

Summary of the October 2024 KY K-12 Education Technology Leaders' Virtual Meeting

In case you missed it or want a refresher, the following is what we talked about during the October 16, 2024, EdTech leaders' virtual meeting. A copy of the video and audio can be found at: <https://mediaportal.education.ky.gov/technology/2024/10/edtech-october-2024/>.

Public viewing of the archived webcasts and written summaries are also available on the KDE Media Portal at: <https://mediaportal.education.ky.gov/technology/district-technology-leadership-webcast/>. Numbers in **RED** indicate the timestamp for that portion of the discussion so it can be easily located on the full digital recording.

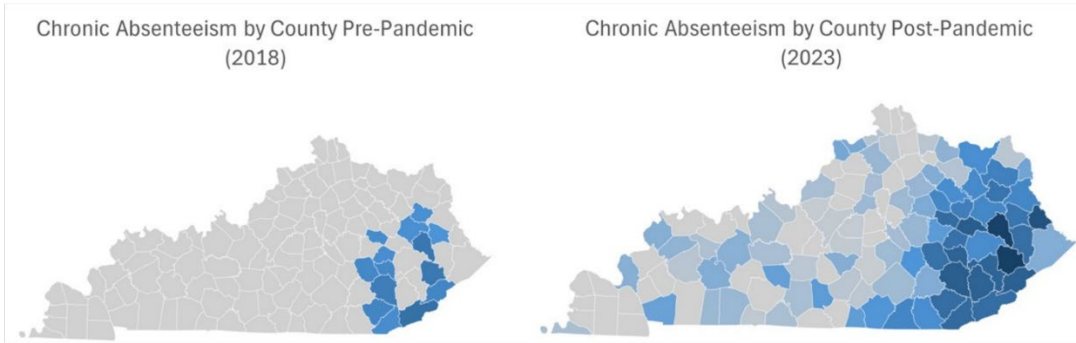
This was a joint meeting with our OET staff and all the districts joining via Microsoft Teams and/or YouTube. We will continue to make these available from our KDE media portal so that you can watch the archived discussion and share with the appropriate people in your district. One poll question was posed throughout the meeting and district EdTech leaders were asked to respond as it assists us in planning and getting a feel for how to best move forward. Your voice and your feedback are important and extremely helpful to us. Please remember that in addition to these webcasts being available on the KDE Media Portal, each month's webcast is accompanied by these written summaries. We encourage you to share the link and all or any portion of these summary notes with staff throughout your district who may find the information beneficial to them in their position.

(00:15) Ways KY K-12 EdTech Can Help with Chronic Student Absenteeism in KY K-12: In addition to our normal invitees to this monthly webcast, we have asked KY K-12 Chief Academic Officers (CAOs), to join us as well as some of our KETS Partners to discuss this important topic. Everyone has a role and responsibility in helping to work together to reduce the chronic absenteeism in K-12 across the nation, which is also impacting KY K-12. Education technology is part of that team effort to address this issue and there are several EdTech related resources available to all 171 school districts to help with chronic absenteeism (IC's early warning system) and ways to make instruction a more engaging experience for students (PBS Learning Media through KET, EverFi, KY Virtual Library (KyVL), IT Academy, and EdTech integrations lead by your Digital Learning Coaches).

David discussed the increased severity of chronic absenteeism pre- and post-pandemic, highlighting the rise from 17% to 30% of students being chronically absent. He emphasized the significant impact on younger grades and the financial implications for schools. He noted that this rise is not just a high school issue but significantly affects younger grades, with first grade seeing a 101% increase, second grade 97%, third grade 93%, fourth grade 88%, and fifth grade 91%.

Increased severity of chronic absenteeism pre and post-pandemic

Blue indicates 25% or higher chronic absenteeism rate



2017-2018: 17% chronically absent
2022-2023: 30% chronically absent

Source: Kentucky School Report Card

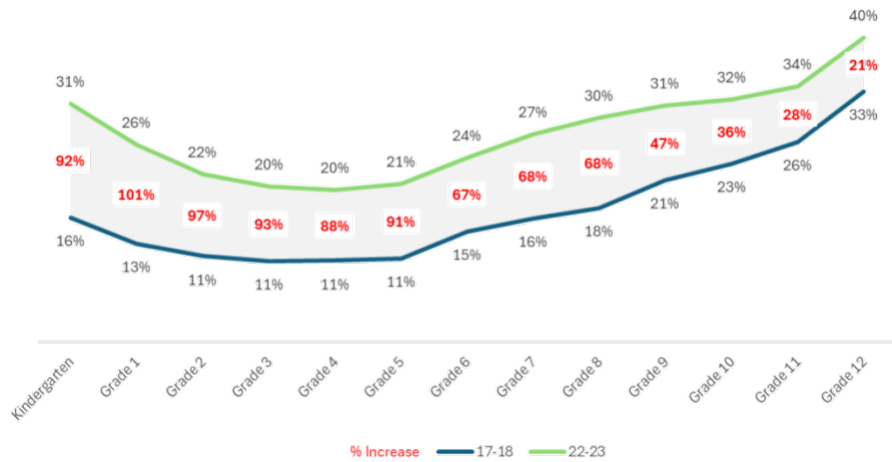


% of Chronic Absenteeism by Grade Level

Rates remain highest among HS students

K-1 students have significantly higher rates than other primary/elementary grades.

Elementary students had the highest percent increase since SY 2017-18.

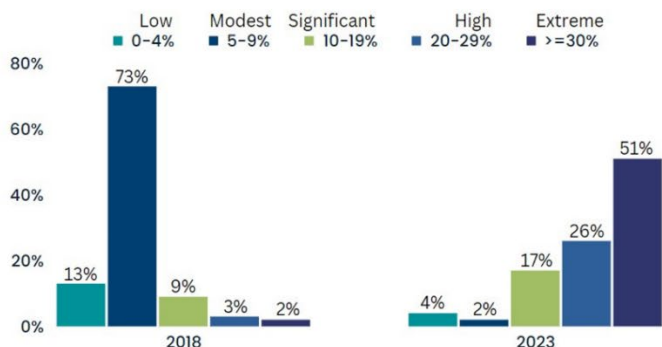




Sources: KY SRC Data Set



There's a significant shift in the collective impact of chronic absenteeism on schools.

CHRONIC ABSENTEE AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL



Post-pandemic, **75%** of Kentucky students now attend schools with high or extremely high chronic absenteeism. That's  students, which is a significant increase from the 5%, or  observed before the pandemic.

 Kentucky Department of **EDUCATION**

Financial Implications: David explained the financial implications of chronic absenteeism, stating that school funding is based on attendance. A high percentage of chronically absent students leads to a significant reduction in funds, impacting the school's ability to operate effectively.

Learning Loss: David discussed the learning loss associated with chronic absenteeism, emphasizing the challenge of catching up students who miss 10% or more of instructional time while trying to keep up with the rest of the class. This learning loss is a major concern for educators and impacts overall student performance.

Parental Role: David mentioned that in younger grades, chronic absenteeism is often due to parental decisions rather than the students themselves. He stressed the importance of addressing this issue by ensuring parents understand the importance of regular school attendance for their children's education.

David noted the social skills part of this whole discussion and how social media and the use of cellphones during instructional time continue to be legislative concerns. David noted a recent EdWeek Article on students not making eye contact and how this is important in children's social skills and chronic absenteeism. Many times, it can be the really simple things and we are going to cover how we identify children at high-risk for chronic absenteeism. Engaging, informative and relevant experiences, and connectedness to the school (sports, clubs, egames, etc.) also help reduce the likelihood of chronic absenteeism.

(15:34) Early Warning System: Lisa Keeter and DeDe Conner presented Ky K-12 early warning tool for districts, which helps identify students at high risk of dropping out and being chronically absent. The tool provides visualizations and customizable dashboards for school-level staff. The views shown during this demonstration were using the federal calculation.

- **Tool Overview:** Lisa Keeter introduced the early warning tool, explaining that it breaks down schools and districts into tiers of risk. The tool uses color-coded indicators to show the risk levels of students, helping staff identify those at high risk of chronic absenteeism and dropout.
- **Visualization Features:** Lisa demonstrated the tool's visualization features, including graphs that show absenteeism tiers and reasons for absences. The tool allows staff to drill down into specific data, such as absenteeism percentages and the number of days missed, providing a detailed view of student attendance patterns.

- Customization: Lisa highlighted the tool's customization options, allowing schools to tailor dashboards to their specific needs. Staff can filter data to focus on particular groups of students or types of absences, making the tool adaptable to various school contexts.
- Access and Training: DeDe mentioned that the tool is available to districts free of charge; it was developed and made available using ESSER funding. We do still have the Tableau environment. She also noted that training sessions are available to help staff learn how to use the tool effectively, with an upcoming session scheduled for October 29th. Check out the KSIS Training Page on the KDE website for the details.

(26:42) Kentucky Educational Television (KET): David is a member of the KET board and has worked closely with KET over the years. KET has been a great partner and a former Stilwell award recipient. Tonya Crum from KET highlighted the usage and benefits of PBS Learning Media, a free repository of high-quality, standards-aligned content. She mentioned the significant usage statistics and the integration with Google Classroom. There are currently 1.1 million views annually and this could be significantly higher considering that many times a teacher is sharing to a whole classroom. New Quiz is one of the top 10 educational resource tools in the country and is reaching 84,000 students per week. If you have questions, reach out to [Amanda Wright](#) for assistance.

(33:17) EverFi: Jess Richter from EverFi discussed the free platform providing resources on financial literacy, health and wellness, workforce readiness, and STEM & history. She shared usage statistics in Kentucky and the impact of the resources on students. They produce curriculum addressing relevant topics and equip students with real-world skills. EverFi collects data and shares an end of year impact report. They can also provide districts with a customized district report as well. If you have topics, you'd like EverFi to develop content around, please let them know! They partner up with other like-minded organizations to enable K-12 educators to bring critical skills education to the classroom as they prepare their students for successful futures. She shared how EverFi has been used in Kentucky and asked anyone who wants more information to please reach out.

2023-2024 SY EVERFI State Impact Report for Kentucky

Active Districts and Schools Report

EVERFI in Kentucky

EVERFI equips students with real-world skills through a digital platform offering more than 40+ interactive, research-based resources covering topics like financial education, health & wellness, STEM, career readiness, character education, and academic readiness.



No Cost and No Catch

Available at no cost thanks to strategic partners across the United States and Canada who share our mission.



Implementation At-Scale

With unlimited student licenses, our no-cost resources are deployable across an entire grade level.



Standards-Aligned

Our Product team uses state & national standards to build our impactful resources.



Data and Reporting

We provide a biannual report illustrating the impact of our free resources on such metrics as student learning and school usage.



Flexible Implementation

Our standards-aligned resources are designed to support flexible classroom, lesson, and student needs.



Cost-free Training and PDs

Your dedicated support team provides trainings and ongoing support throughout the school year all at no cost to you.



Preview of Your Impact Data

Unique Active Students	55,503
Sum of Student Enrollments	91,478
Curricula	42
Active Teachers	869
Active Schools	373

Next Steps:

Book a Meeting with us

- Review the resource library
- View your district's EVERFI data



<https://calendly.com/katie-mcmeans-blackbaud/20-minute-meeting>

(43:44) Digital Learning Coaches (DLCs): Laura Raganas emphasized the role of digital learning coaches in supporting teachers and enhancing student engagement. She highlighted the importance of personalized blended learning and differentiated learning environments in addressing chronic absenteeism. Teacher engagement and learner engagement are reciprocal. When students are engaged, they have a lower risk of chronic absenteeism. DLCs are champions of the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) and drive much of the understanding of Digital Citizenship (as part of the KAS for Technology). If you aren't working with your DLC or want to connect, please reach out to Laura.



(48:48) Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL): James Allen is our state lead for library media services and Kentucky has 1,016 School Media Librarians with 902 of those being full-time in one school. Kentucky has about 650 students for each librarian. James Allen discussed the resources available through the Kentucky Virtual Library; these can be accessed on their site at KYVL.org. He highlighted the importance of school librarians in supporting student engagement and access to information.

Teacher Librarians: Absenteeism

- **Relationships:** School media librarians work with every student in the school, across content areas and grade levels.
- **Welcoming Environment:** Creating safe spaces where students feel like they belong and feel seen.
- **Access:** School libraries are often open before and/or after school.
- **Engaging & Unique Experiences:** Inclusive collections, book clubs, making, author visits, passion projects, genius hour.

Teacher Librarians: Technology

- **Access:** 24/7 student connection to eBooks, audio books, and reference resources.
- **Support:** Inquiry and research needs. Also often a first line of support for students with technology needs and questions.
- **Tech-infused Making:** Maker spaces that encourage students to use information and digital literacy skills in combination with digital tools.
- **Digital Media Creation:** Digital storytelling, website, school newscast, STLP support, yearbook, social media, and many more

KYVL Learning Resources

- 1,600 magazines/journals
- 55,100 primary source documents
- Full text articles
- Encyclopedias (multiple options for text complexity), videos, images, audio clips, maps, biographies, and more
- 217,000+ simultaneous use eBooks
- Prepare for a career exam, explore occupations, and improve workplace skills
- Practice tests, interactive tutorials, and eBooks to help prepare for AP, SAT, ACT and TOEFL exams, as well as college essay writing practice.



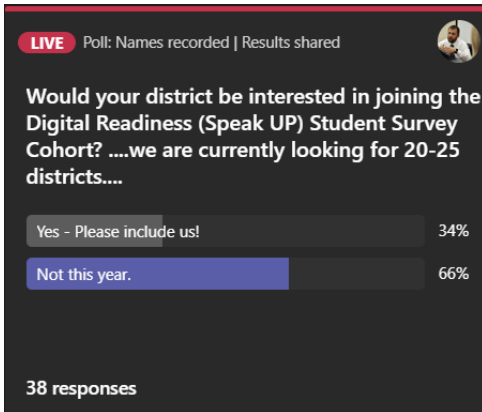
(57:01) Digital Citizenship, Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines and the 5 Digital Learning Guiding Principles: The five guiding principles have been part of the Superintendent Assurances for several years and the [Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines](#) are available for schools and districts to ensure quality, rigor, and impact on student achievement. The guidelines also serve as a vehicle for content digital developers and vendors to ensure alignment to the [Kentucky Academic Standards](#). Marty Park announced the upcoming modernization of the digital learning guidelines, which provide structure for integrating education technology into learning. The updated guidelines will be published in January and will be highlighted at the Spring 2024 KySTE Conference.

Digital Citizenship is crucial to education technology in Kentucky K-12 and is a foundational component that has been in place for 15 years. Marty Park shared the updated DDL site and this resource can be accessed at <https://www.education.ky.gov/school/diglrn/digcitizen/Pages/default.aspx>. The ethical use of technology and ensuring that our students are practicing good digital citizenship has always been important to the KETS program as evidenced by all teams today mentioning responsible use/ethical use of technology in their presentations. Marty highlighted the participation and impact of the module on students and teachers.

(1:03:28) Online Virtual and Remote Learning: During the pandemic we learned that we have a percentage of students who thrive using this learning platform. While it was used on a much larger scale during the pandemic, it is and remains a part of the toolkit. Ben Maynard shared how online virtual programs can help address chronic absenteeism by providing alternative learning environments for students who struggle with in-person attendance. Ben has been working increasingly with the Directors of Pupil Personnel (DPPs) position within the school districts in his work with virtual programs. DPPs from Clark and Rowan County are happy to talk with anyone having interest or questions about virtual learning programs. Ben mentioned some upcoming online leadership network sessions to discuss strategies. An email has gone out about these sessions and information was shared via the chat and included in the October CIO regional meeting agendas.

While we in this segment we spent a few moments on the Digital Readiness Survey. Several districts have reached out about a Perceptions survey to take the place of the former BrightBytes survey. This survey centers around how digital technologies are impacting teaching and learning. We feel this could provide some powerful insights to the issue of chronic absenteeism.

We are creating a Kentucky version of the national SpeakUp survey and would like to know if you would like to be part of this survey that feeds into the KETS Infographic that helps tell our story. Students, staff, leadership, and community may be involved. Collaborative sessions will begin in January 2025. Districts participating will have some extra support from the SpeakUp team. Ben is happy to discuss further with districts and get you signed up to participate in this cohort. There is an interest form included in the CIO agenda and/or reach out to your KETS Engineer.



(1:14:54) KY K-12 Computer Science Report: Code.org will be releasing their National State of Computer Science Report on October 22; this is all we can share while it is under the embargo period.

Combating Chronic Absenteeism

- CS can impact their participation in the school community
- When students feel excited about their learning, they have a higher attendance rate
- When students see their future impacted by what they are doing now, they show up and perform

Celebrations

- 16% above the national average for the number of HSs offering Computer Science
- Since 2017 we have experienced an average growth rate of 7.7% annually
- Access in our rural locations and our smallest HSs is among the highest in the nation
- 1% increase in HS female CS Participation
- We have maintained parity in ethnic representation in Computer Science classrooms

Sean Jackson highlighted Kentucky's success in computer science education, including high school participation and female representation. He emphasized the importance of computer science in engaging students and preparing them for future careers. The one thing we can share is that Kentucky is a top six state in the area of Computer Science and shared the following excerpt:

"The Digital Readiness Survey (DRS) in Kentucky provides an annual overview of technology infrastructure and educational opportunities across the state. In the 2022–23 school year, 113 districts reported offering computer science opportunities to K–8 students, often through the Kentucky Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP). STLP, a project-based learning initiative, has been instrumental in promoting computer science education and aligning with Kentucky's Academic Standards. Kentucky credits its recent growth in high school computer science participation to investments in programs like STLP across all grade levels."

(1:25:31) STLP Update: Jeff Sebulsky discussed how the Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) can help address chronic absenteeism by providing engaging, real-world learning experiences.

He highlighted the importance of student choice and voice in projects and the impact of STLP on school culture.



STLP Regionals will begin soon and the state STLP Championship is scheduled for April 23, 2025.