Content information using technology, presentation boards, and their presentation skills. Presenters are arranged in stations throughout the school and student and adult spectators rotate from station to station to watch each production.

Did you know that at least 55% of KECSAC students—that is of state agency children—qualify for free tuition at any of Kentucky’s public postsecondary institutions, including all four year universities and community & technical colleges? In December of 1999, the Foster Care Independence Act was signed into law. Title I of the Act is the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). This legislation helps ensure that young people involved in the foster care system or committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, get the tools they need to make the most of their lives. Children in foster care often have foster parents who can help them fill out the forms, search and apply for schools and encourage them on their path to higher education. State agency children in your programs, however, only have YOU: teachers, school administrators, support staff and counselors to help them with this process.

The Chafee Act ensures that tuition and mandatory student fees for any undergraduate program of any Kentucky public postsecondary institution,
I sat quietly in a dimly lit room while a videographer captured on film an interview being conducted by one of our school administrators. A young man, quiet, poised, strong and vulnerable sat on a small stool telling us about the life experiences that led him to one of our programs and about what he was learning now that would change his life forever. In the darkness of that room, tears began to form in my eyes as I listened with eagerness and compassion as he recounted years of abuse, alcohol and drug use, missed opportunities and failed excuses. I listened to him talk about the change he has made in his life since coming into our program and about the future he can now envision for himself and his family. He, in a soft, relaxed but solid voice outlined his dreams and aspirations. And then, slowly lifting his head, looking directly into the camera he sent a message to all those people in his previous life who didn’t believe in him, those who thought they knew him and those who sold him short on potential and possibility. He said, “I’m better than you thought I was.”

Over the last few months I have had the fortunate opportunity to talk with so many concerned people from across this great Commonwealth who believe in our students. People who see the potential and those who know, that with support, our students can achieve at high levels. In fact, in the last few weeks we have been highly engaged in a debate about our students with legislation being proposed and discussed at great lengths; it seems everyone has an opinion about what is best for our kids. The beauty of this is that we have a common view that high expectations are necessary, that accountability for what we do is expected and that, in the end, our students deserve our very best. I am continually impressed by the leadership of our school district partners, our school administrators, program administrators and teachers who are so passionate about the students being served in our programs. I feel confident that the groundwork we have laid as a team has prepared us to meet the challenges of our students and to be responsive to other stakeholders in the Commonwealth who value our students and the work we do.

As we navigate the many challenges our students face and as we continually evolve to meet those needs, I hope each of you will be reminded of that student who sat so quietly in that interview room, the young man who reminded each of us that he is constantly changing, that he is growing and that he has a future. Indeed, he is better than some folks thought he was. You can watch parts of his interview and enjoy the full feature discussing alternative education in Kentucky on our website at www.kecsac.eku.edu.

Yours Truly,

Dr. Ronnie Nolan
KECSAC Director

**KECSAC Updates: Listen to the Children**

Student interviews have commenced or are scheduled at Ramey-Estep High School, Ashland Day Treatment, Brooklawn, Hope Hill, Bellewood and Foothills Academy. The interviews will provide background information about state agency children, their adversities, goals and expectations regarding their education. Information gained through this research will be used to inform state policy makers about the intense needs of this population of students and guide future initiatives aimed at improving the educational and treatment services provided to state agency children.

Children in the care and custody of the Commonwealth of Kentucky have unique emotional, physical and educational needs. No one understands this better than the children themselves. **Listen to the Children: Voices that Beg to be Heard** is a research project designed to provide these children an opportunity to voice the successes and barriers they have encountered while receiving educational services at a state agency children’s program.

**Voices that Beg to be Heard** is modeled after a project completed by KECSAC in 1996-1997 called “Listen to the Children: Interviews with State Agency Children about their Education.” This report provided insightful personal perspectives about the lives and educational needs of state agency children.
their learning is through the computer program Windows Movie Maker. A technology specialist came to Maryhurst and trained the students and faculty on how to use the Movie Maker program. Since then, students are using the program by inserting pictures, text information, music and voice over to convey and illustrate their understanding of a particular concept or curriculum strand. Currently, Stephanie Abernethy’s Social Studies classes are developing Civil Rights movies. The students are highly engaged in the project and enjoy this differentiated approach to expressing their learning.

Krenda Anders at Laurel County Day Treatment credits an Integrated Unit Model for student success. Since Laurel County Day Treatment consists of students in grades six through twelve, this unit was intended to target varied learning goals, career scopes and learning styles. The objective was to integrate Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics while allowing students the opportunity to gain knowledge of the real world. The entire unit was designed to build anticipation for the culminating activity; when the entire school would unite on the campus and release helium filled balloons in unison. Most of all, Ms. Anders reports, “we wanted our students to feel ownership in the world in which they live.”

High School students kicked off the unit in their science class by gathering research about the environmental impact of launching helium balloons. This assignment led them to collect information on factors that could determine the distance a helium vehicle might travel, their bearing on the environment, and eco-friendly alternatives that could be used in the activity. Students presented their findings as power point presentations on the final day of the unit.

Language Arts content provided a great opportunity for writing, which is targeted in all grade levels. Students enhanced their writing folder by applying the writing process to develop a letter that would inform the reader of its purpose and provide instructions for corresponding. The final draft was attached to a helium balloon and launched on the final day of the unit. The knowledge acquired in this holistic approach provided support for students to develop viewpoints and opinions to develop a technical writing piece for an authentic audience.

Core Content in social studies was implemented as students constructed a large US map that was used to plot the location of the departure of the balloons and their final destination, if they were lucky enough to receive a response. Lesson plans were created that guided students to describe ways in which the physical environment both promotes and limits human activities and led students to discover mountain ranges that could affect air travel. Small group discussions were facilitated to encourage students to predict where they thought a helium powered vehicle might land and factors that could determine its fate. Responses from student letters were plotted on a US map and the information was used in teaching varied math content.

Students in the diverse math classes applied number concepts and used the data to develop the skills needed to calculate speed, distance and height. Thus far, a total of five students have received letters of response from as far away as the Knoxville, Tennessee area and as nearby as fifteen miles away. Each response indicated that the balloon had traveled in a southward direction. As letters were returned, students utilized their math skills to determine information concerning their balloon’s route. Student data was recorded on the map and displayed to be observed by all participants.

Academic expectations for this unit were assessed through daily assignments, open response questions in each area of the integrated curriculum and writing. However, the most meaningful outcome for this unit was student participation, anticipation and the development of self awareness regarding their individual environmental impact on the planet. This was truly a successful unit!

Integrating units across disciplines, providing hands-on as well as traditional paper/pencil assessments and encouraging curiosity among students to explore topics of interest to them, are all hallmarks of the kinds of rigorous, differentiated and formative academic work state agency children excel at and the kind of work that ultimately helps them to flourish as learners.
Warren Regional Juvenile Detention Center has had two guest lecturers visit the center as part of the Warren County Public Library’s (WCPL) My Life is an Open Book Lecture Series. John Thorndike presented on November 4, 2010 and Dr. Tori Murden McClure presented on November 18, 2010. The lecture series features best-selling authors who have lived fascinating and interesting lives.

John Thorndike, son of Life Editor, Mr. Joe Thorndike, spoke to the students concerning the challenges of being the son of such a famous man and caring for his 95 year old father as he died of Alzheimer’s disease. John Thorndike is the author of two novels, Anna Delaney’s Child and The Potato Baron, and a previous memoir, Another Way Home. He lives in Athens, Ohio.

Mr. Thorndike spoke about what it means to have a healthy father/son relationship and he shared his personal experiences of being a son and a father. In order to process Mr. Thorndike’s lecture, Ms. Erica Jacknin had the students do a Venn Diagram of their relationship with their father in an Art Class. They drew two overlapping circles. On one side, they had their characteristics, abilities, likes, etc. The overlapping area was for things they had in common with their father. Unfortunately, it was also a very challenging activity for some of the students who didn’t know their father and therefore didn’t have a reference point for his circle. However, it was valuable in that it highlighted for them the need to be active and present in their own children’s lives one day!

As Rebecca Painter reflects, “Several of the facility faculty and staff shared stories of the challenges faced with aging parents. Some have parents with strokes and others have grandparents with Alzheimer’s. All in all, his visit touched several lives and we sincerely appreciated the time he spent with us.”

The second installment of the speakers series at WRJDC featured Dr. Tori Murden McClure. Dr. McClure is the author of A Pearl in the Storm: How I Found My Heart in the Middle of the Ocean, a book about the challenges and triumphs she encountered while rowing across the Atlantic. It took two attempts, but she finally succeeded in being the first woman to row across the Atlantic.

Dr. McClure told the students about her family and the fact that she takes care of a brother with disabilities. She shared with them the lessons learned from him and challenges faced by both of them due to his restricted abilities. She credits him with being the catalyst for many of her successes. She also shared her love story of proposing to her husband while rowing on the Atlantic. At 35, she felt confident enough to pop the question herself!

Dr. McClure has a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Smith, a Master of Divinity from Harvard, a Law Degree from University of Louisville, and a Master of Fine Arts and Writing from Spalding University. She has served as a chaplain at Boston City Hospital, Executive Director of Shelters for Homeless Women, Public Policy Analyst for the mayor of Louisville, Director of the National Outdoor Leadership School and has worked for Muhammad Ali. She has skied over land to the South Pole and conquered the Atlantic Ocean. A quote from her book serves as a testimonial of her willingness to push herself to accept the unexpected: “In the end, I know I rowed across the Atlantic to find my heart, but in the beginning, I wasn’t aware that it was missing.”

Rebecca Painter reflects, “Our facility has a strong working relationship with WCPL. Book discussions and author visits are real-life connections for our students. They provide motivation for reading, and that incentive leads to the development of a life-long habit of reading for enjoyment and information. The resulting reading emphasis leads to a surprising increase in reading ability and test scores.”
Sixty volunteers, including former students, current students, Asbury College students, teachers, staff and some of their family members, as well as a cohort from the Jessamine Leadership Team, showed up on January 8, 2011 to helpready the new school site for The Providence School, a 2010-2011 Best Practice Site for Alternative Education. The Jessamine Leadership Team, a group of business and city leaders who spend a year immersed in learning about their community and serving the community, came to help move furniture to the gymnasium and to begin preparing walls for fresh paint. Jessamine Leadership and some individual members have selected the move to the new TPS as their major community service project for 2011.

Jen Jones, a member of Jessamine County Leadership and a representative from Nicholasville/Jessamine County Parks and Recreation, reflected on the day, “each one of the Providence staff truly wanted to be there and was excited about their new adventure. I was honored to have met them, worked by their side and what a blessing they are embarking upon not only for themselves but for each student that enters the doors at their new location. Thank you for this great experience that I will cherish and am looking forward to their success with their students & staff members!”

For purchase information please contact:

including all four year universities and colleges and institutions of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, shall be waived for eligible students.

Do you have a student in mind who might qualify? See if any of these criteria apply:

(a) The student’s family receives state-funded adoption assistance under KRS 199.555;
(b) The student is currently committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services under KRS 610.010(5) and placed in a family foster home or is placed in accordance with KRS 605.090(3);
(c) The student is in an independent living program and the placement is funded by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services;
(d) The student who is an adopted child was in the permanent legal custody of and placed for adoption by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. A student who meets the eligibility criteria of this paragraph and lives outside of Kentucky at the time of application to a Kentucky postsecondary institution may apply for the waiver up to the amount of tuition for a Kentucky resident; or
(e) The Cabinet for Health and Family Services was the student’s legal custodian on his or her eighteenth birthday.

Tuition may also be waived for a Department of Juvenile Justice foster child who is a full-time or part-time student if the student meets all entrance requirements and maintains academic eligibility while enrolled at the postsecondary institution and obtains a recommendation for participation from an official from the Department of Juvenile Justice, and if:

(a) The student has not been sentenced to the Department of Juvenile Justice under KRS Chapter 640;
(b) The student has been committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice for a period of at least two (2) years;
(c) The student is in an independent living program and placement is funded by the Department of Juvenile Justice;
(d) The parental rights of the student’s biological parents have been terminated; or
(e) The student was committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services prior to a commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice.

The tuition waiver application form and the full language of the legislation detailing eligibility will be available on KECSAC webpage:

www.kecsac.eku.edu.
March 4, 2011
Spring Statewide SACSAA Meeting
Regional Video Conferencing Locations
*Required for all KECSAC School Administrators

March 16, 2011
Critical Issues Series: Classroom Management
Perkins Conference Center, EKU

March 30, 2011
Critical Issues Series: KDE Core Content Areas
Pulaski County Area Technology Center, Somerset

Programs Across Kentucky

BULLITT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Bullitt Alternative Center

This year, the students and staff rallied (again) to show support for the community food bank by creating a Thanksgiving / Holiday can food drive. Again, the kids and staff displayed a genuine caring for our community and their holiday needs. District and program leadership are all proud of what Bullitt Alternative Center kids (and staff) do!

In October, students at Spring Meadows took part in a READING Extravaganza. This entails reading a novel and going to the local high school and having a book talk with other students. The novel selected was the second book from the Lightning Thief series by author Rick Riordan. This has lead to a frenzy of reading the whole series among many students, and admittedly, among the staff as well!

Starting in October, Spring Meadows also had a student start attending Bullitt County Area Technology Center (BCATC) in order to take two welding classes. He has been very successful and is well liked by his teacher. He is the first student from Spring Meadows to attend the technology center and faculty and staff are very proud.
CHRISTIAN COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Christian County Day Treatment

Christian County Day Treatment Center students sang Christmas songs through the halls of Covington's Convalescent Center in Hopkinsville, Kentucky as a service project on Friday, December 17, 2010. During the weeks prior to the event, students prepared hand-made Christmas cards and distributed them and gripper footies to the patients at the center.

CLARK COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Clark County Day Treatment

Clark County Day Treatment entered the Northern Kentucky Chess Tournament on February 12, 2011, and finished in second place. The tournament is the largest chess tournament in northern Kentucky, and is comprised of teams from three states: Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Over thirty teams entered the tournament, and were divided into a rated section, and a non-rated section.

Clark County Day Treatment finished second in the non-rated section, beating out other High School/Middle School teams from the three states. It is a Five-Round Tournament, where players/teams accumulate points based on the number of matches they win, or stalemates they force.

Four players participated in the tournament from CCDT: Palmer R. (junior), Patrick L. (8th Grade Conkwright), Austin B. (sophomore), and Travis C. (freshman). Clark County Day Treatment made it mandatory this school year for all entering students to learn and play chess, with the intent on increasing cognitive skills and decision making. Few students knew how to play chess before entering CCDT.

All four participants in the Chess Tournament have only been playing since August of this school year. Greg Hollon, CCDT Principal remarked, “we taught the first 15 students how to play, and now the students teach all new entering students how to play.” Students are told that chess mirrors life. Hollon said, “You must learn to make good decisions before moving your piece on the board or you will experience a loss of that piece. The same is associated with life. People must make good decisions in life, or they will increase the chance of experiencing unfortunate circumstances.”

In addition to their outstanding Chess program, Clark County Day Treatment has implemented a new curriculum of physical fitness and created a newspaper class. They have partnered with the local YMCA and every Tuesday, they take our students to the YMCA where they spend time lifting weights, playing basketball, doing cardio, playing volleyball, etc. Each student has a fitness plan designed with their individual goals in mind. In the new newspaper class, writing and editing skills are taught to the students. Students create a monthly newspaper that is generated by them and edited by staff. The final product is an actual newspaper and it is distributed to the students and staff of Clark County Day Treatment, as well as the Central Office.

FAYETTE COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Lexington Day Treatment

Lexington Day Treatment is proud to announce their second Nationally Board Certified Teacher: Linda Winke, a Health and Physical Education teacher. Ms. Winke received her National Board Certification in December 2010. She is an exemplary teacher and an asset to the program. She has worked diligently to build an effective health education program focusing on physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health. She assists all students to realize their full potential as learners as well as increasing their health knowledge to improve not only their quality of life but also their life goals. Her health education program contributes positively to the well being of society by promoting the knowledge and skills essential for students to lead a productive, healthy life. Congratulations Ms. Winke!

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Board Certification give teachers and schools the tools to define and measure teaching excellence. NBPTS Standards are based on the Five Core Propositions that form the foundation for what all accomplished teachers should know and be able to do and provide a reference that helps educators link teaching standards to teaching practice. For more information about National Board Certification, visit www.nbpts.org

For the Collaborative

Does your program or district have news to share? Something to brag about? Would you like to highlight your summer program or any special projects in the works? Please submit vignettes, tid-bits, articles or article ideas OR if you’d like a member of KECSAC’s staff to come visit your program and write up a story, contact Heather Carpenter (heather.carpenter@eku.edu or call 859-622-5780).
The Collaborative

Call for Proposals

KECSAC is accepting proposals to present break-out sessions at the 10th Annual Alternative Strategies for Educating Students At-Risk Conference which will be July 19-21, 2011 in Richmond, KY. We look forward to providing participants with hands-on training conducted by those of you who are doing the important work of educating students in alternative settings. The conference will cover a variety of topics, so proposals on any relevant topic are welcome. If you have found a great way to motivate your students, discovered successful techniques for managing difficult behaviors or developed exciting strategies for teaching a particular subject, we want to give you the opportunity to share those experiences with other educators.

The deadline for submission is April 1, 2011. Please submit proposals to the KECSAC office via mail, email at katie.helton@eku.edu. Please include your name, as well as any co-presenters, your title, your program, the name of the workshop and a brief abstract.

Thank you for the work that you do and for helping up make this year’s conference a wonderful experience for your fellow educators!