



KENTUCKY CENTER
for SCHOOL SAFETY

ENHANCING SCHOOL SAFETY

27th Annual
Report 2025

ANONYMOUS
REPORTING TOOL
ACCOUNTABILITY
VISITOR MANAGEMENT
PLANNING
TRAINING

EOP
PROACTIVITY
CONSISTENCY
POSITIVE SCHOOL
CLIMATE
COMMUNICATION
REUNIFICATION



- AWARENESS
- ACTIVE SUPERVISION
- DETERRENCE
- LOCKED DOORS
- SAFETY DRILLS
- MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

FAMILIES ● TRUST
INTENTIONALITY
COOPERATION
DILIGENCE

- THREAT ASSESSMENT
- DETERMINATION
- VIGILANCE
- PLANNING
- CONSISTENCY
- CRISIS MANAGEMENT

TRAIN ★ PRACTICE ★ EXECUTE ★ SUPPORT



How Best to Impact School Safety

A Message from our Executive Director

When discussing school safety, it is important to recognize a fundamental truth: school safety is, at its core, child safety. Schools play a vital role in creating and maintaining safe, supportive, and healthy learning environments for students throughout each school day. Yet school hours represent only a small portion of our children's lives, which leaves us with an important question: What about the environments our students return to when they leave their school campuses each school day?

The reality is that, for many children, the structure, supervision, and support provided by schools diminish the moment they walk out the door.

Consider the mathematics of a typical school year. Kentucky students spend approximately 170 days in school, averaging about seven hours per day. This equates to roughly 1,190 hours annually spent in classrooms and school activities. Out of the 8,760 hours in a calendar year, schools directly interact with students for only about 13 percent of their time. The remaining 87 percent is



Parent involvement strengthens our schools and supports every child.



spent in homes, neighborhoods, online environments, and communities across the Commonwealth.

As Kentucky's State Director of School Safety and a former principal, I am frequently asked a challenging question: "What is the single best solution for achieving real school safety?" While there is no simple answer, one principle consistently rises to the top: school safety cannot be achieved by schools alone.

True school safety requires an entire community working together. It requires educators, families, law enforcement, mental health professionals, community organizations, and countless others sharing responsibility for the wellbeing of children. Schools are a critical piece of the puzzle, but they cannot operate in isolation.

For this reason, one of the most important goals for any school should be strengthening the connection between the school environment and the home environment. Parents and guardians are simply indispensable partners in the safety equation. They influence the experiences, relationships, habits, and challenges students bring with them to school each day. Indeed, in many (if not most) cases, issues that surface in school are also present at home, just as challenges faced outside of school often affect a student's behavior, mental health, and academic performance.

The same is true for them regarding today's digital world as well. Many of the online interactions that shape a student's emotional wellbeing occur outside school hours, yet their effects are often felt inside the classroom. This reality further reinforces the need for strong partnerships between schools and families.

When schools and parents communicate openly, build trust, and work together in the best interests of children, positive outcomes follow. Students benefit from consistent expectations, shared support systems, and a unified commitment to their success and safety. Time and again, educators witness the remarkable impact that occurs when families and schools stand together.



Empowering parents with information, Protecting children through awareness.

The message is simple: achieving meaningful school safety requires more than secure buildings, safety plans, and trained personnel. It requires strong relationships. It requires trust. Most importantly, it requires communities that are willing to lock arms with each other and the schools in support of their children.

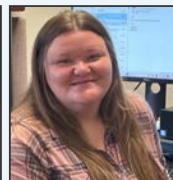
As Kentucky schools continue striving toward safer learning environments, we must never lose sight of the fact that our influence extends beyond the school day, just as the home environment greatly impacts each child's demeanor and behavior at school, translating directly to school safety. By partnering with families and communities, we can positively impact not only the 13 percent of time students spend with us in school, but also the 87 percent of their lives spent beyond our doors.

That, in my view, is how we make the greatest impact on school safety—and ultimately, on the lives of the children we serve.

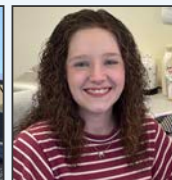
KCSS Staff at EKU



Barbara Gateskill
Associate Director



Tiffany Hardin
Finance & Budget Analyst



Morgan Wilson
Program Coordinator



Lee Ann Morrison
Research Analyst

Before concluding this Annual Report, I would like to personally recognize the exceptional team that serves KCSS at EKU. Without hesitation, I can say that no team demonstrates greater dedication, creativity, professionalism, loyalty, or commitment in fulfilling their job responsibilities each day than these individuals.

Many of the accomplishments highlighted throughout these pages are a direct reflection of their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to Kentucky's students, educators, schools, and communities. Their passion for helping schools create safe, supportive, and resilient learning environments has been instrumental in making KCSS the responsive, trusted, and highly respected organization I believe it is today.

To each member of our team, thank you for your countless hours of service, your willingness to go above and beyond, and your steadfast belief in our mission. This Annual Report is more than a summary of the year's work—it is a tribute to your extraordinary contributions and the lasting difference you make in the lives of the school communities across Kentucky we serve.

Simply put, I could not be prouder to serve alongside this extraordinary group of professionals. They are a huge part of the true foundation of KCSS and an invaluable driving force behind our continued success.

***"Maximum school safety cannot be achieved by schools alone.
It requires families and schools working together with the school on behalf of every child."***

Executive Board of Directors

Guiding Kentucky's School Safety Mission Since 1998

Established by the Kentucky General Assembly
April 10, 1998

The Kentucky Center for School Safety was established through House Bill 330 (The Safe Schools Act) to serve as Kentucky's central resource for school safety research, technical assistance, training, and best practices.

"The General Assembly hereby authorizes the establishment of the Center for School Safety..."
KRS 158.442(1)

Board Governance at a Glance

- 15 Appointed Seats
- Four-Year Terms
- Statewide Representation
- Governor Appointments
- Maximum of Two Consecutive Terms
- Focused on Student Safety & Well-Being

Current Board Term:
February 15, 2023 –
February 14, 2027

Leading Child-Serving Agencies

EDUCATION

-  Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education
-  Kelly Foster (Designee)
Kentucky Department of Education
-  Jeremy Roach
Kentucky Association of School Superintendents
-  Dani Bradley
Kentucky School Boards Association
-  Stephanie Ives
Kentucky Education Association

HEALTH & STUDENT WELLNESS

-  Steven Stack, Secretary
Cabinet for Health and Family Services
-  Melissa Goins (Designee)
Cabinet for Health and Family Services
-  Katie Marks
Department for Behavioral Health
-  Vestena (Tena) Robbins (Designee)
Department for Behavioral Health
-  Patricia Ann Glass
Kentucky School Nurses Association
-  Michelle Lynne Antle
Kentucky Association for Psychology in Schools
-  Kyle Thomas
Kentucky School Counselor Association
-  Katherine Smiley
Kentucky Parent Teacher Association

SAFETY, SECURITY & EMERGENCY RESPONSE

-  Robert Purdy
Kentucky State Police
-  Mike Bosse, Commissioner
Department of Criminal Justice Training
-  Amy Hess, Executive Director
Kentucky Office of Homeland Security
-  William Rudie
Kentucky Association of School Resource Officers

COMMUNITY

-  Art Ealum
Kentucky League of Cities

**"Strong Partnerships,
Safer Schools,
Brighter Futures"**

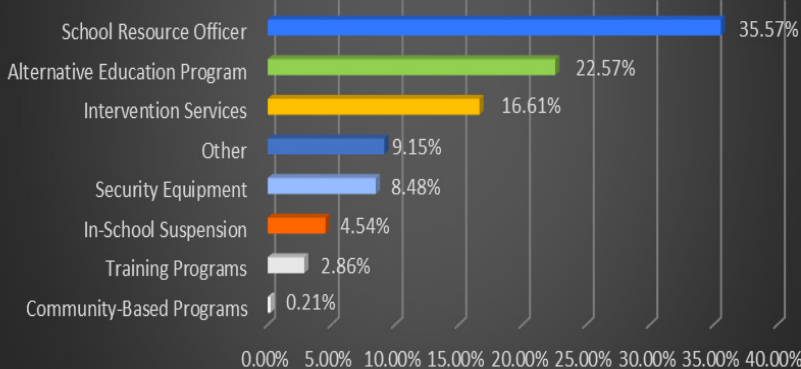


Safe School Funds

FY26 Allocation to 174* School Districts

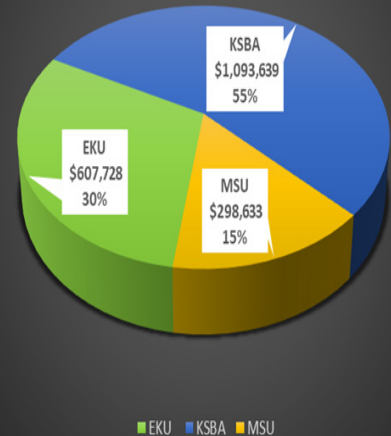
\$12,757,000

**Includes Kentucky School for the Blind, Kentucky School for the Deaf, and Model Laboratory*

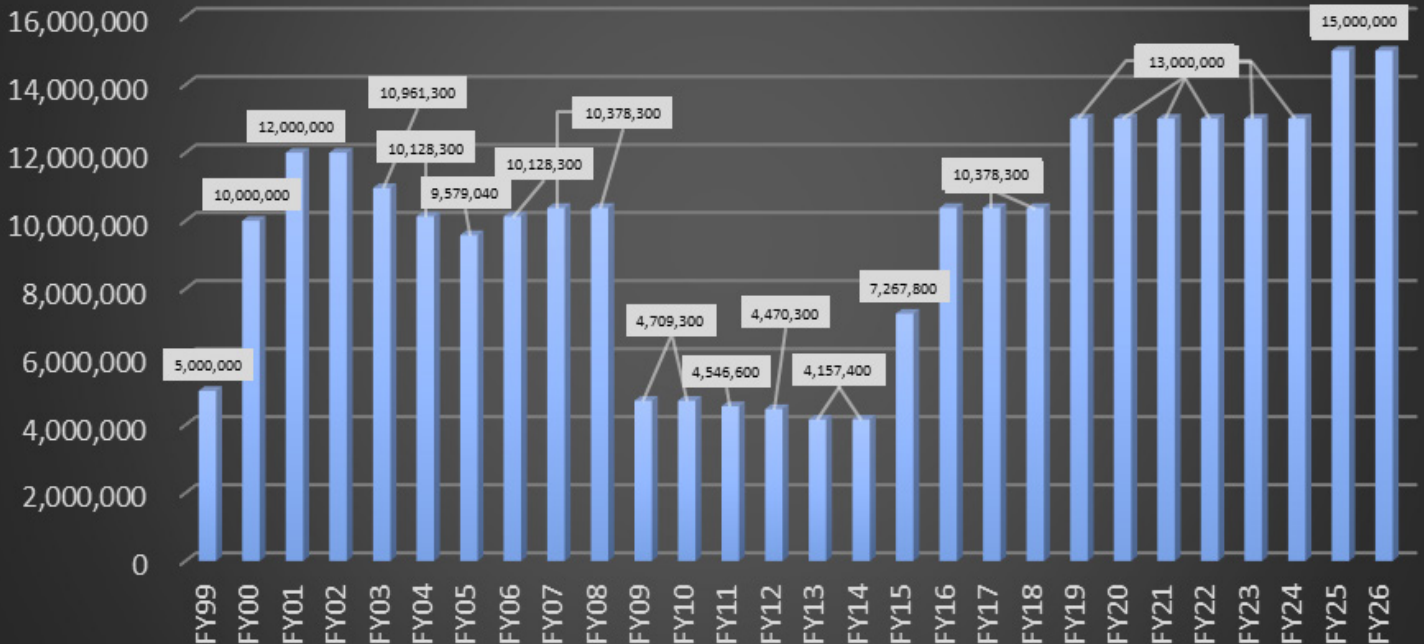


FY26 KCSS Allocation

\$2,000,000



Safe School Funds Appropriated Since 1999 and Allocated Through FY26



BREAKDOWN OF SAFE SCHOOL FUNDS

The KY General Assembly has appropriated more than \$273 million through the Kentucky Department of Education to support safe school efforts since 1999. In 2024, under Senate Bill 91, the Kentucky General Assembly passed a two-year appropriation of \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026. Funding is used by Kentucky school districts for safe school programs and services, and no more than \$2 million is retained for the Kentucky Center for School Safety operations. Each school district receives a base allotment of \$20,000 in addition to a per pupil amount of \$15.80 based on the district's Average Daily Attendance (ADA).

Trainings and Technical Assistance

Since its inception, the Kentucky Center for School Safety (KCSS) has benefited from a strong and enduring partnership with the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA). Under the leadership of Kerri Schelling, KSBA continues to play a critical role in supporting local Boards of Education as they work with KCSS to identify and implement effective strategies to enhance school safety throughout the Commonwealth.



Matt Moore
(KCSS Legislative Liaison),
Alicia Lombardi
(Administrative Assistant),
Kerri Schelling
(KSBA Executive Director),
and **Dan Orman**
(KCSS Training Coordinator)

Together, KCSS and KSBA provide a wide range of training opportunities across Kentucky, addressing both legislative requirements and emerging school safety concerns. These sessions include mandated training, such as Threat Assessment Team instruction, as well as other safety-focused professional learning opportunities designed to help school districts meet the key requirements of the School Safety and Resiliency Act. Through this collaborative effort, KCSS and KSBA continue to equip school leaders and governing boards with the knowledge and resources necessary to develop and maintain safe, secure, and supportive learning environments for all students and staff.

Impact by the Numbers in 2025

4565 Participants Trained	147 Trainings & Technical Assistance Sessions	120 Public School Sessions	27 Private School Sessions

Threat Assessment Team Implementation

Threat assessment teams are required (as part of the School Safety and Resiliency Act) in every public school in Kentucky. Each year since 2020-21, we have increased the number of trainings, as well as individual districts requesting introduction to the model/protocol KCSS utilizes. Essentially, this approach allows Kentucky educators to assist their own schools in providing an essential service in the area of school safety and security.

For the 2025-26 School Year:

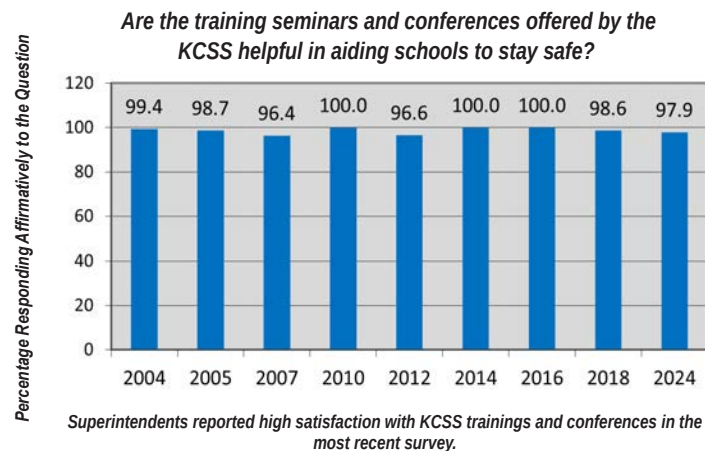
- ✓ 67 Threat Assessment Team Implementation Sessions
- ✓ 34 – County Districts/Schools
- ✓ 8 – Independent Districts/Schools
- ✓ 1 – Private Schools/Organizations
- ✓ 2 – State Conference Presentations
- ✓ Total Participants in Threat Assessment Training (2025-26) = 1178

Since July 2020:

- ✓ County Districts Trained – 70 of 120
- ✓ Independent Districts – 35 of 51
- ✓ Private Schools/Organizations /Sessions – 16

"In creating the School Safety and Resiliency Act, a group of legislators and advisors listened to voices across our Commonwealth. Requiring school threat assessment teams is key to school safety."

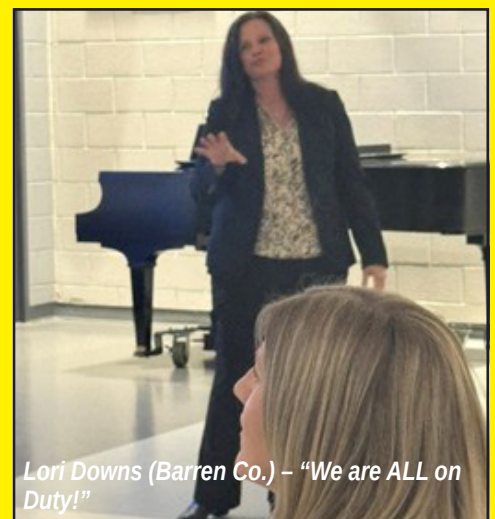
(Jon Akers, KCSS Executive Director)



Matt Moore – Ky Legislative Updates Related to School Safety



Robert Carter – "Protecting Drug-Endangered Children through Coordinated Prevention"



Lori Downs (Barren Co.) – "We are ALL on Duty!"

Note: To schedule a training session, contact KCSS Training Coordinator Dan Orman at dan.orman@ksba.org or 502-424-8652.

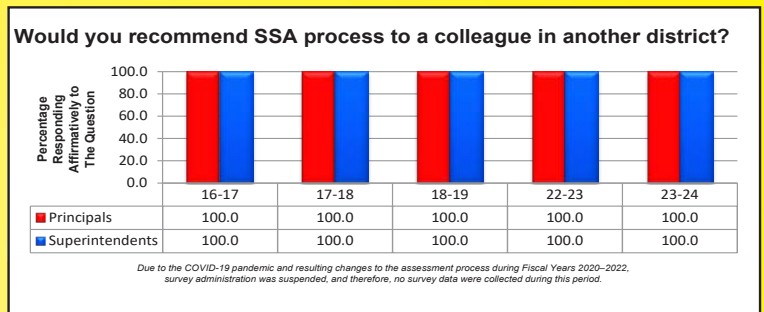
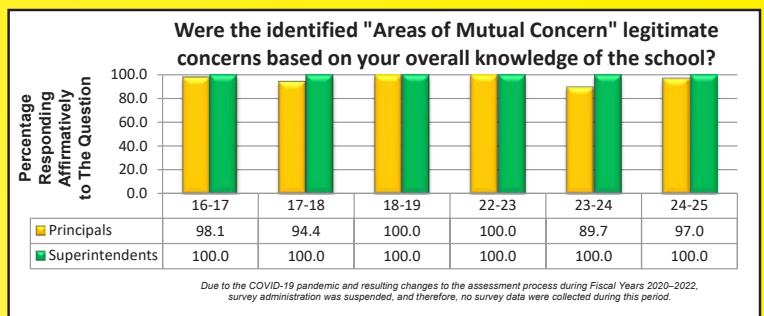
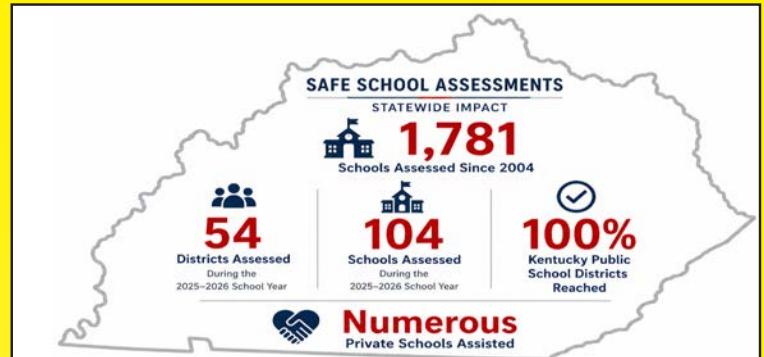
Safe School

Supporting Safer Schools in Every District

During the 2025-2026 school year, fifty-four Kentucky school districts invited KCSS to conduct safe school assessments in their schools. These districts extended geographically across the entire state, reaching from Paducah Independent to Lawrence County and Boone County to Clinton County. As a result, our professional assessment teams were able to complete the comprehensive process of objectively reviewing the safety practices of 104 individual schools. To date, that brings the total number of public P-12 schools we have assessed in our state to 1,781 since we began offering this service in 2004. We can now proudly share that we have completed safe school assessments in every public school district in our state, not counting the many private schools for which we have done the same. KCSS has a firm commitment to assist and support all P-12 schools in Kentucky regarding matters of safety, both public and private, whenever we are contacted.

Our assessments provide an objective evaluation of school safety practices, physical security measures, emergency preparedness efforts, and overall school climate, while offering recommendations, which we call “considerations,” designed to strengthen safe and supportive learning environments.

The value of these assessments is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive feedback received from superintendents, principals, and school staffs. Survey results consistently demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with both the assessment process and the practical considerations. The charts on this page highlight the confidence school leaders place in the Safe School Assessment program and its contribution to improving school safety throughout Kentucky.



Legislative Support Makes Assessments Possible



As we reflect on the continued success of the Safe School Assessment program, we would be remiss not to express our sincere appreciation to the Kentucky General Assembly for its long-standing commitment to school safety. Through their continued investment in the Kentucky Center for School Safety, our state legislators have enabled KCSS to provide this valuable service to schools across the Commonwealth at no cost to districts.

The sustained demand for Safe School Assessments is a testament to the value school leaders place on objective feedback, practical recommendations, and continuous improvement. Over the years, the program has become one of KCSS's most requested and highly regarded services, helping districts strengthen safety practices and better protect students and staff.

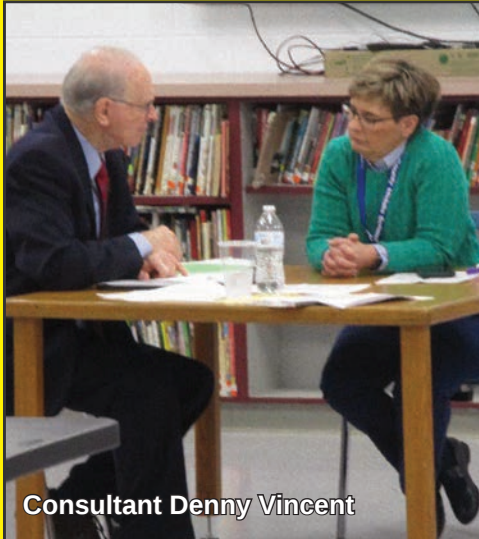
Again, we commend Kentucky's legislators for their ongoing efforts to understand the evolving challenges facing our schools and their commitment to providing the resources necessary to address them. Clearly, their support plays a vital role in helping our schools to create safer and more secure learning environments for all Kentucky students and school staffs..

Assessment

Every Corner of the Commonwealth

Gathering Perspectives, Enhancing Safety

Assessment team members observe activities, supervision patterns, and engage with students, staff members and parents during the on-site assessment visits.



Directors of Pupil Personnel (DPPs in Kentucky)

Connecting Students, Families, and Schools

KRS 159.080 stipulates "Every Kentucky school district must appoint a certified DPP. This administrative role is dedicated to removing barriers to student education, enforcing state compulsory attendance laws, managing district-wide student data, and ensuring fiscal stability through accurate enrollment reporting."



Kentucky's Directors of Pupil Personnel (DPPs) play a critical role in student attendance, family engagement, and school safety. Working in every school district across the Commonwealth, these professionals help to connect students and families with the resources they need to attend a safe school environment and succeed.

What DPPs Do

- Improve Attendance
- Conduct Home Visits
- Connect Families to Services
- Serve as District Liaison with Courts & DCBS
- Ensure Accurate Enrollment & Funding Data

Why DPPs Matter

Research consistently shows that students who feel physically and emotionally safe are more likely to attend school regularly. DPPs help address attendance barriers, support vulnerable students, and connect families with critical resources—making them valuable partners in Kentucky's school safety efforts.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS! Kentucky Department of Education

Kentucky High Attendance Day – 2025

Clark Co. Schools helped to promote Kentucky High



Attendance Day, a statewide initiative encouraging students to attend school and reinforcing the connection between attendance and academic success.

Schools competed in elementary, middle, and high school divisions throughout the Commonwealth.



KDPP Spotlight Kentucky Directors of Pupil Personnel (KDPP)

- Represents DPP professionals statewide
- Organized into 17 Regions
- Each region represented by an appointed DPP who participates in the KDPP Board of Directors
- Promotes strong home-school-community partnerships



2025 KDPP of the year
Kasey Farmer Wolfe
Henderson County

This year, KDPP will host their annual institute from September 16-18 at the Lexington Marriott Griffin Gate Golf Resort & Spa.

This statewide event brings together 200–250 Directors of Pupil Personnel and education leaders from every Kentucky school district—key decision-makers who influence attendance, manage truancy, data report management, student support services, school safety, and enrollment practices.

KCSS is proud to be one of the corporate sponsors of this event!

Protecting School Safety

Kentucky P-12 Private Schools

One Commonwealth – One Commitment to Safety

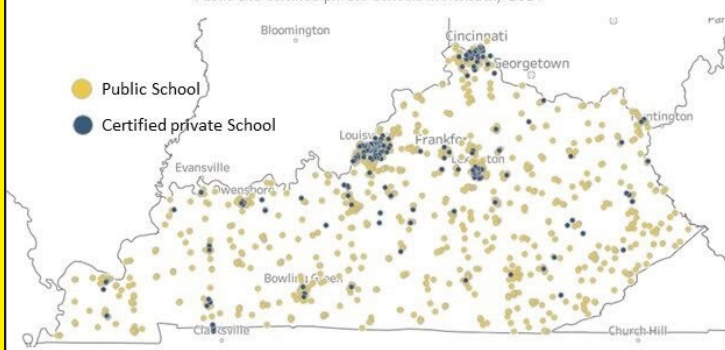
Did You Know?

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics...

- Private schools represent approximately 24% of Kentucky's schools
- 🏠 As of March 2025, there are an estimated 484 private schools in Kentucky
- 👤 Private schools educate approximately 9% of Kentucky's students
- Nearly **80% of certified private schools** in Kentucky are located in urban areas in just 8% of the state's zip codes, the vast majority located in the urban areas of Jefferson, Fayette and Kenton counties
- 63% of Kentucky's counties have no certified private schools

Private Schools Are Concentrated in a Few Metro Areas in Kentucky

Public and certified private schools in Kentucky 2024



Kentucky Center for Economic Policy | kypolicy.org

KCSS is committed to supporting safe and secure learning environments for all Kentucky students in P-12 schools. That commitment extends to the Commonwealth's private schools, which are valuable partners in our statewide school safety efforts.

"Our commitment to safety extends to all Kentucky P-12 schools, public and private. Children are children, regardless of where their families choose to educate them, and every student deserves access to KCSS services as their school officials continually strive to maintain a safe and secure learning environment."

Jon Akers, KCSS Executive Director

Statutory Support for Private School Safety in Kentucky

SB 91 (2024) - Sustained by HB 500 (2026)

Resulted in legislative changes giving Kentucky private schools greater access to:

- ✓ School safety training and professional development through KCSS
- ✓ Technical assistance and consultation on school safety planning
- ✓ School safety assessments and guidance.
- ✓ Crisis planning and emergency preparedness resources
- ✓ Best practices, publications, and online safety resources
- ✓ Collaboration with statewide school safety partners and experts
- ✓ Expanded opportunities for SROs in non-public schools

KCSS Private School Safety Support

- Safety Assessments
- Threat Assessment Training
- Emergency Planning
- Technical Assistance
- School Safety Campaign Participation

As indicated on our website (<https://kycss.org/>), we offer a variety of free school safety services to both public and private schools. From 2016 through the 2025-2026 school year, KCSS has conducted (51) safe school assessments in Kentucky's non-public schools, a few whose logos are illustrated on this page. And, we were excited in September 2025 to extend an invitation to our non-public schools to participate in the annual, statewide School Safety Campaign where many students, staff and parents from our private schools took the safety pledge online, along with those in our public schools.

Private schools across Kentucky provide safe, supportive learning environments that foster academic achievement, student well-being, and community engagement. KCSS is proud to support these schools through training, assessments, and technical assistance.



Trinity



Villa Madonna Academy



Lexington Christian Academy



ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

Catholic Schools

The Point Arc



Northern Kentucky

Greater Cincinnati



Sayre



Providence Christian Academy



Lexington Universal Academy

Networks of Support for K

KCSS Commitment to Principal Success – Principal Support Network (PSN)

Established by KCSS in 2019 as the Principal Mentorship Program, the initiative was originally designed to provide non-evaluative support to first-year principals as they navigated the challenges of school leadership. As the program evolved, participant feedback highlighted the need for continued support beyond a principal's first year. In response, KCSS expanded the program and renamed it the Principal Support Network (PSN) to reflect its commitment to supporting school leaders at every stage of their careers.



Through the PSN, specially trained, master principals share their experience and expertise with current school leaders across Kentucky. These mentors provide guidance, encouragement, and practical strategies for addressing leadership challenges while helping principals and assistant principals strengthen their professional skills. The network is designed to support, coach, and collaborate—not evaluate.



Quick Facts

- Established:** 2019
- Serves:** Kentucky School Principals and Assistant Principals
- Focus:** Leadership Support & Problem-Solving
- Approach:** Non-Evaluative Mentoring and Coaching

Current Mentors in the PSN

- Joseph M. Black, London
- Kimberly Parker-Brown, Lexington
- Kem Cothran, Benton
- Wesley M. Cornett, Waynesburg
- John Crawford, Corbin
- Jane Dreidame, Lexington
- Kim Dublin, Mayfield
- Jon S. Farley, Robards
- Dr. Patricia Greer, Murray
- Kate McAnelly, Lexington
- Andrea McNeal, Nicholasville
- Win Smith, Stanford
- Denny Vincent, Versailles
- Greg Williams, Lexington

Roadmap

- Superintendent/Designee Identifies Principal
- Principal Agrees to Participate
- Referral Submitted to KCSS – (jon.akers@eku.edu)
- Mentor Assigned
- Ongoing Support & Growth

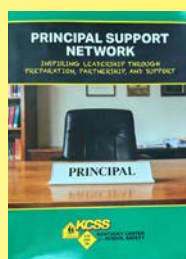
What We Ask of Participants

- ✓ Commitment to Growth
- ✓ Regular Communication with Mentor
- ✓ Openness to Feedback and Learning

Essential Tool

One of many valuable resources made available to participating principals in the PSN is the **K-12 Principal's To-Do List** - a flipchart format outlining a general list of monthly responsibilities for a school principal in Kentucky. It breaks down tasks into (4) categories:

- ★ Tasks required by KRS
- ★ Safety Tasks
- ★ Academic Tasks
- ★ Tasks Relative to building operations



For further information, contact KCSS Executive Director Jon Akers at jon.akers@eku.edu or Principal Mentor Program Coordinator Denny Vincent at dennyvincent1@gmail.com

Kentucky's School Leaders

Kentucky Superintendent Support Network (KSSN)

Experienced Kentucky Superintendents Supporting Kentucky Superintendent Colleagues

THE MANY RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERINTENDENT
Leading Today. Building Tomorrow.

- LEADERSHIP**
Inspiring staff, students, and communities through vision and purpose.
- SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY**
Creating safe, secure environments where students can learn and thrive.
- BUDGET & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**
Sewarding resources responsibly to support student success.
- STUDENT SUCCESS**
Advancing academic achievement and well-being for every student.
- COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY RELATIONS**
Building strong partnerships through open, transparent communication.
- STAFF DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT**
Recruiting, developing, and retaining high-quality educators and staff.
- POLICY & GOVERNANCE**
Working with the board to develop policies and ensure compliance.
- OPERATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY**
Overseeing daily operations and ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.
- STRATEGIC PLANNING**
Setting goals and building plans for long-term district success.
- CLIMATE & CULTURE**
Fostering a positive, inclusive environment where students, staff, and families feel valued and connected.

★ ONE ROLE. | COUNTLESS RESPONSIBILITIES. | A LASTING IMPACT. ★

KENTUCKY SUPERINTENDENT SUPPORT NETWORK (KSSN)
Stronger Leaders. Stronger Schools.

Providing superintendents across the Commonwealth with trusted, individualized support to navigate challenges, strengthen leadership, and improve outcomes for students.

What a Superintendent Participant in KSSN Can Expect

- PERSONALIZED COACHING**
 - Support tailored to each superintendent's unique goals, priorities, and district needs.
 - Goal-focused leadership development
- EXPERIENCED MENTORS**
 - Direct access to veteran education leaders who have successfully led or are currently leading Kentucky school districts.
- ONGOING SUPPORT**
 - Assistance through district visits, phone conversations, virtual meetings, and on-demand consultation.
 - Flexible communication options
- CONFIDENTIAL GUIDANCE**
 - A trusted environment for discussing challenges, exploring solutions, and seeking additional expertise.
 - Continuous program improvement through superintendent feedback

KCSS
KENTUCKY CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

“ Strong district leadership creates stronger schools, safer learning environments, and better outcomes for students. ”

Public Schools Political Vote
Government Jurisdiction
SCHOOL BOARDS
Districts Facilities Safety
Accountability School System
Superintendents Classrooms
Meetings Budgets Counties
Discipline Students Teachers States

Why KSSN?

While the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) provides orientation and professional learning for new superintendents, much of a superintendent's most meaningful growth occurs through real-world leadership experiences beyond the first year. Recognizing the need for continued support, the Kentucky Center for School Safety (KCSS) established the Kentucky Superintendent Support Network (KSSN) to provide ongoing, individualized coaching and guidance.

KSSN connects superintendents with experienced education leaders who understand the complexities of district leadership. Through confidential coaching, practical resources, and personalized consultation, participants receive timely support tailored to their unique goals, challenges, and district needs. Whether navigating day-to-day leadership responsibilities or responding to emerging issues, superintendents have access to trusted mentors who provide practical advice, encouragement, and proven strategies.

By strengthening leadership capacity and promoting informed decision-making, KSSN helps Kentucky superintendents lead with confidence—ultimately benefiting their schools, staff, students, and communities.

★ PROGRAM AT A GLANCE ★

	PURPOSE	Support Kentucky superintendents through individualized coaching
	PARTNERS	KCSS • KASS • KSBA
	FORMAT	District Visits, Virtual Meetings, Telephone Consultation
	CONFIDENTIAL	Trusted, Non-Evaluative Support
	FOCUS	Leadership Development & Problem Solving
	APPROACH	Customized to District Needs

For more information about the Superintendent's Support Network, contact Matt Moore at matt.moore@ksba.org or Jon Akers at jon.akers@eku.edu.

Justice and Law Enforcement

School Resource Officers

Protecting Schools. Building Relationships. Strengthening Communities.

Kentucky SROs at a Glance

- **Required by Law** - One certified SRO on every public-school campus (unless an exception is approved)
- **2025-2026 Number Update** - Currently 937 reported SRO positions in districts, which includes Model Lab School at EKU
- **Specialized Training** - Sworn law enforcement officers trained specifically to work with youth
- **Three Primary Roles** - Law Enforcement • Mentor • Educator
- **Key Responsibilities** - Prevention • Relationship Building • Threat Assessment • Emergency Preparedness
- **2026-2027 Legislative Update** - Guardians may supplement, but not replace, the certified SRO required by KRS 158.4414(2)

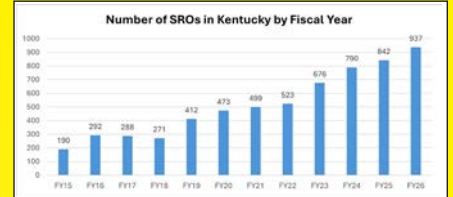
School Resource Officers (SROs) are an essential part of Kentucky's comprehensive approach to school safety. Serving far beyond the traditional role of law enforcement, Kentucky's SROs are educators, mentors, problem-solvers, and trusted partners who help foster safe, welcoming, and supportive learning environments for students and staff.

Working alongside school administrators, teachers, counselors, and community partners, SROs help prevent crises before they occur while strengthening the positive relationships that are the foundation of effective school safety. Their daily responsibilities include mentoring students, supporting behavioral interventions, participating in threat assessment teams, assisting with emergency planning, educating students on safety-related topics, and serving as a visible, reassuring presence on campus.

Kentucky's commitment to school safety is reflected in state law. Pursuant to KRS 158.4414(2), every Kentucky public school campus must have at least one certified School Resource Officer assigned and working on-site full-time unless an exception has been approved by the State School Security Marshal. Under KRS 158.441, a School Resource Officer is defined as a sworn law enforcement officer who has received specialized training to work with youth.

Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, Kentucky school districts may, under limited circumstances and with approval from the State School Security Marshal, employ guardians as an additional layer of school safety. Guardians are intended to supplement—not replace—the certified School Resource Officer required by law.

The Kentucky Center for School Safety remains committed to supporting school districts, law enforcement agencies, and School Resource Officers by providing training, technical assistance, and practical resources that strengthen school safety efforts throughout the Commonwealth. Together, these partnerships help ensure that Kentucky's schools remain places where students can learn, grow, and thrive in safe and supportive environments.



KYASRO
KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

**2026
AWARD
WINNERS**

**ADMINISTRATOR
OF THE YEAR**
Sarah Farrow
Montgomery County Schools

**ROOKIE
OF THE YEAR**
Dean Clark
Warren County

**PROMISING
PROGRAMS AWARD**
Paducah Independent
Schools Police Department

LIFE SAVING AWARD
Chief Gary Mattingly
Daviess County Schools
Police Department

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Hailey McVey
Dayton Independent Schools

Irene Dischar
Robertson County

Madysen Votaw
Nelson County High School

★ REGIONAL SRO WINNERS ★

1 Region 1: Will Gilbert – McCracken County

2 Region 2: Leslee Wagner – Washington County

3 Region 3: Mike Caudill – Scott County

4 Region 4: Scott Menefee – Boone County

5 Region 5: Garion Robinson – Greenup County

6 Region 6: Charles Tinsley – Madison County

SRO OF THE YEAR
Josh Sargent
Harlan County



Principal's Recovery Network (PRN)

Helping Principals & Their School Communities Recover After the Unimaginable

Founded in April 2019, the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Principal Recovery Network (PRN) is a nationwide network of current and former school leaders who have experienced the unimaginable tragedy of gun violence within their schools. Through peer-to-peer support, PRN members provide immediate guidance, practical resources, and compassionate mentorship to fellow school leaders following a school tragedy, remaining alongside them throughout the long and often difficult recovery process.

Often referred to as "The Club No School Principal Ever Wants to Join," the PRN is built upon the shared experiences of educators who understand firsthand the emotional, professional, and community challenges that follow a crisis. While no principal ever hopes to become

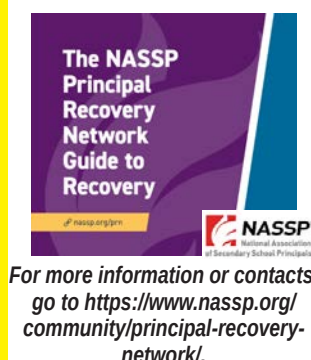
part of this network, its members consistently affirm that the encouragement, understanding, and wisdom offered by colleagues who have walked the same path can make an immeasurable difference during recovery.

Beyond supporting individual school leaders, PRN members are dedicated advocates for strengthening school safety nationwide. By sharing lessons learned, promoting effective recovery practices, and advancing violence prevention efforts, they help schools become better prepared to respond to tragedy while fostering safer learning environments for

future generations.

"No school leader should ever have to face tragedy alone."

— NASSP Principal Recovery Network



Kentucky's Connection to the Principal Recovery Network



**For Dr. Patricia Greer, school safety is more than a profession
- it is deeply personal.**

Prior to joining the KCSS as Resource Center Director, she served as principal of Marshall County High School. On January 23, 2018, her school experienced a tragic shooting that claimed the lives of two of her students and injured fourteen others. Like many school leaders who have endured such unimaginable events, she faced the enormous challenge of helping students, staff, families, and an entire community begin the long journey toward healing.

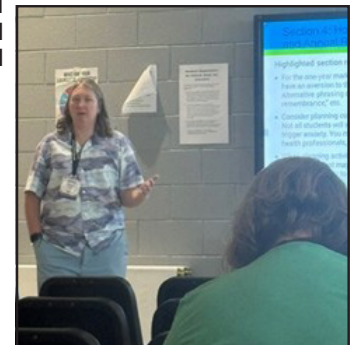
That experience subsequently led Dr. Greer to become one of the founding members of the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Principal Recovery Network (PRN), where school leaders who have lived through tragedy provide guidance, encouragement, and hope to colleagues facing similar circumstances.

Today, Dr. Greer brings that unique perspective to her multifaceted work with the Kentucky Center for School Safety by collaborating with schools across the Commonwealth to provide training, technical assistance, and practical guidance on school safety, crisis preparedness, and recovery. Her firsthand experience, combined with her unwavering commitment to students and educators, allows her to offer both professional expertise and compassionate support to school leaders when they need it most.

Dr. Patricia Greer
"From Experience to Service"

- 🎓 School Leader – Principal, Marshall County High School
- ❤️ PRN Member – Supporting fellow principals after tragedy
- 🗣️ KCSS Leader – Resource Center Director
- 🤝 Statewide Advocate – Providing training and technical assistance to Kentucky schools

At the Kentucky Center for School Safety Annual Conferences in both 2025 and 2026, Dr. Greer shared her experiences and insights regarding the Principal Recovery Network, highlighting the invaluable role that peer support plays in helping school leaders navigate the aftermath of tragedy, support their school communities, and lead the recovery process with strength and resilience.



Education Week – June 13, 2025

**Principals Urge
Ed. Department:
Leave School Safety
Funding Alone**



Meeting in Washington D.C., the PRN spoke to members of Congress and federal agencies in June to advocate for support to schools that have suffered tragedies.

Resource Center

KY Safe Schools Week

“Focus on School Safety” emphasizes the critical need for constant vigilance and proactive measures in maintaining secure learning environments across the Commonwealth. This dedicated week aims to empower schools to strengthen their safety initiatives through targeted activities and discussions. The goal is to raise awareness about various aspects of school safety and empower students, teachers, parents, and the wider community to take proactive steps in creating a safe and nurturing learning environment for everyone.



I pledge to “Focus on School Safety”:

- Frame the positive
- Zoom in on kindness
- Adjust my focus
- Capture responsibility
- Develop the full picture

“Focus on School Safety”
Pledge Map

Over 65,000 students and adults took the online pledge.

KY Safe Schools Week Statistics

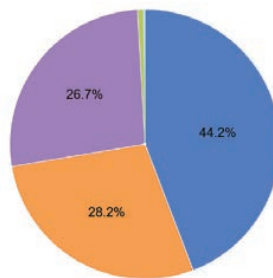
173

School Districts
Participated

24

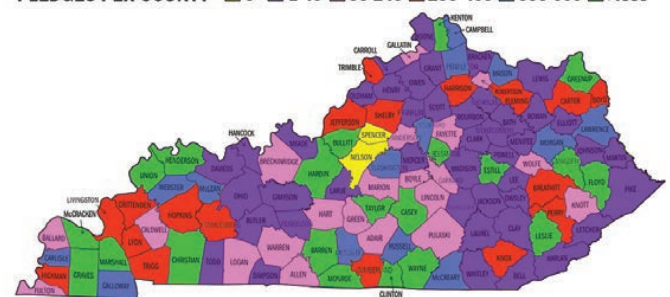
School Districts that are
Green

Total Number of Pledges:
65,150



● Elementary/Intermediate
● Middle
● High
● Community
● Postsecondary

PLEDGES PER COUNTY



Anchorage Ind	Cassia Ind	Fairview Ind	Ludlow Ind	Private
Ashland Ind	Cloverport Ind	Frankfort Ind	Mayfield Ind	Raceland-Worthington Ind
Augusta Ind	Corbin Ind	Fr. Thomas Ind	Middlesboro Ind	Russell Ind
Bardonia Ind	Covington Ind	Fulton Ind	Murray Ind	Science Hill Ind
Beechwood Ind	Danville Ind	Glasgow Ind	Newport Ind	Somerset Ind
Bellvue Ind	Dawson Springs Ind	Harlan Ind	Owensboro Ind	Southgate Ind
Berea Ind	Dayton Ind	Hazard Ind	Paducah Ind	Walton-Verona Ind
Bowling Green Ind	Doonee of Owensboro	Jackson Ind	Paintsville Ind	Williamson Ind
Burgin Ind	East Bernstadt Ind	Jenkins Ind	Parrs Ind	Williamstown Ind
Campbellsville Ind	Elizabethtown Ind	Kentucky School for the Blind	Pikeville Ind	
	Eminence Ind	Kentucky School for the Deaf	Pineville Ind	
	Erlanger-Elsmere Ind			

Follow us at:



@KCSSnews



@KYSCHOOLSAFETY

- Over 1,000 Classroom Response Kits distributed to schools across the Commonwealth
- In total, over 68,000 safety resources distributed
- 347 Social Media Posts were made

Request KCSS
Resources
Form
Developed

QR Code Link
to Form:



Patricia Greer
Director



Elizabeth Abanathy
Program Coordinator

KCSS Website

KCSS Website

The KCSS website provides relevant tools and templates to guide school administrators and teachers in the development of safe school plans. It encompasses a wide range of safety issues from bullying to violence prevention. The website is your one-stop shop for school safety resources and professional development materials.

New Resources

- Sample Generic Event Emergency Plans added
- Emergency Guide: Resources for Swatting and Hoax Threats
- Principal Mentoring page includes a monthly principal update
- Highlighted SRO Appreciation Day with photo gallery
- Updated KCSS handouts



FEATURED TOPICS

RESOURCES BY ROLE

SCHOOL SAFETY ISSUES

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SAFE SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS

TRAINING & COMPLIANCE

RESOURCES & RESPONDERS

REPORTS

Site Map | About | Calendar | Ask KCSS

Search...



Click on Top Navigation to Access KCSS Resources

Visit Kentucky Center for School Safety online: www.kycss.org



Website Traffic 2025

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Hits
January	11,844	23,870	1,186,500
February	13,971	49,179	1,200,921
March	13,033	29,144	1,320,593
April	11,882	27,799	1,124,361
May	12,026	37,741	1,143,754
June	14,327	44,179	472,424
July	13,786	29,704	465,092
August	21,747	42,042	1,883,994
September	42,531	88,092	6,097,601
October	72,738	90,483	1,486,307
November	32,621	45,355	1,155,859
December	28,216	48,362	1,365,674
Totals	288,722	555,950	18,903,080
Average per month	24,060	46,329	1,575,257

Faces of School Safety



MARSHALL CO.



JEFFERSON CO.



BATH CO.



DAVISS CO.



BULLITT CO. PUBLICS CHOOOLS



WARREN CO. PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SHELBY CO.



KENTON CO.



JEFFERSON CO. PUBLICS CHOOOLS



FAYETTE CO. PUBLIC SCHOOLS



BOONE CO.



BELLEVUE IND.



WALTON-VERONA IND.

Around the Commonwealth of Kentucky

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The Annual Report was written and produced by Kentucky Center for School Safety staff. | For more detailed information, visit www.kysafeschools.org

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KCSS



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