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Increasing the High School Graduation Rate

*In education, health, safety, juvenile justice, and economic well-being, rankings on child well-being consistently place the Commonwealth among the bottom ten in the nation. Responding to a challenge from, legislators, children's advocacy groups from across the state formed a broad based coalition to develop a clear and workable agenda to move Kentucky forward. The result is the **Blueprint for Kentucky's children.***

This issue brief serves as a tool to share the latest statistics, research, best practices, and the group's recommendations for action. This brief focuses on prevention of high school dropout and strategies for improving the state's high school graduation rate

We all benefit when people graduate from high school.

All young people need a strong education to succeed in today's economy, and graduating from high school is more critical than ever before. Nearly six in ten jobs in the U.S. today are held by workers with at least some college education. Fifty years ago, the figure was only two in ten.¹ Despite these facts, at least one-fifth of all students drop out of high school.² Nearly a third of all students fail to graduate high school on time.³ Young people in the United States today are less likely than their parents to have completed high school, a fact that distinguishes us from all other industrialized countries.⁴

The Cost of High School Dropouts Nationally

Failing to graduate high school has long-term negative consequences for the individual and for society. High school dropouts earn much less than those with diplomas,⁵ and are far more likely to rely on public assistance. As a result of their lower incomes, dropouts contribute much less in income taxes and sales taxes. A dropout is more likely to commit crimes and serve time in prison. They typically have worse health outcomes and often do not live as long as someone who completed high school.⁶

- On average, high school graduates earn \$9,245 more per year than high school dropouts.⁷

- The estimated tax revenue and lifetime earnings loss from every male between the ages of 25 and 34 years of age who does not complete high school is approximately \$944 billion.⁸
- The increased cost in public assistance and crime is calculated to be \$24 billion nationally.⁹
- Seventy-five percent of America’s state prison inmates are high school dropouts.¹⁰

The Cost of High School Dropouts in Kentucky

Kentucky loses millions of dollars in wages and tax revenue each year due to students dropping out of school. In addition, the state pays more for programs to help support dropouts throughout their life. The state pays more in crime-related costs and public health costs to support dropouts than it does for those who graduate from high school. Finally, Kentucky’s economy suffers directly because an educated workforce is one of the major factors used by companies in deciding where to locate.¹¹

In Kentucky, 9 percent of youth ages 16 to 19 (approximately 23,000 youth) in 2007 were not attending school and did not have a high school degree, compared to 8 percent nationally.^{12,13} Though the rate has improved since 2000, Kentucky ranks 31st among all states on this measure.¹⁴ In the

2006-2007 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education reported 6,297 youth in grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school (see Table 2 for county-level data).

- On average, a high school graduate in Kentucky earns \$6,821 a year more than someone without a diploma.¹⁵
- Based on the 2007 income tax rates, a dropout pays \$396 less in taxes per year than a high school graduate, resulting in a loss of \$2.9 million in state income tax revenue in a single year.¹⁶
- Kentucky spends \$2,113 more on support programs for dropouts than for high school graduates (Table 1).
- Crime-related costs are likely as much as \$3,000 higher for dropouts than for high school graduates.¹⁷
- Lifetime costs associated with dropouts from the class of 2008 alone are estimated to cost Kentucky almost \$4.2 billion in lost wages over their lifetimes.¹⁸

Table 1: Government Transfers Received by Kentucky Adults by High School Completion (65 and under)

	Dropout	H.S. Graduate
Public Cash Assistance	\$ 22	\$ 29
Housing	\$ 12	\$ 7
Food Stamps	\$ 493	\$ 163
Unemployment Insurance	\$ 54	\$ 135
Disability Insurance	\$ 63	\$ 81
Medicare (Market Value)	\$ 2,430	\$ 1,598
Medicaid (Market Value)	\$ 1,678	\$ 626
TOTAL	\$ 4,752	\$ 2,639
Differential		\$ 2,113

Source: Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2008; Accessed March 2009

Long Term Cost Savings of Increasing High School Graduation

Several researchers have estimated the cost of raising the compulsory education age.¹⁹ An analysis of Ohio's dropout prevention efforts calculates the costs associated with increased numbers of pupils as well as wages forgone by those staying in school instead of working.²⁰ Further analysis reveals a benefit-cost ratio of 1: 11.62 to the government - meaning that for every \$1 Ohio spends on raising the compulsory education age, the state benefits \$11.62 over the course of a graduates' lifetime.²¹

The state budget is not the only beneficiary of higher graduation rates. The Ohio cost-benefit analysis shows that for every \$1 spent on increasing graduation rates, the people of Ohio can expect a return of \$31.45 in the form of increased tax revenue, increased earnings, and an improved economy. Most importantly, it didn't take long to begin seeing the net benefits of increased graduation rates: the Ohio study projects that it would take only 3.4 years to reach the point where the benefits exceeded the initial investment.²²

- Kentucky would spend approximately \$17,678 per pupil to educate its students for an additional two years if they continue their schooling to age 18 instead of dropping out at age 16.²³
- Kentucky would experience a net benefit of \$205,418 over the lifetime of each additional high school graduate.²⁴
- Kentucky's citizens would benefit by approximately \$671,898 over the lifetime of each additional graduate in the form of increased earnings, economic growth, and cost avoidance.²⁵
- By decreasing the number of dropouts by just 10 percent, Kentucky would benefit by approximately \$423 million over the lifetimes of the additional graduates.²⁶

Increasing Graduation Rates

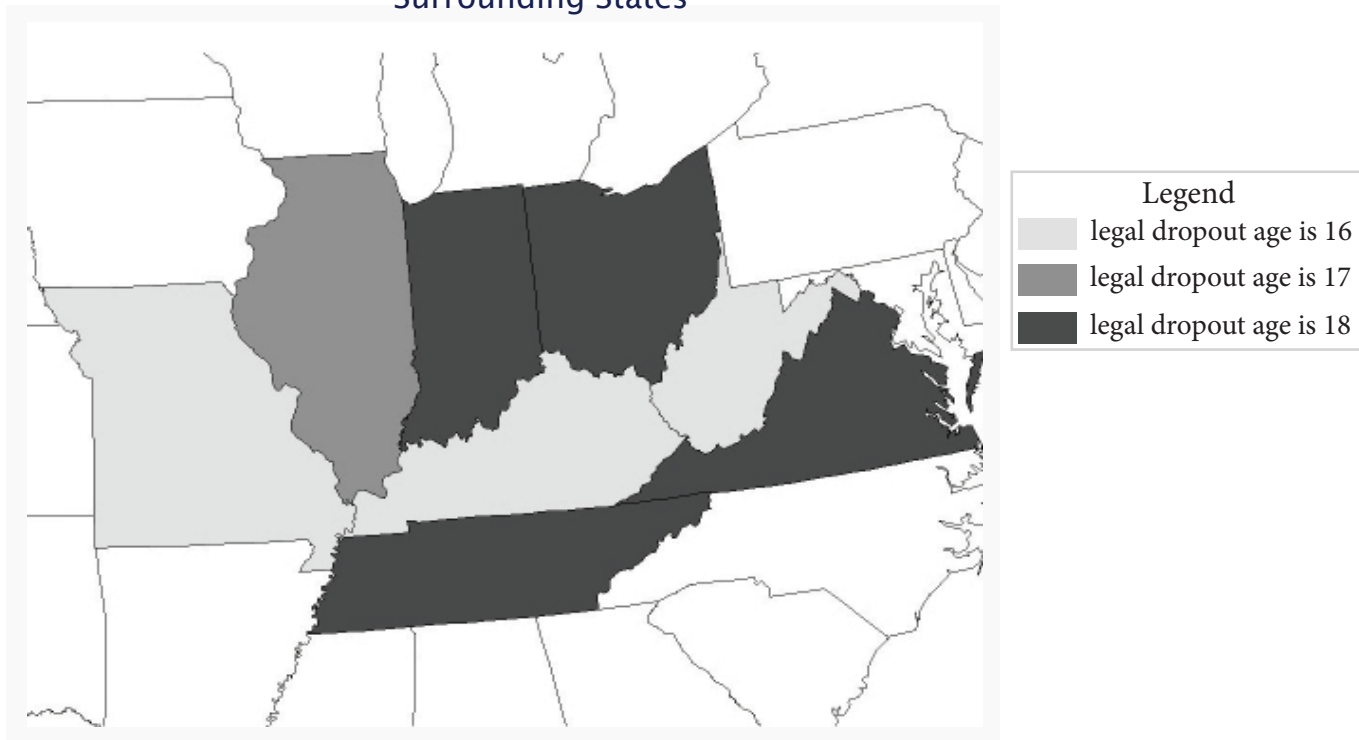
A wealth of research has been done to determine the best way to increase graduation rates. Best-practices have been identified by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network and others.^{27,28,29,30,31} These best-practices include programs that target at-risk youth early; track attendance and other key risk factors closely; provide additional social and emotional supports to students; and allow students to learn in nontraditional settings.³² Success has also been seen with programs that provide flexible schedules allowing students to both work and attend school, and with programs that keep students engaged and challenged by offering advanced placement or local community college courses.³³ One of the most widely employed strategies for decreasing dropout is raising the compulsory education age – the age at which a student may legally drop out of school.

Raising the Compulsory Attendance Age

State legislatures around the country have begun raising the age at which a student may legally drop out of high school.³⁴ According to a 2007 report from the public policy firm, Civic Enterprises, "Many current state efforts to keep young people in school are dealing with the compulsory school age, because there is a growing, shared understanding that raising the age requirement is also a way to raise expectations among students, their parents, school authorities, and the general public."³⁵

As of January 2009, 22 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation requiring school attendance to age 18 with certain exceptions. Seven other states have raised the attendance age from 16 to 17.³⁶ This movement is still growing, with at least 10 more states introducing bills raising the compulsory attendance age in their 2009 legislative sessions.³⁷

Map 1: Compulsory School Attendance Age in Kentucky and Surrounding States



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration.

Research shows that raising the compulsory attendance age can play an important role in raising graduation rates.³⁸ Angrist and Krueger estimate that raising the compulsory education age can keep approximately one out of every four likely dropouts in school.³⁹ Another study finds that keeping students in school even one year longer leads to a 12 percent increase in earnings.⁴⁰

Raising the compulsory attendance age is not a perfect solution. States that have raised their compulsory attendance age have found mixed results with regard to increases in graduation rates.⁴¹ The state of Illinois experienced a dramatic increase in truancy following their enactment of a higher compulsory education age; the same students still failed to attend, but they were considered truant instead of being counted as dropping out.⁴² As more states have adopted a higher dropout age, it has become clear that raising the compulsory attendance age should be only one part of a more comprehensive plan to increase graduation rates.⁴³ Programs that support at-risk students and allow for flexible educational opportunities complement legislation that raises the compulsory education age, resulting in

improved graduation rates.

States with Winning Programs

Several states have developed effective, comprehensive programs for increasing graduation rates, including Indiana, Georgia, New Hampshire, and Virginia. For purposes of comparison, this brief will present details of programs in the two nearest states, Indiana and Virginia.

Indiana's Career Planning, *School Flex*, *Double-Up*, and *Fast Track* Programs

Indiana has garnered national attention for the improvements they have achieved in preventing dropout.^{44,45} Their multi-pronged approach incorporates raising the compulsory education age and enforcing it; allowing students flexibility in their educational plans; and providing an opportunity for those who have already dropped out to earn their diplomas. Other programs offer support and counseling to younger students in developing educational plans.⁴⁶

Indiana's Dropout Prevention Programs

Compulsory School Age 18

Requires attendance until age 18 with few exceptions. Students who drop out or are truant risk losing their work permits and driving privileges.

Career Planning

Requires 8th graders to develop a flexible coursework and career plan. Includes periodic reviews and counseling for students falling behind.

School Flex

Allows at-risk 11th and 12th grade students the flexibility to attend classes at least 3 hours per day while maintaining employment as well.

Double-Up

Empowers colleges and universities to partner with high schools to offer early college, dual credit, and dual enrollment opportunities to students up to an associate's degree. The cost is shared between the college and high school for low-income students.

Fast Track

Allows individuals who have already dropped out to earn their high school diploma while enrolled in an associate's or certificate program at a state college or university. Students must pass the state graduation exam or approved equivalent, and the school district pays for high school coursework for students ages 17-18.

Source: National Governors Association (2006). Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States, vol. 1, issue 2.

Virginia's Honor Schools and Project Graduation

Through the Governor's Honor Schools program, Virginia recognizes 30 schools with higher-than-average ninth grade retention rates and provides them with grants for supporting students' transitions to high school. Project Graduation is a statewide initiative helping at-risk students with tutorial and remedial services in reading, writing, and algebra. These initiatives complement Virginia's compulsory education age law to create a comprehensive system for preventing dropout and increasing graduation rates.

Recommendations for Kentucky

Kentucky can increase high school graduation rates by raising expectations for students and increasing programs that keep students engaged. Three proven strategies should be employed to raise the graduation rate without new and expensive programs:

1. Increase the compulsory education age from 16 to 18.
2. Offer opportunities in all high schools for students to combine part-day schooling with employment.
3. Ensure that all high schools offer their students access to early college credits through dual enrollment courses in either 4-year colleges or technical and community colleges.

Endnotes

- ¹ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed February 2009.
- ² National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Habash, E. (2008). *Counting on Graduation: An Agenda for State Leadership*. The Education Trust. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau (2007). *Earnings Gap Highlighted by Census Bureau Data on Educational Attainment*. Press release. Available at: <http://www.census.gov>. Accessed September 2008.
- ⁶ Kentucky Youth Advocates (2008). *2008 Kentucky KIDS COUNT County Data Book*. Louisville, KY: Kentucky Youth Advocates.
- ⁷ Doland, E. (2001). Give Yourself The Gift Of A Degree. Employment Policy Foundation. (no longer available)
- ⁸ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed February 2009.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Harlow, C. W. (2003). Education and Correctional Populations. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- ¹¹ Thorstensen, B. *If You Build It, They Will Come: Investing In Public Education*. Available at http://abec.unm.edu/resources/gallery/present/invest_in_ed.pdf. Accessed February 2009.
- ¹² States currently use many different methods to calculate graduation rates. In 2008, along with 32 other states, Kentucky counted the percentage of students leaving school with a high school diploma, which tends to undercount dropouts. New requirements under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act requires all fifty states to adopt a uniform formula by 2012 which will give a more accurate picture of educational outcomes. Kentucky plans to adopt this new formula in 2009. The number of dropouts reported here is gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau by asking all youth ages 16 to 19 if they have completed high school and if they are currently in school. Kentucky data available for calculating state income tax revenue loss are based on the old formula. Other sources used in this brief may employ the newer formula for calculating graduation rates, depending on their publication date.
- ¹³ Annie E. Casey Foundation website. KIDS COUNT Data Center. Available at <http://www.kidscount.org>. Accessed March 2009.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (2007). Kentucky and United States Median Earnings by Educational Attainment Level and Gender, 2006. Available at http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/38E23093-122B-430A-947F-F2E932D01E84/0/KY__US_Median_Earnings_by_Attainment_Gender_20071101.pdf. Accessed January 2009.
- ¹⁶ Estimate based on Kentucky's 2007 state income tax rate for individuals with no deductions earning \$24, 344 (high school graduate median earnings) and \$17,523 (high school dropout median earnings). Under these rates, graduates paid \$1,228 in state income tax, and dropouts paid \$832 in state income tax, a difference of \$396. If 7,400 students dropped out in 2007, and each one paid \$396 less in state income tax that year, then Kentucky lost approximately \$2.9 million as a result of lower wages earned by those who dropped out in 2007.
- ¹⁷ A study conducted by the Economics Center for Education & Research found that Ohio could save as much as \$3,000 in crime-related costs (including operation of the criminal justice system, parole, restitution for victims, and crime prevention) for every additional high school graduate. See Endnote 19.
- ¹⁸ Alliance for Excellent Education (2008). *The High Cost of High School Dropouts: What the Nation Pays for Inadequate High Schools*. Available at http://www.all4ed.org/files/Kentucky_wc.pdf. Accessed January 2009.
- ¹⁹ Economics Center for Education & Research, University of Cincinnati (2008). An Evaluation of the Economic Benefits of High School Education. Commissioned by the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Estimate based on 2008 cost per pupil data from the Kentucky Department of Education. News Room: Kentucky Education Facts. Available at <http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/HomePageRepository/News+Room/Kentucky+Education+Facts.htm>. Accessed February 2009.
- ²⁴ Calculations based on cost-benefit ratio used in the Economics Center for Education & Research study. See Endnote 19.
- ²⁵ Kentucky's annual per pupil expenditure is \$8,839. For two additional years of high school, Kentucky would pay \$17, 678 per graduate. Using the Economics Center for Education & Research study's cost-benefit ratio and their calculation of the amount of wages lost by students staying in school versus being employed as dropouts, one may calculate the net benefit to the state government as such: 1: 11.62 = 17,678: 205,418. The same method may be used to calculate the net benefit to the entire state: 1:31.45 = 21,364: 671,898.

Endnotes cont.

²⁶ In the 2007 school year 6,297 students dropped out of school (see Table 2). If that number were decreased by 10% that would create 629 new graduates. Over the course of one graduate's lifetime, Kentucky would benefit by \$671,898; thus 629 new graduates would equal a benefit of \$422.6 million over the course of those graduates' lifetimes.

²⁷ National Conference of State Legislatures. *Improving High Schools through Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships*. Available at <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/educ/HSRigorRelevanceRelationship.htm>. Accessed February 2009.

²⁸ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed January 2009.

²⁹ National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. *Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention*. Available at: <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/default.htm>. Accessed January 2009.

³⁰ Hamilton, S. (1984) *Raising Standards and Reducing Dropout Rates: Implications of Research for Recent Secondary School Reform Proposals*. Available at: http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/2f/6c/c6.pdf. Accessed January 2009.

³¹ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2003). *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Reducing the High School Dropout Rate*. Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid={3DE81D1E-A011-4B6E-91E5-D62D8907BC29}>. Accessed January 2009.

³² Ibid.

³³ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed January 2009.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ United States Department of Labor. Employment Standards Administration. Available at: <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/state/schoolattend.htm#foot2>. Accessed February 2009.

³⁷ Home School Legal Defense Association. State Legislation. Available at: <http://www.hslda.org/legislation/state/default.asp>. Retrieved February 2009.

³⁸ Wenger, J.W. (2002). *Does the Dropout Age Matter? How Mandatory Schooling Laws Impact High School Completion and School Choice*. Public Finance and Management. Available at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa5334/is_4_2/ai_n28975681/pg_9?tag=artBody;col1. Accessed January 2009.

³⁹ Angrist, Joshua D. & Allan B. Krueger (1991). *Does Compulsory School Attendance Affect Schooling and Earnings?* The Quarterly Journal of Economics, CVI (4), 979-1014.

⁴⁰ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed January 2009.

⁴¹ Illinois Task Force on Re-enrolling Students Who Dropped Out of School. Interim Report. January 2007. Available at: http://www.isbe.state.il.us/high_school/pdf/interim_report_task_force.pdf. Accessed January 2009.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Bahnपुरi H. & Reynolds, G. (2003). Learning Point Associates. *Understanding and Addressing the Issue of High School Dropout Age: Executive Summary*. Available at: <http://www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/second/index.html>. Accessed January 2009.

⁴⁴ National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.

⁴⁵ Bridgeland, John M, Dilulio, John Jr., & Streeter, Ryan. (2007). *Raising the Compulsory School Attendance Age: The Case for Reform*. Civic Enterprises. Available at <http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/raisingschoolage.pdf>. Accessed January 2009.

⁴⁶ National Governors Association (2006). *Honoring Progress: An Update on the NGA Center Honor States*, vol. 1. issue 2.

	SY 2003			SY 2007		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Kentucky	6,219	36,379	79	6,297	38,364	84
Adair Co.	38	141	66	25	165	83
Allen Co.	30	194	74	20	202	88
Anderson Co.	32	227	88	21	253	90
Ballard Co.	7	66	83	7	83	92
Barren Co.	42	235	80	60	237	78
Caverna Ind.	3	41	79	10	40	85
Glasgow Ind.	18	109	79	39	115	83
Bath Co.	28	89	67	26	92	77
Bell Co.	71	173	69	22	182	82
Middlesboro Ind.	35	83	67	20	98	73
Pineville Ind.	8	28	85	6	29	74
Boone Co.	53	899	91	99	1,031	91
Walton Verona Ind.	0	74	99	0	80	100
Bourbon Co.	23	168	90	21	180	90
Paris Ind.	7	48	91	1	53	100
Boyd Co.	23	229	86	12	223	89
Ashland Ind.	35	184	86	28	198	83
Fairview Ind.	2	43	88	1	60	97
Boyle Co.	19	178	82	6	212	92
Danville Ind.	18	98	85	7	111	94
Bracken Co.	7	77	92	13	73	79
Augusta Ind.	0	16	100	0	20	100
Breathitt Co.	40	110	50	33	137	86
Jackson Ind.	1	28	82	0	16	100
Breckinridge Co.	45	173	79	27	188	92
Cloverport Ind.	0	22	100	0	20	100
Bullitt Co.	101	627	81	122	656	81
Butler Co.	6	141	89	25	153	92
Caldwell Co.	18	146	85	12	124	87
Calloway Co.	13	189	90	15	207	95
Murray Ind.	4	118	99	7	132	96
Campbell Co.	48	303	85	48	308	89
Bellevue Ind.	5	47	85	0	67	96
Dayton Ind.	7	36	54	1	64	100
Fort Thomas Ind.	6	180	97	5	186	98
Newport Ind.	22	142	87	21	114	81
Silver Grove Ind.	0	15	94	4	12	100
Southgate Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Casey Co.	26	134	82	13	155	88
Christian Co.	79	475	75	108	481	80
Clark Co.	119	280	69	53	348	80

	SY 2003			SY 2007		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Clay Co.	77	190	58	75	217	76
Clinton Co.	22	64	74	6	96	85
Crittenden Co.	10	98	90	15	75	82
Cumberland Co.	20	76	72	22	73	76
Daviess Co.	24	737	91	31	738	93
Owensboro Ind.	30	223	84	55	222	84
Edmonson Co.	19	138	84	18	139	86
Elliott Co.	19	76	78	12	69	85
Estill Co.	24	142	74	11	145	92
Fayette Co.	542	1,672	75	317	1,928	79
Fleming Co.	28	137	79	10	148	83
Floyd Co.	85	395	75	69	377	85
Franklin Co.	77	336	78	68	339	80
Frankfort Ind.	8	68	80	9	77	93
Fulton Co.	4	51	85	3	56	88
Fulton Ind.	2	37	86	0	34	94
Gallatin Co.	8	50	74	24	70	74
Garrard Co.	28	142	74	15	139	79
Grant Co.	55	212	79	65	199	78
Williamstown Ind.	6	41	77	2	60	92
Graves Co.	30	250	79	34	309	85
Mayfield Ind.	20	80	84	13	75	74
Grayson Co.	36	270	78	50	231	84
Green Co.	0	107	91	3	120	95
Greenup Co.	28	193	77	30	198	85
Raceland Ind.	1	70	99	3	68	96
Russell Ind.	10	158	95	8	152	92
Hancock Co.	0	83	98	3	95	96
Hardin Co.	183	876	80	57	913	83
Elizabethtown Ind.	21	167	85	18	139	87
West Point Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Harlan Co.	105	327	75	131	241	67
Harlan Ind.	7	51	75	7	57	86
Harrison Co.	17	211	88	25	216	92
Hart Co.	23	140	84	35	156	78
Henderson Co.	122	424	74	46	433	86
Henry Co.	19	137	81	26	116	81
Eminence Ind.	1	18	86	0	28	97
Hickman Co.	4	45	82	3	36	84
Hopkins Co.	89	432	84	46	424	83
Dawson Springs Ind.	5	32	80	8	31	79

	SY 2003			SY 2007		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Jackson Co.	15	130	84	34	127	82
Jefferson Co.	898	4,610	69	1,831	4,817	73
Anchorage Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jessamine Co.	103	342	72	71	366	78
Johnson Co.	39	211	84	19	199	93
Paintsville Ind.	0	57	77	1	68	92
Kenton Co.	95	753	91	92	856	90
Beechwood Ind.	0	81	99	0	68	99
Covington Ind.	8	194	89	28	161	89
Erlanger-Elsmere Ind.	9	94	87	20	117	90
Ludlow Ind.	4	64	93	1	63	94
Knott Co.	31	153	72	22	130	82
Knox Co.	63	225	63	54	242	81
Barbourville Ind.	1	44	100	1	40	100
Larue Co.	40	152	80	2	149	90
Laurel Co.	102	440	72	88	490	84
East Bernstadt Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lawrence Co.	47	164	76	35	161	81
Lee Co.	15	70	78	1	73	81
Leslie Co.	42	147	79	30	107	78
Letcher Co.	39	201	77	15	193	86
Jenkins Ind.	3	38	97	0	47	100
Lewis Co.	17	143	81	9	138	85
Lincoln Co.	58	240	71	24	257	80
Livingston Co.	16	87	89	5	95	86
Logan Co.	30	195	78	13	219	94
Russellville Ind.	7	85	89	2	78	89
Lyon Co.	1	64	86	1	71	93
McCracken Co.	39	415	91	38	433	91
Paducah Ind.	49	159	70	16	144	78
McCreary Co.	20	175	76	46	252	70
McLean Co.	13	114	85	8	108	86
Madison Co.	29	449	88	61	562	89
Berea Ind.	10	61	86	4	61	92
Magoffin Co.	24	144	72	2	121	89
Marion Co.	21	172	84	28	171	86
Marshall Co.	24	276	83	19	289	85
Martin Co.	29	151	79	29	121	74
Mason Co.	47	165	86	27	191	89
Meade Co.	35	323	81	30	307	88
Menifee Co.	19	98	74	7	68	85
Mercer Co.	9	152	94	12	203	93

	SY 2003			SY 2007		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Burgin Ind.	2	21	84	3	28	97
Harrodsburg Ind.	8	50	86	**	**	**
Metcalfe Co.	3	55	73	18	96	89
Monroe Co.	13	118	84	19	113	86
Montgomery Co.	15	203	79	54	232	85
Morgan Co.	31	150	78	28	140	84
Muhlenberg Co.	37	348	83	43	357	88
Nelson Co.	40	304	87	9	313	89
Bardstown Ind.	11	103	74	7	99	92
Nicholas Co.	13	69	85	11	80	82
Ohio Co.	21	244	89	14	252	91
Oldham Co.	33	612	93	18	736	96
Owen Co.	32	92	74	19	118	82
Owsley Co.	10	53	79	5	46	87
Pendleton Co.	15	185	91	21	198	84
Perry Co.	44	200	68	22	247	89
Hazard Ind.	0	77	88	1	68	97
Pike Co.	86	583	84	118	636	85
Pikeville Ind.	6	79	83	1	67	84
Powell Co.	39	125	68	14	157	83
Pulaski Co.	41	503	79	58	477	85
Science Hill Ind.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Somerset Ind.	12	91	85	18	105	88
Robertson Co.	5	14	82	4	23	82
Rockcastle Co.	26	185	77	5	203	93
Rowan Co.	34	171	80	20	179	86
Russell Co.	50	135	70	14	180	90
Scott Co.	70	332	77	58	403	86
Shelby Co.	52	305	78	54	328	81
Simpson Co.	27	167	87	28	216	86
Spencer Co.	9	131	89	14	161	94
Taylor Co.	15	204	90	9	162	92
Campbellsville Ind.	17	76	76	9	67	91
Todd Co.	23	127	85	7	116	82
Trigg Co.	20	109	78	18	126	83
Trimble Co.	12	92	87	24	110	89
Union Co.	36	147	81	18	166	82
Warren Co.	86	693	87	57	741	89
Bowling Green Ind.	23	208	87	26	215	88
Washington Co.	17	140	84	15	124	94
Wayne Co.	36	145	74	13	157	88
Monticello Ind.	9	48	81	8	52	87

	SY 2003			SY 2007		
	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate	Number of dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of high school graduates	High school graduation rate
Webster Co.	10	139	84	18	141	84
Providence Ind.	2	24	89	**	**	**
Whitley Co.	55	209	79	41	253	80
Corbin Ind.	4	158	91	0	154	97
Williamsburg Ind.	3	46	84	0	53	95
Wolfe Co.	7	84	76	0	66	99
Woodford Co.	17	245	86	21	262	91

Source: Kentucky Department of Education website.

* District has no schools with grades 7-12.

** District merged with county school district.