

March 2012

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### **KYAE performance update**

At the fiscal year's seven-month mark, KYAE's state performance data show mixed results but are mostly favorable as compared to data from the same time last year.

- As of February 8, 2012, state enrollment was 23,453, which is 46 percent of the state goal of 50,000. While we are ahead of last year's enrollment data (22,879 or 45 percent), we have a lot of ground to make up to achieve the state goal.
- Academic performance at 42 percent exceeded last year's percentage of 40 percent, but needs attention if Kentucky is to exceed the 54 percent benchmark and meet our federal performance indicators.
- GED® production was 4,134, down from 4,785 at the same time last year. However, the statewide and local promotion of free GED® testing should help increase enrollment, academic performance and GED® production. Please see related article below.

### **Free GED®/NCRC testing**

As previously announced, two important education and workforce credential tests will be free to eligible Kentuckians on a first-come, first-served basis through June 30 or until funds are expended. Free GED® tests and assessments to earn a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) are sponsored by KYAE and the Department of Workforce Investment (DWI), an agency of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, using federal Workforce Investment Act incentive funding.

KYAE and DWI are printing promotional posters, which will be mailed to your adult education center. Each county will receive 15 posters for placement in the community. In addition, [click here](#) to print an 8.5" x 11" version of the poster to use as a flyer or hand-out. Make sure you select "Print to Actual Size" or "Fit to Printable Area" so that the flyer prints the correct size.

There have been several questions from adult educators about the free NCRC testing. As you know, NCRC testing has been free to the adult education-eligible population for some time. Because we are sponsoring free testing with incentive funding earned jointly by KYAE and the DWI, our partner agency requested that we simultaneously promote both free GED® and NCRC testing.

More details about free testing follow:

- GED® testing will be free for all those taking the GED® test February 15 – June 30. This includes first-time tests, full or partial, and those retesting. This also includes those in corrections and Job Corps centers.
- Please let students know if they schedule a GED® test and are a "no show," the next time they schedule, they will have to pay the testing fee. This is to prevent testing centers from losing money when test sessions are not full.
- Based on lessons learned from free GED® testing in 2011, KYAE encourages providers to schedule as many students as possible to test prior to June, which is historically the heaviest testing month. Even when testing centers add slots and entire test sessions, many cannot accommodate the high demand experienced in June 2011. To help ease the late-year onslaught, KYAE began free testing a month earlier this year.
- KYAE and Workforce Investment will promote free testing through a statewide radio campaign scheduled to begin soon. We are producing posters for display in the centers and to share with partners and throughout the community.
- Please feel free to market and promote free testing through local opportunities.

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## Federal budget

President Obama announced his 2013 budget request on February 13. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, the federal budget includes \$606 million to support adult education activities, which represents level funding. Of this amount, \$595 million is designated for adult education state grants, including \$74 million available for English literacy and civics education.

## Common Core Standards resources

At English/Language Arts Common Core Standards PD sessions, adult educators requested a tool to record resources that align well with the standards. KYAE is pleased to share an adapted version of the Resource Alignment Charts now available for that purpose. They may be downloaded from KYAE's Content Standards webpage at <http://www.kyae.ky.gov/educators/standardsresources.htm>. Since these are Word documents, instructors will be able to manipulate them as needed. The forms are arranged by grade level with the standards pre-populated. The same will be available for Mathematics resources later this year.

## National recognition for adult educators

KYAE extends congratulations to Jefferson County Adult Education for recent national recognition for its program and three individual adult educators.

- Last month, Education Week printed an article about education programs for low-skilled adults. The article featured the Jefferson County Adult Education's Educational Enrichment Services (ESS) program that serves co-enrolled students with free instruction in academic levels lower than developmental education, thereby saving more than \$590,000 in tuition last year.
- The Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) presented national awards to three Jefferson County Adult Education staff members:
  - The ABE Administrator of the Year Award was presented to Joyce Griffith, program director. The award is presented to an adult education administrator with five or more years of experience who has made an outstanding contribution toward fostering the concept of education as a continuing life-process. The awardee must demonstrate a contribution to adult education at the community, state and/or national levels. [Click here](#) to read more about Joyce's accomplishments as an educator and administrator.
  - Julie Scoskie was awarded a COABE scholarship. Scholarships from COABE fund, or partially fund, college-level courses of study that will advance the professional standing of COABE practitioners. Julie will earn an Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership and Organizational Development from the University of Louisville in May 2012. For more information about Julie, [click here](#).
  - Tracy Noles was awarded an Incentive Grant for "Breaking Barriers," a collaborative effort with the University of Kentucky to increase student persistence in the lowest literacy levels. To read more about Tracy and Breaking Barriers, [click here](#).

## Twitter Town Hall

The National Coalition for Literacy and COABE are sponsoring a webinar at 11:30 a.m. (ET), March 16 to demonstrate how to use Twitter and to participate in a Twitter Town Hall. U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretary Brenda Dann-Messier will conduct a Twitter Town Hall on April 12 to discuss adult education issues facing programs, adult educators and students. To register for the March 16 webinar, [click here](#).

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## Work-Ready Communities named

The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board has designated three counties as Certified Work-Ready Communities and another as a Work-Ready Community in Progress. Adult education programs in the counties – Daviess, Warren, Woodford and Russell (in-progress county) – were instrumental in the certification process.

To earn the designation of a Certified Work-Ready Community, counties must meet and maintain criteria on education attainment levels, workforce certifications, community commitment, soft skills and Internet availability. Being certified provides tangible evidence that a community's workers are skilled and the county is committed to keeping them skilled.

Certified Work-Ready Communities can attract new businesses and investment, help existing companies grow and add new jobs; recruit creative, talented and innovative people; and revitalize their economies and keep them growing. For more information, visit [www.kwib.ky.gov/workreadycommunity.htm](http://www.kwib.ky.gov/workreadycommunity.htm).

## GED® updates

### OPT availability

For a fee, GED® Testing Service (GEDTS™) has made the OPT available online. However, it will **not** be accepted for the purpose of test readiness in Kentucky at this time. For test-readiness purposes, KYAE requires that the OPT be taken through an *authorized adult education program or Kentucky Educational Television (KET)*.

### GED® Computer-Based Testing Pilot

As you may know, GEDTS™ has made the current 2002 GED® test series available through computer-based testing (CBT) starting January 1, 2012. To begin to select appropriate locations for CBT and identify challenges, KYAE will conduct a pilot with Pearson VUE assessment centers that also currently offer the GED® tests via paper and pencil. KYAE has contacted centers to ascertain their interest in the pilot and subsequently made arrangements with GEDTS™ to “get on their schedule” to implement CBT. We anticipate a tentative pilot start date of July 1, 2012, with three Pearson VUE assessment centers. Please remember that GEDTS™ (a partnership between Pearson VUE and American Council on Education) has priced the GED® CBT for the battery at \$120 and \$24 per test, which is a considerable increase from Kentucky's paper-and-pencil-based fee of \$60 for the battery. We will continue to update you as we proceed.

### New edition of GED® tests

As the current GED® 2002 series draws to a close (December 2013), educators have asked for more resources that inform them of what the new tests will contain. [Click here](#) for “An Assessment Guide for Educators” that outlines assessment targets and content of the new GED® test series for educators.

To stay up to date with information from GEDTS, subscribe to “The Community” newsletter at [www.gedcbt.org/gedts/signup.html](http://www.gedcbt.org/gedts/signup.html).

## TABE and NRS

Adult educators should be aware that although McGraw-Hill is promoting a new adaptive TABE test, this version of TABE is **not** acceptable for NRS purposes. The NRS-approved TABE tests are as follows: TABE 9&10 Paper, TABE Online and TABE PC.

## Financial aid tips

Please share the following financial aid information with your students.

### Federal student aid programs

The federal government sponsors numerous financial aid programs that can help students pay college expenses. Below is a brief summary from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) that describes some of the more common federal grant and loan programs. Grants generally do not have to be repaid, but loans do. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is used to apply for all of these programs.

- **Federal Pell Grant:** Pell Grants provide up to \$5,550 per year for undergraduates with financial need.
- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant:** Grants that provide up to \$4,000 per year for undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need.
- **Federal Perkins Loan:** Loans for students with exceptional financial need. Undergraduates can get up to \$5,500 per year, while graduate students can get up to \$8,000 per year.
- **Federal Stafford Loan:** Stafford Loans are available to undergraduate, graduate and professional students. The amount students may borrow varies depending upon their year in school.

### Free book for adults in college

Kentucky adults returning to college have a free resource to help them make decisions about postsecondary education. *Adults Returning to School* provides information about entrance exams, financial aid programs and Kentucky colleges and universities. Free copies are available through KHEAA by e-mailing [publications@kheaa.com](mailto:publications@kheaa.com).

## Valuable resources

The following are valuable resources useful to adult educators.

### Financial literacy booklet

“It’s Money, Baby” is a free booklet available to Kentucky students and teachers to help learn about financial literacy. The 32-page booklet, provided by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), includes sections on wants vs. needs, banking, credit, insurance and identity theft.

Copies may be ordered by e-mailing [publications@kheaa.com](mailto:publications@kheaa.com) or by calling (800) 928-8926, ext. 6-7372. Teachers planning to use the booklet in classes may order as many as needed.

### Tech Teaching Tips

KET’s “Tech Teaching Tips” is a monthly newsletter that continues to provide great adult education resources, including incorporating technology into lessons, links to short educational video clips and suggested classroom activities. [Click here](#) to subscribe to this great resource targeted specifically for adult educators.

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