

Commonwealth Education Continuum Meeting Minutes, January, 2025

The meeting began with Amanda Ellis welcoming attendees and co-leads. Dr. Aaron Thompson highlighted the fifth year of the P-20 Council, noting Kentucky's national recognition and progress, including improved college-going rates and increased college completions. He expressed gratitude for the council's efforts, particularly in improving student transitions to post-secondary education.

Dr. Thomas Woods Tucker provided updates from the Kentucky Department of Education, including training on the SEEK funding program and progress in areas like computer science education and grants for AEDs. Lieutenant Governor Jacqueline Coleman congratulated the group for their successes and encouraged continued collaboration.

Dr. Ellis then discussed Kentucky's progress over the past four years, focusing on initiatives like increasing FAFSA completion, improving dual credit options, and addressing financial barriers. The state has made significant strides in degrees awarded, enrollment, and adult learner support, with collaborations from various stakeholders. Kentucky's national recognition was also emphasized, along with the successful Kentucky Advising Academy (KAA), which has reached over 80% of school districts.

Key educational initiatives included FAFSA completion campaigns, Summer Bridge programs, and efforts to improve teacher recruitment and retention. Dr. Ellis highlighted financial support for teachers, including scholarships, dual credit programs, and professional development initiatives.

Rep. Tipton stressed the need to address challenges such as sustainable funding for scholarships, while both he and Dr. Thompson committed to continued collaboration. Matt Berry from KYSTATS provided an update on the new data dashboard, offering more granular insights into educational trends, with a focus on dual credit and FAFSA data.

Meredith Brewer from KDE discussed initiatives for educator recruitment and retention, including mentorship programs, increasing teacher compensation, and creating alternative certification pathways. She also outlined efforts to improve the teacher certification process and support teacher retention.

The meeting concluded with updates on Futurity, a new website launching in February to help Kentucky residents access educational and career resources. Dr. Thompson praised the initiative, and Amanda Ellis mentioned that a follow-up survey would be sent to gather feedback and guide next steps. The next meeting is scheduled for April.