

KDE Student Advisory Council offers feedback on postsecondary transition resources

FRANKFORT — Members of the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE's) Commissioner's Student Advisory Council discussed a project they are working on to review postsecondary readiness resources and the role of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) during their meeting on Feb. 24.

As defined in 704 KAR 19:002, the ILP is a "comprehensive framework for advising students in grades 6 through 12 to engage in coursework and activities that will best prepare them to both realize college and career success and become contributing members of their communities."

This year, council members have been reviewing ILP and postsecondary planning resources to propose how they might be maximized to ensure a meaningful post-high school transition.

During their meeting, Mitzi Holland, director of the Council on Postsecondary Education's Kentucky Advising Academy, presented an additional resource to the council called the Kentucky Middle School Postsecondary Advising Scope and Sequence.

As a new resource currently in the drafting phase, it is designed to help school advisors, counselors or teachers guide students on their college and career journey. It is being designed for grades 6-12, with middle school being more about exploring and preparing for the high school plan; and high school being more about making postsecondary decisions.

The resource focuses on four categories: career exploration, postsecondary opportunities, financial literacy and essential skills. Teachers have the option to follow a monthly advising focus with a different theme for each month. For example, in one month all grades would focus on career interests and survey their personality traits, while the next month would focus on financial literacy.

Student Advisory Council member Preston Graham, a

senior at Woodford County High School, said he sees the scope and sequence document as a "huge improvement" to the ILP resources he has used.

"I see (what I used) and I compare that to the ILP collection sheet with the networking resources with all the classes you could take, and that's just a huge improvement for first steps," Graham said.

Council members broke out into groups to discuss what they thought of different postsecondary resources available to students and teachers, including the scope and sequence tool, an ILP collection document spreadsheet from CPE and Futuriti, a CPE website that helps students and adults find their career paths.

Council member Harper Blake, a junior at Marion County High School, said her group discussed the ILP collection spreadsheet for scheduling, which is a tool students can use to plan their classes, extracurriculars, careers they're interested in and life goals after high school.

"We thought that it helps students better organize and understand classes for graduation requirements while also taking classes customized to their preferences, so we were big fans of that," Blake said.

Blake's group also reviewed the Futuriti website, and some of her group members said it was difficult to navigate in parts. Blake said a video might be beneficial in helping students figure out where to go on the website. She also said the website could benefit from additional information on different career pathways.

"While there were plenty of options for CTE pathways, it didn't really expand on all of the postsecondary issues that a student might have, and one example of that was out-of-state funding," Blake said.

Manas Garla, a senior at Western Hills High School (Franklin County), agreed that Futuriti could benefit from more focus on out-of-state opportunities.

"Futuriti is really good for focusing on Kentucky's opportunities, it has a varied

approach to it, but there's not really many things for students who would like to go outside of Kentucky for either college or their careers," Garla said. "So we talked about how having a comparison between occupations in different states versus Kentucky might be beneficial."

Garla said his group agreed that Futuriti is a good one-stop shop for everything a student might need — like a career and college finder — but having the ability to save information on the website might be beneficial.

Hadley Nicolas, a junior at Martha Layne Collins High School (Shelby County), said her group thought all the resources are great for students planning their careers and futures, but said that students should be given more intentional time to use the resources.

"We thought that there should be designated time in school for using these resources because we felt that sometimes they might not be able to implement them at home," Nicolas said. "Using them at school would help have guidance from the teachers."

She also said districts could raise more awareness of the resources both in schools and at events for parents, as many of her group members hadn't heard of them.

Karen Dodd, chief performance officer in KDE's Office of the Commissioner, pitched to the council a final project idea about a campaign promoting the ILP and other postsecondary resources. She explained that the advisory council could make an instructional video for a statewide campaign.

The campaign would involve students around the state submitting projects to promote postsecondary resources. Dodd described it as a showcase for students by students. The Commissioner's Student Advisory Council's video would explain the showcase to students around the state and how they can participate. The council agreed to move forward with this project.

The council will present their final project to the commissioner at their next meeting in April.

States Least Affected by Scams

Rank	State	Scam Complaints per 1k-citizens	Losses per Citizen (\$)	Scam Effect Score
50	Kentucky	1.34	16.11	4.13
49	Arkansas	1.37	16.74	6.27
47	Mississippi	1.04	22.29	8.31
47	West Virginia	1.47	13.67	8.31
45	Louisiana	1.40	19.01	10.40
45	Vermont	1.45	17.40	10.40
44	Nebraska	1.30	23.30	13.52
43	Alabama	1.52	20.12	16.63
42	Rhode Island	1.48	21.21	16.68
41	North Dakota	1.11	27.41	19.74

Kentucky is scam resilient

BY DENIS HOUSE
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According to a recent survey by the Pew Research Center, around 24% of U.S. adults say they got a scam email, text message, or call that led them to share personal information.

Recently, email communication experts at AI-powered platform Mailgo (https://www.mailgo.ai/) analyzed FBI Internet Crime Compliant Center data to rank the states based on scam frequency and financial impact, and it found that Kentucky ranks 50th nationally (the lowest impact) with a scam effect score of 4.13, making it the most secure digital landscape in the country.

"Kentucky is currently the national leader in scam resilience, ranking as the least affected state in our study," said Lennon Han, email communications expert at Mailgo. "With a loss of just \$16.11 per citizen, Kentuckians are proving harder to deceive than residents in almost any other state."

He added that as nationwide extortion attempts

skyrocket by over 40%, it is critical that Kentucky businesses "don't become complacent."

"Fraudsters often pivot to 'quieter' states when larger hubs like California or New York tighten their security," Han said. "Maintaining robust email verification remains the best defense against these evolving threats."

Kentucky sees just 1.34 complaints per 1,000 citizens, reflecting a significantly lower frequency of reported fraud compared to the national average. Financial losses are the lowest among all analyzed states, with residents losing an average of \$16.11 per person.

Scam complaints are surging nationally, with extortion leading at 40.50% growth, followed by crimes against children (30.02%), and investment fraud (22.10%) from 2022 to 2024.

Nevada is the state affected the most by scams, with a scam effect score of 100.00. It has 3.28 scam complaints per 1,000 citizens, and an average of \$82.26 losses per citizen.

Arizona (94.71) is the

second most affected state, followed by California (93.69), Wyoming (92.67), and Washington (87.41) to round out the top five. The bottom five least affected states are Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, and West Virginia (tied for 47th), and Louisiana and Vermont (tied for 45th).

This study identifies the U.S. states most affected by scams by analyzing complaint and loss data from the 2024 FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) Annual Report. Two core metrics were calculated: total scam complaints per 10,000 residents and total losses per 100,000 residents, providing a standardized comparison of how frequently scams occur and how financially damaging they are in each state.

Mailgo compared IC3's reported complaint counts for major crime types across 2022, 2023, and 2024, calculating the year-over-year percentage change to highlight which scams are rising fastest nationwide. All figures were sourced directly from the 2024 IC3 report to ensure consistency across metrics.

YOUNG

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to not let things get to you," Tungate explained.

He describes Garrett as a smart player, who also possesses that competitive spirit while Shaver is someone he can count on to throw strikes consistently.

Bridgette Farris moves over from first base to tackle the catching duties this spring and will be backed up by Ava Edelen.

Returning starter Kendall Thompson gives the Lady Knights solid defense and a quick bat and Garrett and Shaver will handle the second base responsibilities when not pitching.

"Kendall is really smooth out there at shortstop. She has great lateral movement and just glides to the ball in the holes," Tungate said.

Several players are competing for positions on the corners of the diamond including senior Kinley Craig, who Tungate hopes can give the lineup some pop.

Underclassmen Chazity Farris, Molly Stout and Josie Gordon will patrol the outfield for Marion County and their athleticism gives the team the ability to chase down potential extra base hits.

According to Tungate, the team's most pressing need is more power in the lineup, but with such a young team, that could develop as the season goes along.

Tungate is joined on the softball coaching staff this season by former baseball coaches Marc Brock and Toby Tungate.

Defending region champ Taylor County is the likely favorite to win the 20th District this spring, but the Lady Knights are the reigning district title holders. Though the team lost a great deal of talent to graduation, the expectations are high for this team and its new coach.

"I'm more than happy with my decision to coach softball. We had a great turnout in

the fall and they've put in some work. They have some big goals to win that region

tournament, but we need to concentrate on getting that district first," Tungate said.

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