

# TRANSITION INDEX

The Council for Better Education, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, and the Prichard Committee are partnering to provide overall school results (called a transition index) during the Senate Bill 1 transition.

Using 2009 test results reported by the Kentucky Department of Education, we plan to publish a single number that sums up students' progress on all subjects still being tested. To provide usable trend data, we will share 2007 and 2008 data calculated by the same formula we use with the 2009 release.

For schools and districts, we hope this data will be helpful in evaluating and improving student performance. For parents, citizens, and policy-makers, it will be a quick snapshot of our progress in helping all Kentucky students succeed.

## FORMULA FOR THE TRANSITION INDEX

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*The index for each subject will be calculated by:*

1. Taking the percent of students at each performance level
2. Multiplying each percent by the appropriate weight below.

Novice Nonperformance	0.00
Medium Novice	0.13
High Novice	0.26
Low Apprentice	0.40
Medium Apprentice	0.60
High Apprentice	0.80
Proficient	1.00
Distinguished	1.40

3. Adding up the resulting numbers to get a number on a 0-140 scale.

*Then the transition index for the whole school will be calculated by:*

1. Taking the index results for each subject.
2. Multiplying each index by the appropriate weight below (shown rounded to three decimal places).

	Elementary	Middle	High
Reading	0.266	0.253	0.222
Mathematics	0.266	0.253	0.222
Science	0.186	0.196	0.222
Social Studies	0.186	0.196	0.222
Writing On-Demand	0.096	0.102	0.111

3. Adding up the results to get a number on a 0-140 scale.

## TRANSITION INDEX PROJECTS

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- Overall index results for schools for 2007, 2008, and 2009, plus a projected 2014 Index if the school continues the 2007-2009 trend; District and state results at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
- School subject area index results for 2007, 2008, and 2009; Similar district and state results at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
- Similar lists by disaggregated groups
- A statewide press release summarizing results
- A one-page explanation of data and formulas
- Regional press releases summarizing results for local districts



## ANSWERS ON: TRANSITION INDEX

### DETAILS ON PRODUCING THE INDEX

#### WHY IS A TRANSITION INDEX NEEDED?

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Improving student achievement (in all areas, not just on tests) is the number one responsibility for Kentucky schools and districts and their stakeholders. State education organizations and other state leaders are there to support and assist schools and districts in their effort to improve student achievement. The transition index can provide the big picture on whether schools' strategies are working with kids. We see this transition project as a way to help schools measure their progress until the new 2012 assessment begins.

#### WHAT DATA WILL BE USED FOR THE TRANSITION INDEX?

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The Department of Education will report the percent of students at each performance level on 2009 testing of reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and on-demand writing. That is, we'll know how many students did distinguished work, proficient work, the three levels of apprentice work, and the three levels of novice work.

#### HOW WILL YOU BE ABLE TO CALCULATE THE TRANSITION INDEX WHEN SOME PARTS OF THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (ARTS, PRACTICAL LIVING, AND WRITING PORTFOLIO) ARE NO LONGER INCLUDED?

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The state Department of Education will release subject area scores showing percent novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished in the remaining tests. KDE will not provide an "accountability index" combining all results in a single snapshot of progress being made. To fill the gap, we will use the test results to calculate a "transition index" that closely resembles the academic data published by the state in past years.

#### HOW WILL THOSE NUMBERS BE TURNED INTO INDEX RESULTS?

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First, that data will be used to calculate an index for each subject, using exactly the formula the Department used in past years. Then the subject results will be combined using a formula close to the old state formula for the academic index. Those results will be calculated for all schools, all districts and the state, along with comparable numbers for 2007 and 2008 and a projection of how the school would score in 2014 if it continued improving at the same rate for five more years.

#### WILL THE PARTNERS IN THIS PROJECT HAVE ACCESS TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SCORES?

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We will not see any individual scores; that would be a violation of student privacy. Schools will still get the student level data of course, along with a shorter, revised version of the Kentucky Performance Report. The department of education will release the overall school scores for each tested subject—reading, math, social studies, and science. Our group will use those subject area scores to calculate an overall performance score, which we are calling a "transition index."

#### THE LEGISLATURE HAS RECOGNIZED THAT THE CURRENT MATH STANDARDS NEED REVISION. WHY ARE YOU BASING YOUR INDEX ON THEM?

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Narrowing of the math standards will take place, but for now, we can only work with what is in place. Even though the standards may be broad, Kentucky students are all taking the same test. The transition index will provide another tool for measuring how students perform on Kentucky's current standards. The Kentucky standards for math and reading also determine school/district success for No Child Left Behind.

## ACCESSING THE RESULTS

### WHEN WILL THE RESULTS BE AVAILABLE?

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Within two weeks after the Department lifts the embargo on public discussion of the scores.

### HOW WILL WE BE ABLE TO GET COPIES OF THE RESULTS?

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You'll be able to download a report listing the transition index results for all the schools at your level, and backup reports listing the index numbers for each subject. KASC will host the data on its website so anyone who wants to see the results can do so.

### IS THE TRANSITION INDEX SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE PURCHASED FROM KASC?

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No. KASC is partnering with the Prichard Committee and the Council for Better Education to make the index available free to anyone who requests it. The information will also be available on the KASC website.

KASC will be developing some products that can be used with the new transition index that you will be able to purchase.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### WILL THE STATE USE THIS INDEX TO HOLD SCHOOLS OR DISTRICTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR PERFORMANCE?

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No. There will be no overall performance index from the Kentucky Department of Education. Schools and districts will be only be held accountable for reaching math and reading goals under the federal No Child Left Behind law.

### WHAT WILL THE TRANSITION INDEX TELL SCHOOLS THAT NCLB REPORTING CANNOT?

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The NCLB standard is based on a pass-fail model for specific percentages of student proficiency for all student groups. The transition index will honor school improvement in a way that NCLB will not.

### IS THIS LEGAL? DOESN'T THE LAW STIPULATE NO PUBLIC RELEASE OF DATA?

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Senate Bill 1 prohibits a KDE accountability index to hold schools accountable by the standards previously dictated by CATS. The math, reading, social studies, and science test results for schools will be released by KDE. You will still get a revised Kentucky Performance Report with core content results. Schools and districts will be able to use this information to evaluate student performance.

KASC, the Prichard Committee, and the Council for Better Education are all independent organizations, and we are taking public data to figure an overall index that we're calling the transition index. There is absolutely no accountability or consequences from our index. We want to provide this index, including applying the same formula to 2007 and 2008 scores, to give schools and districts academic performance trend data so schools and districts have as many tools as possible to see how well they are meeting student needs and to be able to make decisions to further improve student achievement.

## TRANSITION INDEX PARTNERS

### WHAT IS THE KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL COUNCILS?

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The Kentucky Association of School Councils is a membership organization supporting school-based decision-making councils that are responsible for key school decisions about how to improve student achievement.

### WHAT IS THE COUNCIL FOR BETTER EDUCATION?

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The Council for Better Education represents 168 of Kentucky's 174 school districts in efforts to ensure an efficient system of public schools.

### WHAT IS THE PRICHARD COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE?

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The Prichard Committee is an independent, non-profit, citizens' advocacy organization working to improve education for all Kentuckians.

*Follow-up Questions? The Kentucky Association of School Councils can address your questions. Contact KASC using the information below.*