

2025 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY — CHANGES THAT IMPACT COUNCILS

To help schools stay up to date, KASC has outlined key legislative changes from the 2025 General Assembly. This resource focuses on what school leaders need to know and do in response to these changes. It starts with required actions and ends with other bills of interest.

First, see the following reminder about a 2024 law that takes effect in 2025–26.

Cursive Instruction in Elementary Schools — 2024 Senate Bill 167

Amends KRS 156.160

4. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, cursive writing shall be included as a course of study in all elementary schools and shall be designed to ensure proficiency in cursive writing by the end of grade five;

KASC has reviewed KDE writing resources (Writing Standards and Writing Program Guidelines), discussed this with KDE staff, and our understanding of the **bottom line** is:

- In the 2025-26 school year, students in elementary school must have instruction in cursive writing.
- Cursive writing is already part of the KY Academic Standards for Reading/Writing for grades 2 and 3.
- As with all content, the superintendent determines the curriculum and instructional materials.
- It's up to the local district to decide how it will ensure proficiency in cursive writing by the end of grade five.

Council Action Needed:

- None — The council would have previously consulted with superintendent prior to adoption of curriculum and resources [existing SBDM law (160.345) requires superintendent to consult with the council prior to determining curriculum and instructional materials]

Timeline: Cursive writing as a course of study in all elementary schools is supposed to start in the upcoming school year — 2025-26. Any additional details will come from the district staff.

Implementation Advice: Ensure a smooth beginning for this new requirement by notifying impacted staff, families, and students of the requirement and how the school will carry it out.

Here's some draft language to get you started: *Starting in the 2025-26 school year, all Kentucky elementary schools will have cursive writing instruction. The focus is in second and third grade where cursive writing is part of the required standards for writing. The goal is for every student to be proficient in cursive by the end of grade five. Want to do something to make a connection at home? Point out cursive handwriting in real life.*

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Cell Phone Ban During Instructional Time and Social Media Restrictions — 2025 House Bill 208

Part 1 Cell Phone Ban — Amends KRS 158.165

DISTRICT

The local school board must adopt a policy that:

(1)(b) "...shall, at a minimum, prohibit a student's use of a personal telecommunications device during instructional time, except during an emergency, if directed to do so by a teacher for an instructional purpose, or if authorized by a teacher."

SCHOOL

KASC recommends the school and council approach this in two steps:

1) POSITIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The most important thing for the culture and learning environment of your school is first focus on implementing the district policy in the right way.

Give feedback on district policy as it's in development:

- Will the cell phone ban include only instructional time?
- What about areas outside the classroom?
- Will the board policy allow schools to work with students, families, faculties and staff to craft the best ways to carry out the board policy?
For example, in a recent article posted on WLKY, the Jefferson County Public Schools stated that their board policy will likely require *"a school-based cellphone policy which will allow for each school in the district to create their own plan for implementation."* ... *"As part of the policy, schools will develop equitable enforcement standards, monitoring plans, compliance checks, and evaluate necessary exemptions."*

WDRB in Louisville posted an article about the cell phone bill and it includes [interesting video comments](#) from students at Male High School in support of the ban.

Involve students, families, faculties and staff in every aspect of implementing the ban at the school level.

- Be clear about the reason for the law — documented student mental health damage and distractions from learning.
- Approach this as a team effort — not about "catching" kids on their phones and punishing, but about creating a healthier learning environment for everyone.

2) POLICY REVISIONS

While the law doesn't say the SBDM must have a policy on cell phone use — some council policies may need to be amended once the district policy is finalized. As long as your school is clearly communicating the cell phone rules from the district policy to students, parents, and school personnel, you can revise impacted policies as they come up for your regular review.

KASC will be reviewing the following two sample policies — *Technology Utilization* and *Discipline, Classroom Management, and School Safety* — and will share changes that need to be made in our monthly Agenda News.

Council Action Needed:

From now through the beginning months of the 2025-26 school year:

- Keep up with the school board's development of this policy.
- After the local board policy is developed, work with the school on positive implementation.

Throughout the 2025-26 school year:

Review and revise school policies that may be impacted — *Technology Utilization and Discipline, Classroom Management, and School Safety*

Timeline: The law requiring the board policy takes effect on June 27, 2025.

Implementation Advice: Take the steps in **#1 Positive Implementation** above and:

- Recognize the importance cell phones have in students' lives.
- Recognize that this will be hard on students and adults.
- Don't minimize those feelings; approach each other with understanding and caring and keep the focus on the goals for the ban and not the punishment.

Part 2 Social Media — Amends KRS 156.675

DISTRICT

Adds "**social media ... that is NOT authorized by a teacher for an instructional purpose**" to the law that already prohibits students from accessing sexually explicit materials on school/district technology. This part of the law is focused on the state department and local districts to be sure the right filters are in place to block access to social media on school devices and internet—unless authorized by a teacher.

SCHOOL

The school needs to make sure students, families, and school employees understand the directives from the local board policy.

Council Action Needed:

Throughout the 2025-26 school year:

Review and revise school policies that may be impacted — *Technology Utilization and Discipline, Classroom Management, and School Safety*

Timeline: The law requiring the board policy takes effect on June 27, 2025.

Amends KRS 158.175 and KRS 158.200

DISTRICT

The **local Board of Education** shall establish a policy on a **Moment of Silence** that:

- requires a moment of silence or reflection
 - during the first class
 - lasting between one to two minutes
- requires notice to be sent home to encourage parents to give their children guidance on the moment of silence policy

The **local Board of Education** shall establish a policy on student release for **Moral Instruction** that:

- details the requirements for students to be released for one hour per week of moral instruction for approved entities and with parent/guardian permission (Students are considered present for attendance purposes during this time.)

Council Action Needed:

Your school board will have new policy on both issues above.

The council needs to:

- Update the SBDM *Schedule of the School Day Policy* to include the Moment of Silence/Reflection [The law does not require the council to include this in their policy, but KASC recommends adding it to the criteria since the schedule must include this time each day.]

KASC has updated our *Sample Schedule Policy* with language that will align with any board policy.

Our schedule will:

Include the legally-required moment of silence or reflection during the first class of the day. The moment must be at least one minute and not more than two minutes.

The [revised policy is available to all KASC members](#), and we make the process simple by clearly marking what is legally required and what is suggested practice.

- No action should be necessary for the council on the moral instruction release (The principal will be responsible for any next steps needed for carrying out the school board policy.)

Timeline: The law takes effect June 27, 2025. Check with district leaders on the details of the board policy.

Implementation Advice: These areas can bring about strong feelings and a wide variety of perspectives. To honor different values and avoid potential conflict, the principal should use district-provided information to:

- inform families of the moment of silence and encourage parents/guardians to make a plan with their child for how to spend their moment — the law gives examples of *‘meditate, pray, or any other silent activity that doesn’t interfere with anyone else’s rights’*
- educate teachers, staff, parent volunteers, and students of the requirements during the moment
- stress to school employees of the seriousness of not doing anything that comes across as influencing students in any way. Give teachers a set of directions to read and responses to questions (similar to

what is given before testing) to be delivered as warmly and kindly as possible as to not detract from the peace of the moment

- work with school staff on how to set the moment with a positive feeling and not let it turn into a time where students start the day off in trouble

Requirements for the moment of silence:

- 1) Students:
 - must remain seated
 - must be silent and make no distracting display
 - must make their own individual choices about how to spend their moment

- 2) School/district personnel (or any other adult beyond parents/guardians) are prohibited from providing guidance or suggestions for what students should do during their moment

Amends KRS 158.6453 and 160.348

SCHOOL

- Requires each school (**with fourth grade or higher**) to adopt policies related to advanced courses [including elementary students is new to the law]
- Specifies advanced coursework must be available ("**when practicable**") math, reading, science, and English language arts [previous to the 2025 law, no subjects were listed]
- Adds a new requirement that every school notify student and families of:
 - benefits of advanced coursework; and
 - opportunities available

DISTRICT

- By December 1, 2025, the local board of education must adopt a district plan establishing clear policies on the promotion of advanced coursework or accelerated learning in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science by grade level for students in grades four to twelve.
- The plan **MUST** include specifics like:
 - Strategies and approach to advanced coursework or accelerated learning options
 - Service delivery options for students
 - Be publicly accessible on the district website
- The plan **MAY** include specifics like eligibility requirements, enrollment, and withdrawal.

Council Action Needed:

- Update the *Advanced Coursework Policy*
 - Elementary Schools with fourth grade or above will need to write an *Advanced Coursework Policy* (this was not required before)
 - Middle and High Schools will need to update their *Advanced Coursework Policy*

KASC has already updated our sample *Advanced Coursework Policy* with language that meets all the legal requirements and will align with any board policy. The [revised policy is available to all KASC members](#), and we make the process simple by clearly marking what is legally required and what is suggested practice.

KASC will feature the *Advanced Coursework Policy* and the new requirements in the November Agenda News for schools planning to update/write the policy later.

Timeline: The law takes effect June 27, 2025. District plan and policies must be adopted by December 1, 2025. Check with district leaders on local expectations and timeline for school implementation.

Implementation Advice: The new law reflects practices many schools already have in place, so at the school level, the updated policy is primarily about meeting compliance expectations. The deeper commitment—and the opportunity to make a real impact—will come through the specifics in the district’s plan and policies.

KASC recommends keeping your school policy changes focused on compliance, while using the district’s plan as a guide to drive commitment. That’s where your time and energy can go toward what truly matters—clear, supportive communication with students and families. The pieces that make this experience meaningful will likely be shared through your student-family handbook, school website, social media, and other school-level communication tools.

Keep on track to meet student’s individual needs for all students and to address any student learning plans.

Additional Information: KASC reviewed our *Assignment of Students Policy* and found no conflicts with the new law.

Safeguard Student Communications; Child Sexual Abuse Curriculum—2025 Senate Bill 181

Part 1 Communication with Students — Creates a new section of KRS 160.145

Each local board of education shall designate a traceable communication system that shall be the exclusive means for **school district employees** and **volunteers** to communicate electronically with students

- The school principal shall send notice to the parents within the first 10 days of the school year with instructions
- Reporting violations is mandatory, and the law specifies who must receive those reports

Council Action Needed:

- ❑ Update the SBDM *Extracurricular Programs Policy* to reflect this requirement.

[The law does not require the council to include this in their policy, but KASC recommends including it in the policy as another way to communicate expectations clearly.]

KASC has updated our Sample Extracurricular Programs Policy to include the legal requirement:

Coaches and Sponsors—

Each district employee and volunteer who needs to communicate electronically with students will exclusively use the district-designated, traceable communication system.

The [revised policy is available to all KASC members](#), and we make the process simple by clearly marking what is legally required and what is suggested practice.

This requirement will also likely impact — *Technology Utilization and Discipline, Classroom Management, and School Safety* policies. KASC will guide you through a review of these policies in the November and December Agenda News.

Timeline: The law takes effect on June 27, 2025.

Implementation Advice:

Adding the language above to the *Extracurricular Programs Policy* is an easy step, but putting it into practice requires thoughtful coordination, communication, and support.

For the district and the school overall, this requirement impacts **any** electronic communication with students, not just *Extracurricular Programs*. The district needs to:

- make the communication requirements clear to every district employee and volunteer
- provide the principal with information that's ready to share with students and families, so they are getting consistent information from all the schools in the district
- give applicable employees and volunteers access, training, and ongoing support for how to use the designated system correctly

It is also important that everyone impacted knows the seriousness of reporting violations and the possible ramifications.

Plan to get feedback on the system and how to make it more effective and easier to use.

Part 2 Child Sexual Abuse Curriculum — Amends KRS 158.1415 (4) to clarify that all grade levels may provide age-appropriate instruction on child sexual abuse through specific curriculum aligned with the standards set forth by the *Children’s Advocacy Centers of Kentucky*. **The bottom line is that every grade level, K-12, may have the approved child sexual abuse instruction.**

Council Action Needed:

- Check with the superintendent on child sexual abuse curriculum, then
- Review your SBDM *Curriculum Responsibilities Policy* to be sure it is:
 - aligned with the law on child sexual abuse curriculum
 - consistent with board policy

KASC has updated our Sample *Curriculum Responsibilities Policy*

The [revised policy is available to all KASC members](#) now.

In the December Agenda News, KASC will feature the new requirement for the *Curriculum Responsibilities Policy* in our regular review and update.

Timeline: Low priority — The law takes effect on June 27, 2025, but first, the superintendent decides whether to include the child sexual abuse curriculum. Then, the council will amend its policy, if necessary.

Revises KERA goals; Clarifies Language in SBDM Law — 2025 Senate Bill 68

This bill includes changes to two related statutes that connect to SBDM Councils.

Part 1 KERA Goals — Amends KRS 158.645 and 158.6451

The changes marked below add details, but the overall meaning is consistent with the previous language.

Capacities Required for Students KRS 158.645

It is the intent of the General Assembly to create a system of public education which shall allow and assist all students to acquire the following capacities:

- 1) **Literacy, including** communication skills necessary to function in a complex and changing **world**;
- 2) Knowledge to make **wise** economic, social, **career**, and political choices;
- 3) Core values and qualities of good character to make moral and ethical decisions throughout life;
- 4) Understanding of **our constitutional republic, the three branches of government, and how government impacts citizens**, the community, the state, and the nation;
- 5) Sufficient self-knowledge and knowledge of **the student's own** [his] mental and physical wellness;
- 6) Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate **the student's own** cultural and historical heritage;
- 7) Sufficient preparation to choose and pursue **the student's** life's work intelligently; and
- 8) Skills to enable **each student** to compete competitively with students in other states.

Goals for Kentucky's School 158.6451

The General Assembly finds, declares, and establishes that:

- (a) Schools shall expect a high level of academic achievement of all students;
- (b) Schools shall develop their students' ability to:

- 1) Use communication and mathematics skills for purposes and situations they will encounter throughout their lives;
- 2) Apply core concepts and principles from mathematics, the sciences, the arts, the humanities, social studies, **civics**, and practical living studies to situations they will encounter throughout their lives;
- 3) Become self-sufficient individuals of good character exhibiting the qualities of altruism, citizenship, courtesy, hard work, honesty, human worth, justice, knowledge, patriotism, respect, responsibility, and self discipline;
- 4) Become responsible members of a family, work group, or community, including demonstrating effectiveness in community service;
- 5) Think **critically, creatively, and independently to** solve problems in school situations and in a variety of situations they will encounter in life;
- 6) Connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge from all subject matter fields with what they have previously learned and build on past learning experiences to acquire new information through various media sources; and
- 7) Express their creative talents and interests in visual arts, music, dance and dramatic arts.

Council Action Needed:

Your school / district likely includes one or both of these lists on your website and in your policies.

- As you come across either of these lists, make updates.

Timeline: Low priority — changes are official June 27, 2025, but there is no hurry to search and replace with the new language because the meaning remains consistent.

Implementation Advice:

Website — KASC recommends having your website tech review the site and make any needed changes.

Policies — Follow KASC's policy review schedule through the monthly Agenda News and make applicable policy changes as they are focused on in Agenda News.

Additional Information: KASC has updated the language in our sample policies that includes the lists: *Enhancing Student Achievement* and *Extracurricular Programs*.

Part 2 Clarifies Language in SBDM Law — Amends KRS 160.345(2)(b)1

Makes a grammatical change that teacher representative shall not be transferred (involuntarily) during their term of office. There is no change in meaning or implementation from the previous language.

*(b) 1. ...A teacher elected to a school council shall not be involuntarily transferred during **the teacher representative's** [his or her] term of office.*

Council Action Needed:

- Have the council secretary search for this language in your bylaws or policies. If this language is included, the secretary can make the revision to match the law and distribute updated versions to the council. [KASC's sample bylaws **do not** include involuntary transfer language, so no update was needed.]

Timeline: Low priority — changes are official June 27, 2025, but the meaning of the law has not changed

SCHOOL

Amends KRS 158.305

- Kindergarten and first grade students are to be given a universal screener with the final 14 instructional days of the school year
- A student **MAY** receive an additional year in **kindergarten** if the student had a reading improvement plan and the school determines the student:
 - Did not meet grade level benchmarks in reading while in kindergarten;
 - Did not master the Kentucky reading academic standards for kindergarten; or
 - Is not properly prepared to be successful in the first grade.
- A student **MUST** receive an additional year in **first grade** if the student had a reading improvement plan and the school determines the student:
 - Did not meet grade level benchmarks in reading while in the first grade;
 - Did not master the Kentucky reading academic standards for the first grade; or
 - Is not properly prepared to be successful in the second grade.
- Decisions for students with special education or related services **MUST** be made by the ARC.
- Students who receive an additional year in Kindergarten **MUST NOT** be required to remain in first grade for an additional year.
- Students **MUST NOT** be required to remain in first grade for more than one additional year.
- **Reading Improvement Plans MUST** be reevaluated with appropriate changes made to all programs and services provided for any student receiving an additional year in kindergarten or first grade.
- A student receiving an additional year may advance through the primary school program when the school determines it is in the best educational interest of the student.

Council Action Needed:

Throughout the 2025-26 School Year:

- Review and revise school policies that may be impacted – *Primary Program, Classroom Assessment, and/or Curriculum Responsibilities.*

The law does not require the council to include language in policy, but KASC recommends doing so where appropriate—especially in policies related to assessing student needs or describing key attributes of the primary program, which may already include relevant language.

KASC has updated our Primary/K-3 policy with this language:

Kindergarten and first grade students will be give a reading universal screener within the final 14 instructional days of the school year.

A student receiving an additional year may advance through the primary school program when the school determines it is in the best educational interest of the student.

The [revised policy is available to all KASC members](#), and we make the process simple by clearly marking what is legally required and what is suggested practice.

Timeline: 2025-26 School Year

Implementation Advice: Connect your current work to the new requirements:

- Use progress monitoring data to drive each student’s **Reading Improvement Plan.**
- Define clear **benchmarks, mastery of standards**, and what it means to be “**properly prepared**” for the next grade.

Track students not meeting expectations early so decisions about an additional year are timely and well-

documented.

Require Financial Literacy as Graduation Requirement — 2025 House Bill 342

Amends KRS 158.1411

- Requires one credit in financial literacy as a graduation requirement beginning with students entering 9th grade on or after July 1, 2025. The course must include but is not limited to instruction in:
 - Budgeting
 - Saving and investing
 - Credit and debt
 - Insurance and risk management
 - Taxes
 - The necessity of critical review and understanding of documents prior to signing agreement or approval and the ability sign in cursive

Council Action Needed:

- ☐ Consult with superintendent on the adoption of curriculum and instructional resources [existing SBDM law (160.345) requires superintendent to consult with the council prior to determining curriculum and instructional materials]

Timeline: Begins in the 2025-26 school year for students entering 9th grade.

Implementation Advice:

The local school board is responsible for the policy that meets state legal requirements for graduation. At the school level, the most important thing is communicating the new requirement clearly to the incoming 9th grade students and their families.

Instructional Materials and Waivers of Laws — 2025 Senate Bill 207

Creates new sections of KRS 156; Amends 156.160, 156.395, 156.407, 156.410, 156.415, 156.445

SCHOOL

- May request a waiver of certain education statutes and regulations (with exceptions) to become a school of innovation
 - Requests must specify how the waivers will improve operations or student academic achievement
 - Waivers granted expire on June 30th of the third full school year after approved
 - Renewal requests cannot be submitted earlier than 6 months prior to waiver's expiration

SBDM COUNCIL

- May request a waiver of maximum special education class size
 - Must prove that the waiver won't impede any exceptional child from achieving his/her IEP in the least restrictive environment

DISTRICT

- Must use the newly established instructional depository at KDE to purchase instructional materials
 - Must come from state-approved lists
 - Must report the district's selection of materials

Council Action Needed:

- ☐ None needed at this time — could impact curriculum consultation with the superintendent and *Curriculum/Instructional Practices Policy* in the future.

Professional Development & Red Tape Reduction Act — 2025 House Bill 48

Amends KRS 156.095

SCHOOL

- Summative evaluations must occur every **5 years** for tenured teachers.
 - Additional summative evaluations may be performed at the discretion of the immediate supervisor of the teacher or other professional based on a case-by-case analysis.

DISTRICT

- By August 1, 2025, implement the professional development training schedule created by the department including at least 1 hour of each of the following **within 12 months of initial hire** and at least **once every 4 years thereafter**:
 - Active shooter
 - Child abuse and neglect
 - Suicide prevention
 - Seizure disorder
- Induction programs for first-year teachers was required but now is **encouraged**.
 - Those districts that have not implemented an induction program for teachers will be reported by EPSB to the LRC by October 1 of each year.

Council Action Needed:

- None needed

CSI Schools — 2025 House Bill 298

Amends KRS 160.346

SCHOOL/DISTRICT

- Schools will be identified as CSI annually by the department.
- An assessment and recommendation will be given to the superintendent from the department regarding the principal's capacity to lead the turnaround effort in the school.
- The superintendent and principal will collaborate with the department to create a turnaround training and support team that will be approved by the local school board.
- The department will determine the professional development teachers will receive.
- The department must approve the HQIR adopted by the superintendent.

Council Action Needed:

- None needed

2025 Bills Pertinent to School Work or Education Interest

ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

Sexual Extortion Require School Send Notice — 2025 Senate Bill 73

- Requires the principal, within the first ten days of school, to provide written notice of the Sexual Extortion Act to students in grades 4-12 and to their parents/guardians.
- Requires schools with grades 6-12 to post (by August 1, 2025) specified sexual extortion information in the Sexual Extortion that includes: age-appropriate description of sexual extortion; contact information for local and federal law enforcement and for suicide prevention

Child Abuse Training for Coaches; Posting of Wage & Hour Restrictions — 2025 Senate Bill 120

- Requires child dependency, neglect, and abuse information to be included in any athletics participation consent form and requires any training for administrators and coaches to include information about mandatory reporting duties for child dependency, neglect, and abuse
- Requires public schools with grades 6-12 to post in a prominent place (and on the school website) a printed sign of child labor laws, including prohibited jobs and restrictions on work hours
- prohibits students in grades 7-8 from participating in HS boys and coed varsity lacrosse

GENERAL INTEREST:

Amend TRS Sick and Personal Day Accrual and Maternity benefits — 2025 Senate Bill 9

Amends the law for benefits earned after June 30, 2025, and caps the amount of sick leave factored into state teacher retirement calculations at 13 days per year— Districts can opt to offer more sick leave but the district will be responsible for the additional pension costs. Requires all school districts to provide for up to 30 days of paid maternity leave by July 2, 2030. Emergency provision and became law immediately.

Home or Hospital Instruction — 2025 House Bill 132

If a student is admitted to an inpatient facility, then this law allows the student to receive home or hospital instruction effective on the day of admittance.

Disaster Relief Days and Virtual School — 2025 House Bill 241

Schools that experienced disaster days (weather or other emergencies) can add instructional time to existing school days rather than extend the school year; KDE Commissioner can waive up to five required attendance days if making up the days would keep school in session past June 4; restricts enrollment caps on virtual programs until 2028; emergency clause, became law March 27.

Small School District Bus Training — 2025 House Bill 430

School districts that transport less than 48 students per day are allowed to be exempted from school bus safety training, but they must create and submit a bus safety training program, emergency clause, became law April 1.

Reemployment after Retirement Teachers Retirement System — 2025 House Bill 441

Amends Teachers Retirement laws to increase percentage of retired members the district can employ; amends provisions governing return to work for teacher retirees.

Teacher Health Insurance Funding — 2025 House Bill 694

TRS members continue to pay the extra three percent of payroll into the TRS health insurance fund until the health fund and the pension fund are fully funded; requires districts to continue making their extra three percent of certified payroll contributions until the TRS pension and health insurance funds are fully funded.