



Kids First Kentucky Overview Talking Points

- Kids First Kentucky is an initiative of the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents.
- We need to ensure that our students, teachers, and schools can be at their best physically and psychologically in and outside the classroom.
- When Kentucky public schools succeed, the Commonwealth succeeds.

Stabilize Education Budgets Now to Avoid a Stark Funding Cliff

- Lawmakers took an important first step last year in appropriating additional dollars for education. They need to build on that momentum by stabilizing budgets now to avert a catastrophic funding cliff facing many districts in FY 2024:
 1. Address inflationary pressures on schools, and stabilize funding this session to avoid a stark funding cliff.
 2. Provide districts that have seen significant growth access to needed funds, while creating a soft landing for districts facing a stark funding cliff because of pandemic-related absences.
 3. Disburse excess SEEK funds to districts.
 4. Fully fund Kentucky public school transportation and account for increased costs for bus drivers, buses, fuel and mechanics.

Recruit & Retain High-Quality Teachers & Staff to Avert a Teacher Crisis

- Kentucky public schools are facing a teaching and staffing crisis. Across the Commonwealth, people are exiting the teaching profession or choosing to forgo a career in public education all together. Kentucky needs to:
 1. Provide incentives (apprenticeships, scholarships, “Learn & Earn” opportunities, etc.) to enter the education profession.
 2. Identify the education career pathway as a high-demand work sector.
 3. Encourage young people to pursue education as a career through Educator Rising chapters integrated at every level of the Kentucky public school system.

Focus on Student & Staff Safety & Wellness

- We need to make sure Kentucky students, teachers and staff can be at their best every day in safe classrooms with access to the mental health services and support they need in and outside the classroom. It’s imperative that Kentucky lawmakers:
 1. Improve student discipline and staff working conditions by reforming juvenile justice laws.
 2. Fully fund the School Safety and Resiliency Act of 2019, to provide for SROs and mental health professionals on each campus.
 3. Increase access to mental health services for every student and ensure Kentucky families can obtain help when and where they need it.