Kentucky State Profile

Updated September 2023

Kentucky has significant district activity and one multi-district school opening for Fall 2023. There is no state virtual school. Kentucky was among the first states in the nation to offer a state virtual school beginning in the year 2000. For a dozen years students from across the state were able to utilize the Kentucky Virtual High School for part-time or supplemental course enrollment. Due to budgetary constraints, the state virtual school was forced to close in 2012 in favor of public-school districts creating their own online programs.

State virtual school?	NO
Multi-district fully online schools?	YES
State approval process for online providers?	NO
State approval process for online courses?	NO

Kentucky now has a significant number of district online programs. As of the 2022-2023 school year, 151 of 171 districts reported offering online courses. Of those districts, 111 reported offering a full-time enrollment option while 45 make enrollment available to students from other districts in the state.

Examples of district programs include the following:

- Barren Academy of Virtual and Expanded Learning (BAVEL) offers students in grades K–12 offers part- and full-time online learning options. BAVEL also acts as a provider of online courses to other districts in the state.
- Corbin School of Innovation offers online options for homeschooling and a hybrid program for grades 9-12.
- Hardin County Schools Virtual School serves students in grades K-12 with some synchronous requirements.
- Bullitt Virtual Learning Academy offers full-time enrollment for district students in grades 3-12.
- Jefferson County Public Schools' JCPSeSchool is an online program for middle and high school students, and enrolls both resident and students from across the state.

- Christian County Public Schools' Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) serves grades K-12. VLA students are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities or sports.
- Fleming County Performance Academy offers diverse learning environment open to K-12 students who are enrolled in Fleming County Schools. Students enrolled in FCPA have full access to the same resources, services, and extracurricular activities as in-person students.
- Jessamine County Virtual Learning Academy offers full-time enrollment options for students K-12 for in-district as well as students from other districts in the state (expanded enrollment).

The Kentucky Department of Education Office of Education Technology has partnered with Kentucky Education Television to form a partnership aimed at increasing access to supports for online programs across the state. The Kentucky Online Learning Experiences Collaborative brings together online programs as well as local and national partners to provide increased access to coaching, professional learning, research and best practices, and continuous improvement strategy support.

State Policies

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) promulgated 704 KAR 3:535 effective July 1, 2023. This new regulation replaces the waiver of specific sections of the Pupil Attendance Regulation utilized by districts from 2020-2022 allowing K-4 students enrolled full-time in an online program to be counted in attendance. The regulation creates a funding mechanism specifically for grades K-4. A district may choose to apply the structures and funding mechanism to any grade K-12. Districts may also choose to use traditional virtual and performance-based structures for students in grades 5-12 available through 704 KAR 3:305. Btw according to Ben it's this last line that is allowing the growing online school to enroll students.

Kentucky does not require approval for online courses offered by a district program or third-party online provider. The school-based decision making council and local board of education work together to establish appropriate policies for online programs based on existing statutes and regulations for the adoption of curriculum. These policies ensure online and blended learning courses meet or exceed the scope and sequence of the Kentucky Academic Standards.

The Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines establishes five guiding principles to ensure that online courses meet or exceed the criteria of traditional instruction:

- Review, Align, and Endorse: A Kentucky Content Specific Certified teacher in the school (and/or district) reviews, aligns to appropriate KAS (Kentucky Academic Standard), and endorses the digital content.
- Steward Learning: A Kentucky Content Specific Certified teacher or content mentor stewards learning performance and demonstrated mastery by consistently and continuously ensuring progress.

- Ensure Access to Supports: Learners have access to Kentucky Content Specific Certified teachers, content coaches, or professionally recognized masters in the course field, as active mentors in their digital learning experience.
- Personalize Experiences: Digital learning experiences are personalized based on student progress data, interests and learning goals allowing customization of student path, place and pace.
- Apply Effective Teaching Practices: Effective teaching practices prescribed by Kentucky Framework for Teaching apply equally to digital learning experiences.

The 2017 Regular Session of the General Assembly approved HB 520, legislation that for the first time allowed public charter schools in Kentucky. However, Kentucky Revised Statute 160.1591 Section 4 prohibits virtual public charter schools.

The Kentucky General Assembly passed House Bill 563 (2021) resulting in KRS 157.350(4)(b). This change to district nonresident pupil policies related to average daily attendance eliminates the previous requirement for districts to create agreements with other districts to enroll students from outside their attendance boundaries into the district, including their online program. Enrollment will be subject to the policy criteria, so enrollment is not guaranteed.

DLC State Profile Key Terms