

# Kentucky alters plan for new high school graduation rules

By ADAM BEAM  
Associated Press  
LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky’s education commissioner has scaled back proposed new high school graduation requirements after some districts worried they wouldn’t have the resources needed for their students to graduate.

Wayne Lewis announced the changes Monday, two days before the state Board of Education is scheduled to vote on the new requirements after a public comment period.

At a public hearing last week, some superintendents of rural school districts worried they could not offer all of the options to their students, including apprenticeship programs and 500 hours of “exceptional work experience.”

“The concern from the field was that the step forward we were proposing was too big a step,” Lewis said. “It is still a step forward, but it is a smaller step.”

The new requirements are designed to better prepare students for either a career or to pursue a degree at a college or university. Kentucky has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country, with about 90 percent of its students earning diplomas each year. But state education officials say only about 60 percent of those students meet standards showing they are ready for a college or a career.

The first proposal, initially approved in October, would have required students to meet standards for “transition readiness” to graduate. The new proposal offers students a choice among seven “graduation qualifiers” that are not as rigorous as the first proposal.

For example, the first proposal would have accepted a benchmark score in reading and math on a college admission exam like the ACT. The new proposal loosens that standard, only requiring students meet the benchmark in one area, not both. And if students could not meet the standard in a college admission exam, the state would accept a benchmark score in a less rigorous college placement exam.

Another option under the first proposal was for students to gain certification in a certain industry, as approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. But the new proposal would accept an easier standard: students who complete at least four courses within a “career pathway” as approved by the Kentucky Department of Education.

“Do I believe that by students meeting one of these qualifiers that they are ready for postsecondary education or ready to go into the workforce and get a job where they can take care of themselves? Maybe, maybe not,” Lewis said. “But I do believe I am confident that with this proposal the expectation for minimum high school graduation in Kentucky is a more rigorous expectation than what we currently have.”

The changes come after a public hearing last week where 16 of the 17 people who spoke opposed the plan, including education advocacy groups, school superintendents, teachers and a high school student. Lewis said the changes show the department values the feedback.

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, an education advocacy group, said in a statement it is glad Lewis is “being receptive to feedback” and looked forward to reviewing the proposal in more detail. But they again renewed their call for the state Board of Education to delay voting on the new requirements.

“There is broad agreement that too many kids are not getting all they need out of high school,” the Prichard Committee said in a statement posted to the organization’s Twitter account. “But the call at last week’s hearing was near universal for the Kentucky Board of Education to table

the proposal and have authentic engagement with stakeholders to craft solutions.”

Other aspects of the proposal did not change. Students will have to show a “basic competency” in reading and math to graduate. They can do this by meeting the minimum required scores in reading and math in tests taken in the eighth and 10th grades. Most education advocacy groups have opposed this, arguing it places too much emphasis on a test. But Lewis noted students can take the test twice a year. Plus, students can bypass the test by presenting a portfolio of work demonstrating they have met the standard, among other options.



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**INVITATION TO BID**

The Hancock County Fiscal Court will accept sealed bids for two (2) new EMS Cardiac Monitors with 12 lead EKG transmit ability. Bid specifications are available by contacting Sage Taylor at the Hancock County Judge Executive’s Office, Hancock County Administration Building, Hawesville, KY at (270)927-8137. Local point of contact for questions about bid specifications is Damian Rice at (270)927-1311.

Bids will be accepted until 9:00 a.m. Monday, December 10, 2018, in the County Judge/Executive’s office, located on the third floor of the Administration Building, 225 Main Cross Street, Hawesville, KY. Mailing of bids should be sent to Hancock County Judge/Executive, **Attn: Bid for 2018 Cardiac Monitors**, P.O. Box 580, Hawesville, KY 42348.

Bids will be opened on Monday, December 10, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. local time at the Hancock County Fiscal Court Room, County Administration Building. All bids must be submitted on the Bid Cover Sheet included in the bid specifications. All envelopes must be marked: **Attn: Bid for 2018 Cardiac Monitors**. The bidder will certify with his/her bid that his/her product meets said requirements. Bidder will provide full warranty information.

The Hancock County Fiscal Court reserves the right not to accept the lowest bid and the right to reject any and/or all bids. By order of Hancock County Fiscal Court.

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**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> – 10:00 AM**

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**INVITATION TO BIDDERS**

Separate sealed bids will be received by the Hancock County Fiscal Court for the price of snow removal at the following locations for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. **EACH** location is to be bid separately, including snow removal from parking lots, sidewalks and salt application, of the following properties: Hancock County Career Center, Hancock Senior Citizens Center, Hancock County Administration Building, Hancock County Health Department, Hancock County Courthouse (old building) and Hancock County Judicial Center. The bids will be taken through 9:00 am, Monday, December 10, 2018. Bids received after that time will **NOT** be accepted.

Separate sealed bids will also be received by the Hancock County Fiscal Court for the emergency removal of snow on county roads for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Bids **MUST** be submitted as an hourly rate (hourly rate will include price for both equipment {list size and hp}and equipment operator combined and submitted as **ONE** hourly rate). The bids will be taken through 9:00 am, Monday, December 10, 2018. Bids received after that time will **NOT** be accepted.

Bids must be received in a sealed envelope labeled with the identification of **SNOW REMOVAL BID** and bidder's name on the front of the envelope. Any bid which is not submitted as directed herein, may, at the discretion of the Fiscal Court, be rejected. Interested bidders can contact the Judge/Executive’s Office at 270-927-8137 for information. Bidder must attach proof of liability insurance to the bid and proof of Workmen's Comp. Insurance, where applicable. Sealed bids must be delivered to the Hancock County Judge/Executive’s Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Hancock County Administration Building, Hawesville, Kentucky.

The Fiscal Court of Hancock County reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any irregularities in bids and to accept what, in their opinion, is the best evaluated bid.

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