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Increasing the High School Graduation Rate

*In education, health, safety, juvenile justice, and economic well-being, rankings on child well-being consistently place the Commonwealth among the bottom ten in the nation. Responding to a challenge from, legislators, children's advocacy groups from across the state formed a broad based coalition to develop a clear and workable agenda to move Kentucky forward. The result is the **Blueprint for Kentucky's children.***

This issue brief serves as a tool to share the latest statistics, research, best practices, and the group's recommendations for action. This brief focuses on prevention of high school dropout and strategies for improving the state's high school graduation rate

We all benefit when people graduate from high school.

All young people need a strong education to succeed in today's economy, and graduating from high school is more critical than ever before. Nearly six in ten jobs in the U.S. today are held by workers with at least some college education. Fifty years ago, the figure was only two in ten.¹ Despite these facts, at least one-fifth of all students drop out of high school.² Nearly a third of all students fail to graduate high school on time.³ Young people in the United States today are less likely than their parents to have completed high school, a fact that distinguishes us from all other industrialized countries.⁴

The Cost of High School Dropouts Nationally

Failing to graduate high school has long-term negative consequences for the individual and for society. High school dropouts earn much less than those with diplomas,⁵ and are far more likely to rely on public assistance. As a result of their lower incomes, dropouts contribute much less in income taxes and sales taxes. A dropout is more likely to commit crimes and serve time in prison. They typically have worse health outcomes and often do not live as long as someone who completed high school.⁶

- On average, high school graduates earn \$9,608 more per year than high school dropouts.⁷

Increasing the High School Graduation Rate

- The estimated tax revenue and lifetime earnings loss from every male between the ages of 25 and 34 years of age who does not complete high school is approximately \$944 billion.⁸
- The increased cost in public assistance and crime is calculated to be \$24 billion nationally.⁹
- Seventy-five percent of America's state prison inmates are high school dropouts.¹⁰

Though the rate has improved since 2000, Kentucky ranks 25th among all states on this measure.¹⁴ In the 2007-2008 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education reported 6,729 youth in grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school (see Table 2 for county-level data).

- On average, a high school graduate in Kentucky earns \$6,821 a year more than someone without a diploma.¹⁵
- Based on the 2007 income tax rates, a dropout pays \$396 less in taxes per year than a high school graduate, resulting in a loss of \$2.9 million in state income tax revenue in a single year.¹⁶
- Kentucky spends \$2,065 more on support programs for dropouts than for high school graduates (Table 1).
- Crime-related costs are likely as much as \$3,000 higher for dropouts than for high school graduates.¹⁷
- Lifetime costs associated with dropouts from the class of 2008 alone are estimated to cost Kentucky almost \$4.2 billion in lost wages over their lifetimes.¹⁸

The Cost of High School Dropouts in Kentucky

Kentucky loses millions of dollars in wages and tax revenue each year due to students dropping out of school. In addition, the state pays more for programs to help support dropouts throughout their life. The state pays more in crime-related costs and public health costs to support dropouts than it does for those who graduate from high school. Finally, Kentucky's economy suffers directly because an educated workforce is one of the major factors used by companies in deciding where to locate.¹¹

In Kentucky, 7 percent of youth ages 16 to 19 (approximately 16,000 youth) in 2008 were not attending school and did not have a high school degree, compared to 6 percent nationally.^{12,13}

Table 1: Government Transfers Received by Kentucky Adults by High School Completion (65 and under)

	Dropout	H.S. Graduate
Public Cash Assistance	\$ 17	\$ 15
Housing	\$ 13	\$ 9
Food Stamps	\$ 783	\$ 310
Unemployment Insurance	\$ 292	\$ 251
Disability Insurance	\$ 76	\$ 179
Medicare (Market Value)	\$ 734	\$ 396
Medicaid (Market Value)	\$ 1,823	\$ 513
TOTAL	\$ 3,738	\$ 1,673
Differential		\$ 2,065

Source: Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2009; Accessed March 2010

Long Term Cost Savings of Increasing High School Graduation

Several researchers have estimated the cost of raising the compulsory education age.¹⁹ An analysis of Ohio's dropout prevention efforts calculates the costs associated with increased numbers of pupils as well as wages forgone by those staying in school instead of working.²⁰ Further analysis reveals a benefit-cost ratio of 1: 11.62 to the government - meaning that for every \$1 Ohio spends on raising the compulsory education age, the state benefits \$11.62 over the course of a graduates' lifetime.²¹

The state budget is not the only beneficiary of higher graduation rates. The Ohio cost-benefit analysis shows that for every \$1 spent on increasing graduation rates, the people of Ohio can expect a return of \$31.45 in the form of increased tax revenue, increased earnings, and an improved economy. Most importantly, it didn't take long to begin seeing the net benefits of increased graduation rates: the Ohio study projects that it would take only 3.4 years to reach the point where the benefits exceeded the initial investment.²²

- Kentucky would spend approximately \$17,678 per pupil to educate its students for an additional two years if they continue their schooling to age 18 instead of dropping out at age 16.²³
- Kentucky would experience a net benefit of \$205,418 over the lifetime of each additional high school graduate.²⁴
- Kentucky's citizens would benefit by approximately \$671,898 over the lifetime of each additional graduate in the form of increased earnings, economic growth, and cost avoidance.²⁵
- By decreasing the number of dropouts by just 10 percent, Kentucky would benefit by approximately \$452 million over the lifetimes of the additional graduates.²⁶

Increasing Graduation Rates

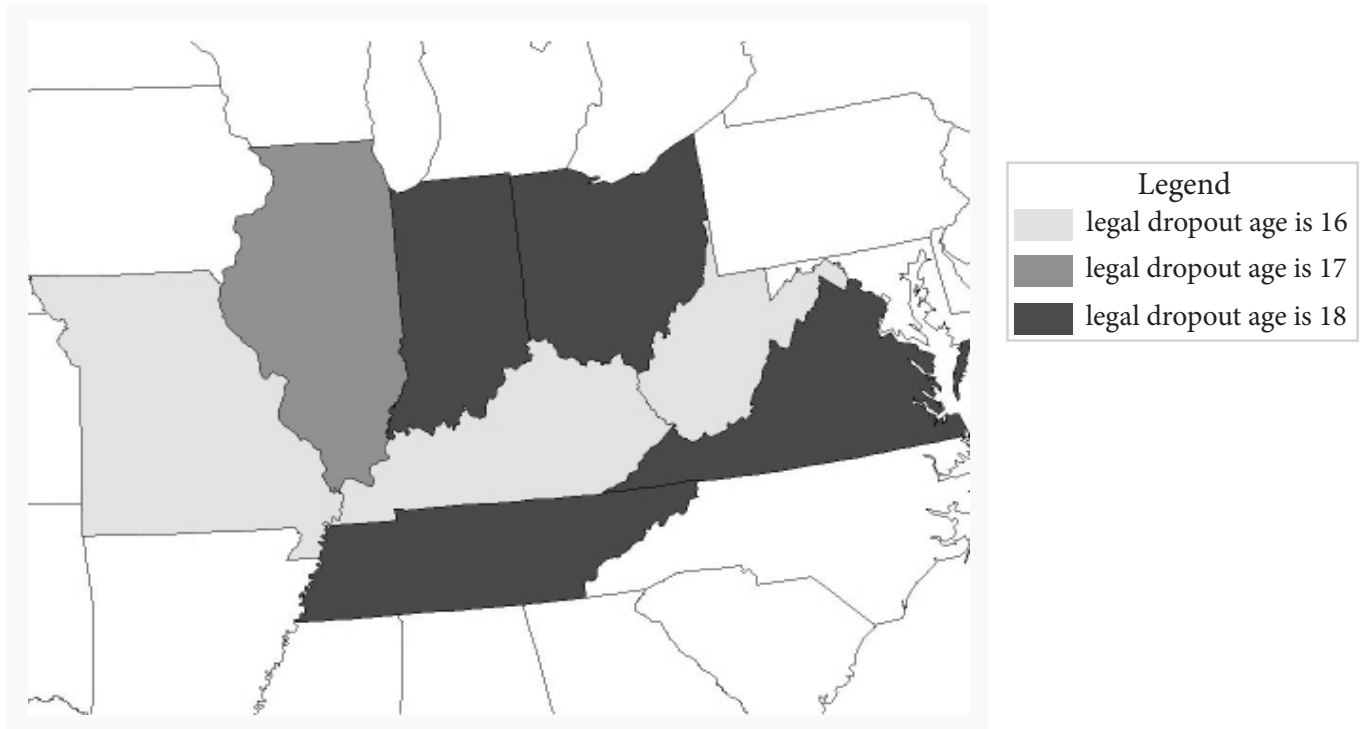
A wealth of research has been done to determine the best way to increase graduation rates. Best-practices have been identified by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network and others.^{27,28,29,30,31} These best-practices include programs that target at-risk youth early; track attendance and other key risk factors closely; provide additional social and emotional supports to students; and allow students to learn in nontraditional settings.³² Success has also been seen with programs that provide flexible schedules allowing students to both work and attend school, and with programs that keep students engaged and challenged by offering advanced placement or local community college courses.³³ One of the most widely employed strategies for decreasing dropout is raising the compulsory education age – the age at which a student may legally drop out of school.

Raising the Compulsory Attendance Age

State legislatures around the country have begun raising the age at which a student may legally drop out of high school.³⁴ According to a 2007 report from the public policy firm, Civic Enterprises, "Many current state efforts to keep young people in school are dealing with the compulsory school age, because there is a growing, shared understanding that raising the age requirement is also a way to raise expectations among students, their parents, school authorities, and the general public."³⁵

As of January 2010, 22 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation requiring school attendance to age 18 with certain exceptions. Nine other states have raised the attendance age from 16 to 17.³⁶ This movement is still growing, with at least 10 more states introducing bills raising the compulsory attendance age in their 2009 legislative sessions and 9 states introducing similar bills in 2010.³⁷

Map 1: Compulsory School Attendance Age in Kentucky and Surrounding States



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration.

Research shows that raising the compulsory attendance age can play an important role in raising graduation rates.³⁸ Angrist and Krueger estimate that raising the compulsory education age can keep approximately one out of every four likely dropouts in school.³⁹ Another study finds that keeping students in school even one year longer leads to a 12 percent increase in earnings.⁴⁰

Raising the compulsory attendance age alone is not a perfect solution. States that have raised their compulsory attendance age have found mixed results with regard to increases in graduation rates.⁴¹ The state of Illinois experienced a dramatic increase in truancy following their enactment of a higher compulsory education age; the same students still failed to attend, but they were considered truant instead of being counted as dropping out.⁴² As more states have adopted a higher dropout age, it has become clear that raising the compulsory attendance age should be only one part of a more comprehensive plan to increase graduation rates.⁴³ Programs that support at-risk students and allow for flexible educational opportunities complement legislation that raises the compulsory education age, resulting in

improved graduation rates. Current successful efforts in Kentucky to improve graduation rates include high-quality alternative programs, career/technical opportunities, personalized guidance services, and structural changes, such as master scheduling and reconfiguring the senior year.

States with Winning Programs

Several states have developed effective, comprehensive programs for increasing graduation rates, including Indiana, Georgia, New Hampshire, and Virginia. For purposes of comparison, this brief will present details of programs in the two nearest states, Indiana and Virginia.

Indiana's Career Planning, *School Flex*, *Double-Up*, and *Fast Track* Programs

Indiana has garnered national attention for the improvements they have achieved in preventing dropout.^{44,45} Their multi-pronged approach incorporates raising the compulsory education age and enforcing it; allowing students flexibility in their educational plans; and providing an opportunity

Indiana's Dropout Prevention Programs

Compulsory School Age 18

Requires attendance until age 18 with few exceptions. Students who drop out or are truant risk losing their work permits and driving privileges.

Career Planning

Requires 8th graders to develop a flexible coursework and career plan. Includes periodic reviews and counseling for students falling behind.

School Flex

Allows at-risk 11th and 12th grade students the flexibility to attend classes at least 3 hours per day while maintaining employment as well.

Double-Up

Empowers colleges and universities to partner with high schools to offer early college, dual credit, and dual enrollment opportunities to students up to an associate's degree. The cost is shared between the college and high school for low-income students.

Fast Track

Allows individuals who have already dropped out to earn their high school diploma while enrolled in an associate's or certificate program at a state college or university. Students must pass the state graduation exam or approved equivalent, and the school district pays for high school coursework for students ages 17-18.

Source: National Governors Association (2006). Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States, vol. 1, issue 2.

for those who have already dropped out to earn their diplomas. Other programs offer support and counseling to younger students in developing educational plans.⁴⁶

Virginia's Honor Schools and Project Graduation

Through the Governor's Honor Schools program, Virginia recognizes 30 schools with higher-than-average ninth grade retention rates and provides them with grants for supporting students' transitions to high school. Project Graduation is a statewide initiative helping at-risk students with tutorial and remedial services in reading, writing, and algebra. These initiatives complement Virginia's compulsory education age law to create a comprehensive system for preventing dropout and increasing graduation rates.

Recommendations for Kentucky

Kentucky can increase high school graduation rates by raising expectations for students and increasing programs that keep students engaged. Three proven strategies should be employed to raise the graduation rate without new and expensive programs:

1. Increase the compulsory education age from 16 to 18.
2. Offer opportunities in all high schools for students to combine part-day schooling with employment.
3. Ensure that all high schools offer their students access to early college credits through dual enrollment courses in either 4-year colleges or technical and community colleges.
4. Ensure academic quality in alternative programs.

Endnotes

- ¹ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed March 2010.
- ² National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Habash, E. (2008). *Counting on Graduation: An Agenda for State Leadership*. The Education Trust. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau (2007). *Earnings Gap Highlighted by Census Bureau Data on Educational Attainment*. Press release. Available at <http://www.census.gov>. Accessed September 2008.
- ⁶ Kentucky Youth Advocates (2008). *2008 Kentucky KIDS COUNT County Data Book*. Louisville, KY: Kentucky Youth Advocates.
- ⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *Mean Earnings by Highest Degree Earned*, Table 227, 2007. Available at http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/education/educational_attainment.html. Accessed March 2010.
- ⁸ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed March 2010.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Harlow, C. W. (2003). *Education and Correctional Populations*. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- ¹¹ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed March 2010.
- ¹² States currently use many different methods to calculate graduation rates. In 2008, along with 32 other states, Kentucky counted the percentage of students leaving school with a high school diploma, which tends to undercount dropouts. New requirements under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act requires all fifty states to adopt a uniform formula by 2012 which will give a more accurate picture of educational outcomes. Kentucky plans to adopt this new formula in 2009. The number of dropouts reported here is gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau by asking all youth ages 16 to 19 if they have completed high school and if they are currently in school. Kentucky data available for calculating state income tax revenue loss are based on the old formula. Other sources used in this brief may employ the newer formula for calculating graduation rates, depending on their publication date.
- ¹³ Annie E. Casey Foundation website. KIDS COUNT Data Center. Available at <http://www.kidscount.org>. Accessed March 2010.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (2007). *Kentucky and United States Median Earnings by Educational Attainment Level and Gender, 2006*. Available at http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/38E23093-122B-430A-947F-F2E932D01E84/0/KY__US_Median_Earnings_by_Attainment_Gender_20071101.pdf. Accessed January 2009.
- ¹⁶ Estimate based on Kentucky's 2007 state income tax rate for individuals with no deductions earning \$24, 344 (high school graduate median earnings) and \$17,523 (high school dropout median earnings). Under these rates, graduates paid \$1,228 in state income tax, and dropouts paid \$832 in state income tax, a difference of \$396. If 7,400 students dropped out in 2007, and each one paid \$396 less in state income tax that year, then Kentucky lost approximately \$2.9 million as a result of lower wages earned by those who dropped out in 2007.
- ¹⁷ A study conducted by the Economics Center for Education & Research found that Ohio could save as much as \$3,000 in crime-related costs (including operation of the criminal justice system, parole, restitution for victims, and crime prevention) for every additional high school graduate. See Endnote 19.
- ¹⁸ Alliance for Excellent Education (2009). *Understanding High School Graduation Rates in Kentucky*. Available at http://www.all4ed.org/files/Kentucky_wc.pdf. Accessed March 2010.
- ¹⁹ Economics Center for Education & Research, University of Cincinnati (2008). *An Evaluation of the Economic Benefits of High School Education*. Commissioned by the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Estimate based on 2008 cost per pupil data from the Kentucky Department of Education. News Room: Kentucky Education Facts. Available at <http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/HomePageRepository/News+Room/Kentucky+Education+Facts.htm>. Accessed February 2009.
- ²⁴ Calculations based on cost-benefit ratio used in the Economics Center for Education & Research study. See Endnote 19.
- ²⁵ Kentucky's annual per pupil expenditure is \$8,839. For two additional years of high school, Kentucky would pay \$17, 678 per graduate. Using the Economics Center for Education & Research study's cost-benefit ratio and their calculation of the amount of wages lost by students staying in school versus being employed as dropouts, one may calculate the net benefit to the state

Endnotes cont.

government as such: 1: 11.62 = 17,678: 205,418. The same method may be used to calculate the net benefit to the entire state: 1:31.45 = 21,364: 671,898.

²⁶ In the 2008 school year 6,729 students dropped out of school (see Table 2). If that number were decreased by 10% that would create 672 new graduates. Over the course of one graduate's lifetime, Kentucky would benefit by \$671,898; thus 672 new graduates would equal a benefit of \$451.5 million over the course of those graduates' lifetimes.

²⁷ National Conference of State Legislatures. *Improving High Schools through Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships*. Available at <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/educ/HSRigorRelevanceRelationship.htm>. Accessed February 2009.

²⁸ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed March 2010.

²⁹ National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. *Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention*. Available at <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/default.htm>. Accessed January 2009.

³⁰ Hamilton, S. (1984) *Raising Standards and Reducing Dropout Rates: Implications of Research for Recent Secondary School Reform Proposals*. Available at http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/2f/6c/c6.pdf. Accessed January 2009.

³¹ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2009). *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Reducing the High School Dropout Rate*. Available at <http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid={3DE81D1E-A011-4B6E-91E5-D62D8907BC29}>. Accessed March 2010.

³² Ibid.

³³ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed March 2010.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ United States Department of Labor. Employment Standards Administration. Available at <http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/schoolattend.htm>. Accessed March 2010.

³⁷ Home School Legal Defense Association. State Legislation. Available at <http://www.hslda.org/legislation/state/default.asp>. Accessed March 2010.

³⁸ Wenger, J.W. (2002). *Does the Dropout Age Matter? How Mandatory Schooling Laws Impact High School Completion and School Choice*. Public Finance and Management. Available at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa5334/is_4_2/ai_n28975681/pg_9?tag=artBody;col1. Accessed January 2009.

³⁹ Angrist, Joshua D. & Allan B. Krueger (1991). *Does Compulsory School Attendance Affect Schooling and Earnings?* The Quarterly Journal of Economics, CVI (4), 979-1014.

⁴⁰ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed March 2010.

⁴¹ Illinois Task Force on Re-enrolling Students Who Dropped Out of School. Interim Report. January 2007. Available at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/high_school/pdf/interim_report_task_force.pdf. Accessed January 2009.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Bahnpuri H. & Reynolds, G. (2003). Learning Point Associates. *Understanding and Addressing the Issue of High School Dropout Age: Executive Summary*. Available at <http://www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/second/index.html>. Accessed January 2009.

⁴⁴ National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.

⁴⁵ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed March 2010.

⁴⁶ National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.

Table 2: High School Dropouts, Graduates, and Graduation Rates

	SY 2003			SY 2008		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Kentucky	6,219	36,379	79	6,729	40,099	84
Adair Co.	38	141	66	18	159	82
Allen Co.	30	194	74	38	192	83
Anderson Co.	32	227	88	27	264	90
Ballard Co.	7	66	83	9	87	91
Barren Co.	42	235	80	37	314	84
Caverna Ind.	3	41	79	2	40	80
Glasgow Ind.	18	109	79	9	109	80
Bath Co.	28	89	67	18	110	83
Bell Co.	71	173	69	15	160	80
Middlesboro Ind.	35	83	67	13	112	77
Pineville Ind.	8	28	85	3	37	95
Boone Co.	53	899	91	102	1,025	89
Walton Verona Ind.	0	74	99	0	84	100
Bourbon Co.	23	168	90	16	179	89
Paris Ind.	7	48	91	4	46	96
Boyd Co.	23	229	86	4	278	94
Ashland Ind.	35	184	86	29	194	84
Fairview Ind.	2	43	88	5	61	97
Boyle Co.	19	178	82	30	172	86
Danville Ind.	18	98	85	18	119	91
Bracken Co.	7	77	92	4	72	87
Augusta Ind.	0	16	100	0	25	96
Breathitt Co.	40	110	50	15	124	77
Jackson Ind.	1	28	82	1	33	100
Breckinridge Co.	45	173	79	21	178	86
Cloverport Ind.	0	22	100	0	19	100
Bullitt Co.	101	627	81	122	745	85
Butler Co.	6	141	89	15	145	86
Caldwell Co.	18	146	85	14	135	88
Calloway Co.	13	189	90	15	220	89
Murray Ind.	4	118	99	4	97	94
Campbell Co.	48	303	85	39	334	90
Bellevue Ind.	5	47	85	0	56	100
Dayton Ind.	7	36	54	2	62	97
Fort Thomas Ind.	6	180	97	5	203	98
Newport Ind.	22	142	87	31	86	89
Silver Grove Ind.	0	15	94	1	19	100
Southgate Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Carlisle Co.	12	58	88	5	64	85
Carroll Co.	21	89	70	8	116	87
Carter Co.	42	273	84	21	341	89

	SY 2003			SY 2008		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Casey Co.	26	134	82	19	149	88
Christian Co.	79	475	75	80	502	82
Clark Co.	119	280	69	54	304	80
Clay Co.	77	190	58	72	187	71
Clinton Co.	22	64	74	8	82	89
Crittenden Co.	10	98	90	17	88	83
Cumberland Co.	20	76	72	8	85	77
Daviess Co.	24	737	91	33	795	94
Owensboro Ind.	30	223	84	14	218	85
Edmonson Co.	19	138	84	13	141	89
Elliott Co.	19	76	78	11	61	78
Estill Co.	24	142	74	1	136	91
Fayette Co.	542	1,672	75	381	1,927	81
Fleming Co.	28	137	79	6	142	89
Floyd Co.	85	395	75	81	411	84
Franklin Co.	77	336	78	49	338	82
Frankfort Ind.	8	68	80	0	72	90
Fulton Co.	4	51	85	0	50	94
Fulton Ind.	2	37	86	0	37	100
Gallatin Co.	8	50	74	23	100	87
Garrard Co.	28	142	74	9	151	86
Grant Co.	55	212	79	41	208	82
Williamstown Ind.	6	41	77	0	54	90
Graves Co.	30	250	79	28	308	88
Mayfield Ind.	20	80	84	5	91	83
Grayson Co.	36	270	78	41	274	84
Green Co.	0	107	91	5	110	97
Greenup Co.	28	193	77	32	186	84
Raceland Ind.	1	70	99	2	66	100
Russell Ind.	10	158	95	5	178	96
Hancock Co.	0	83	98	2	119	97
Hardin Co.	183	876	80	105	1,023	86
Elizabethtown Ind.	21	167	85	20	137	85
West Point Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Harlan Co.	105	327	75	74	272	72
Harlan Ind.	7	51	75	3	43	78
Harrison Co.	17	211	88	34	209	90
Hart Co.	23	140	84	12	149	83
Henderson Co.	122	424	74	31	457	82
Henry Co.	19	137	81	10	133	82
Eminence Ind.	1	18	86	0	34	100

	SY 2003			SY 2008		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Hickman Co.	4	45	82	8	46	90
Hopkins Co.	89	432	84	62	461	87
Dawson Springs Ind.	5	32	80	8	46	90
Jackson Co.	15	130	84	17	148	80
Jefferson Co.	898	4,610	69	1,925	5,240	75
Anchorage Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jessamine Co.	103	342	72	57	427	84
Johnson Co.	39	211	84	13	247	94
Paintsville Ind.	0	57	77	2	46	96
Kenton Co.	95	753	91	108	817	86
Beechwood Ind.	0	81	99	1	84	99
Covington Ind.	8	194	89	17	156	84
Erlanger-Elsmere Ind.	9	94	87	21	121	88
Ludlow Ind.	4	64	93	6	62	91
Knott Co.	31	153	72	17	149	87
Knox Co.	63	225	63	48	251	80
Barbourville Ind.	1	44	100	0	52	100
Larue Co.	40	152	80	2	161	95
Laurel Co.	102	440	72	75	516	84
East Bernstadt Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lawrence Co.	47	164	76	27	164	80
Lee Co.	15	70	78	8	73	92
Leslie Co.	42	147	79	21	115	79
Letcher Co.	39	201	77	19	193	87
Jenkins Ind.	3	38	97	0	38	95
Lewis Co.	17	143	81	7	152	92
Lincoln Co.	58	240	71	17	249	82
Livingston Co.	16	87	89	7	94	90
Logan Co.	30	195	78	17	256	91
Russellville Ind.	7	85	89	4	82	90
Lyon Co.	1	64	86	2	77	100
McCracken Co.	39	415	91	27	447	91
Paducah Ind.	49	159	70	15	167	86
McCreary Co.	20	175	76	12	193	80
McLean Co.	13	114	85	2	108	89
Madison Co.	29	449	88	66	613	90
Berea Ind.	10	61	86	2	71	91
Magoffin Co.	24	144	72	8	139	91
Marion Co.	21	172	84	23	195	82
Marshall Co.	24	276	83	25	332	91
Martin Co.	29	151	79	20	115	86
Mason Co.	47	165	86	18	179	88

	SY 2003			SY 2008		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Meade Co.	35	323	81	35	330	90
Menifee Co.	19	98	74	3	81	86
Mercer Co.	9	152	94	2	228	86
Burgin Ind.	2	21	84	0	34	94
Harrodsburg Ind.	8	50	86	*	*	*
Metcalfé Co.	3	55	73	3	104	84
Monroe Co.	13	118	84	15	103	90
Montgomery Co.	15	203	79	33	247	82
Morgan Co.	31	150	78	23	129	85
Muhlenberg Co.	37	348	83	56	354	88
Nelson Co.	40	304	87	9	367	96
Bardstown Ind.	11	103	74	11	113	93
Nicholas Co.	13	69	85	10	74	84
Ohio Co.	21	244	89	20	225	91
Oldham Co.	33	612	93	26	725	94
Owen Co.	32	92	74	15	127	90
Owsley Co.	10	53	79	3	64	86
Pendleton Co.	15	185	91	8	184	92
Perry Co.	44	200	68	21	263	89
Hazard Ind.	0	77	88	0	63	100
Pike Co.	86	583	84	132	593	81
Pikeville Ind.	6	79	83	6	85	92
Powell Co.	39	125	68	21	146	87
Pulaski Co.	41	503	79	51	541	85
Science Hill Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Somerset Ind.	12	91	85	7	108	86
Robertson Co.	5	14	82	2	25	76
Rockcastle Co.	26	185	77	13	209	92
Rowan Co.	34	171	80	39	204	85
Russell Co.	50	135	70	5	181	91
Scott Co.	70	332	77	85	397	85
Shelby Co.	52	305	78	31	346	86
Simpson Co.	27	167	87	18	200	86
Spencer Co.	9	131	89	19	159	87
Taylor Co.	15	204	90	20	198	90
Campbellsville Ind.	17	76	76	7	57	70
Todd Co.	23	127	85	6	140	92
Trigg Co.	20	109	78	10	135	86
Trimble Co.	12	92	87	17	111	87
Union Co.	36	147	81	16	162	82
Warren Co.	86	693	87	76	827	91
Bowling Green Ind.	23	208	87	4	250	91

	SY 2003			SY 2008		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Washington Co.	17	140	84	12	135	88
Wayne Co.	36	145	74	6	151	88
Monticello Ind.	9	48	81	7	51	85
Webster Co.	10	139	84	10	121	88
Providence Ind.	2	24	89	**	**	**
Whitley Co.	55	209	79	17	236	82
Corbin Ind.	4	158	91	0	147	99
Williamsburg Ind.	3	46	84	0	53	100
Wolfe Co.	7	84	76	2	88	98
Woodford Co.	17	245	86	24	283	92

Source: Kentucky Department of Education website.

* District has no schools with grades 7-12.

** District merged with county school district.