

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Council on June 13, 2025

Who: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type: Business Meeting
Date: April 17, 2025
Time: 1:30 p.m. ET
Location: Northern Kentucky University, Vortuba Student Union Rm 104, Highland Heights, KY

WELCOME REMARKS

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education held a business meeting on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. ET. The meeting occurred at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, Kentucky. Chair Madison Silvert presided.

ATTENDANCE

The following Council members attended the meeting in person: CB Akins, Jacob Brown, Lindsey Case, Jennifer Collins, Kellie Ellis, Meredith Figg, Karyn Hoover, Madison Silvert, Macy Waddle and Elaine Walker, Kevin Weaver. Council members who attended virtually were LaDonna Rogers and Commissioner Robbie Fletcher.

Council members who did not attend were Muhammad Babar and Sean Garber.

CPE President Aaron Thompson served as secretary of the board, per the CPE Bylaws. Ms. Heather Faesy, CPE program manager, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the January 30, 2025, meetings were approved as presented.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

The Council approved a resolution for Council member Faith Kemper, who served on the board from June 2022 through March 2025.

KY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDE) COMMISSIONER REPORT

KDE Commissioner Robbie Fletcher provided a report featuring a number of highlights including the Persistence to Graduation Summit taking place in June, the Go Teach KY campaign, and Skills USA students at a statewide conference.

UPDATE FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBER

Ms. Waddle provided a brief report that focused on the upcoming transition of student body presidents on each of the campuses as well as their plans to gather in May at a leadership meeting.

CPE PRESIDENT REPORT

President Aaron Thompson's written report was included in the board materials. He provided additional comments about the opioid abatement grant awarded to CPE to work with postsecondary institutions to provide trauma-informed recovery support services to adult learners impacted by opioid use disorder and co-occurring mental health challenges as well as statistics and early feedback on the new Futuriti website that focuses on college and career exploration. Mr. Travis Powell, Sr. Vice President and General Counsel, and Ms. Regan Satterwhite, Director of Legislative Relations, provided an update on the bills passed during the 2025 legislative session and how they impact postsecondary education and Kentucky's institutions.

ACADEMIC AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COMMITTEE – REPORT & ACTION ITEMS

Committee Chair Karyn Hoover presented the report and recommendations made by the Academic and Strategic Initiatives (ASI) Committee, which met on April 14, 2025. She announced that Committee members:

- Received a report of the KCTCS programs approved between January-April 2025.
- Received a briefing on the update on the work of the Commonwealth Education Continuum.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval eight proposed new academic programs:
 - Kentucky State University – Master of Science, Biological and Agricultural Engineering (CIP 14.0301)
 - Kentucky State University – Master of Science, Criminal Justice (CIP 43.0104)
 - Kentucky State University – Master of Social Work, Social Work (CIP 44.0701)
 - Morehead State University – Doctor of Engineering, Systems Engineering (CIP 14.2701)
 - Murray State University – Associate of Science, Dental Hygiene (CIP 51.0602)
 - University of Kentucky – Master of Accounting, Accountancy and Analytics (CIP 30.7104)
 - University of Kentucky – Doctor of Audiology, Audiology (CIP 51.0202)

- Western Kentucky University – Bachelor of Science, User Experience (CIP 11.0105)

MOTION: The ASI Committee's recommendation to approve the endorsed action items served as the motion. A second was not needed.

VOTE: The motion passed. Meredith Figg abstained.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – REPORT AND ACTION ITEMS

Committee Chair Jacob Brown presented the report and recommendations made by the Finance Committee, which met on April 14, 2025. Committee members:

- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval revisions to the Endowment Match Program Guidelines.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval two interim capital projects
 - Murray State University - Curris Center Roof Replacement, \$1.5 million
 - Northern Kentucky University - Reconstruct Outdoor Tennis Complex, \$3 million.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval the tuition and mandatory fees recommendations for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years as follows:
 - For the research universities – UK and UofL – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$675.00 over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$450.00 in any one year.
 - For the comprehensive universities – ECU, KSU, Morehead, Murray, NKU, and WKU – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$630.00 over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$420.00 in any one year.
 - For KCTCS institutions – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$9.00 per credit hour over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$6.00 per credit hour in any one year.
 - In addition to proposing resident undergraduate rate ceilings for the next two years, staff recommended that the public institutions be allowed to submit for Council review and approval:
 - Nonresident undergraduate tuition and fee rates that comply with the Council's Tuition and Mandatory Fees Policy, or otherwise adhere to provisions of an existing Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and an institution.
 - Market competitive tuition and fee rates for graduate and online courses, as approved by their respective governing boards.

MOTION: The Finance Committee's recommendation to approve the endorsed action items served as the motion. A second was not needed.

VOTE: The motion passed.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – REPORT

Chair Silvert presented the report of the Executive Committee, which met the morning of April 17, 2025. Committee members:

- Discussed the Council’s board retreat scheduled for June 12-13, 2025.
- Received an update on operations at Kentucky State University in relation to their Management Improvement Plan.
- Received an update from President Thompson on post legislative discussions and implementation plans of passed legislation.

Chair Silvert appointed the following to the Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund for two-year terms ending April 30, 2027:

- LaDonna Rogers, Council representative and Committee Chair
- Dr. Cliff Maesaka, CEOc Chairman’s Circle/Board Chair of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
- J.P. Hamm, Kentucky Hospital Association
- Dr. Michael Muscarella, Baptist Health, Paducah
- Dr. Michael Yoder, Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet
- Dr. Vestena Robbins, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
- Beth Shafer, KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Public Health
- Tim Gaillard, University of Kentucky Healthcare
- Donovan Layne, Kentucky Community and Technical College
- Mason Dyer, Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT DEBT LEVELS IN KENTUCKY

Dr. Chris Ledford, Director of Data and Advanced Analytics, and Travis Muncie, Chief Information Officer, presented an overview of a study completed on undergraduate student debt levels at graduation from Kentucky’s public institutions. The study investigated debt trends over the past five academic years among undergraduate completers at Kentucky’s public institutions, and it showed that average debt levels for undergraduate completers in Kentucky continue to decline across sectors and credential levels.

- Average debt for all public undergraduates (including those graduating with and without debt) dropped 32.8 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 54.8 percent to 40.9 percent over the same period.
- At KCTCS, average debt of graduates declined by 38.6 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 42.7 percent to 28.0 percent over the same period.

- At four-year public universities, average debt of graduates declined by 15.5 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 61.6 percent to 54.9 percent.
- Declining debt trends generally hold across demographic and academic subgroups and higher education sectors.

KENTUCKY VIRTUAL LIBRARY AND AFFORDABLE LEARNING KENTUCKY

Ms. Ilona Burdette, Executive Director of Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) and Dr. Leah Halliday, Associate Director of Affordable Learning Kentucky (ALKY), provided an update on the initiatives they oversee. One of CPE's key duties is managing the KYVL, which is a collaboration of over 350 Kentucky libraries and institutions, including colleges and universities, public libraries, K-12 schools, hospitals and the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. KYVL's shared services and collaborative purchasing result in annual savings of approximately \$10 million for Kentucky's postsecondary institutions. Through the ALKY initiative, Dr. Halliday detailed how students directly benefit through open educational resources and free textbooks.

CAMPUS GOOD NEWS REPORTS

Reports from the institutions were provided in the agenda materials. Chair Silvert provided highlights from University of Louisville, Murray State University, Western Kentucky University and the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned the business meeting at 3:50 p.m. ET.