

TITLE: Report from CPE President Aaron Thompson

DESCRIPTION: President Thompson will highlight specific initiatives during his report to the Council. This written report serves as his official report for March 31, 2023.

PRESENTER: Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President

Online Toolkit - The Kentucky Advising Academy (KAA), a CPE initiative, launched a first-of-its-kind online resource for postsecondary advisors. The [College and Career Advising Toolkit](#) is a comprehensive collection of tools, information and resources, which will serve as a hub for advisors across the Commonwealth. Topics covered include career exploration, financial aid, financial literacy, postsecondary opportunities, reducing summer melt and leveraging data in advising. The data section provides advisors with timely, statewide data on everything from FAFSA completion rates to schools' academic performance to dual credit statistics.

College and Career Pathways— CPE will lead a new national initiative known as “Launch: Equitable & Accelerated Pathways for All.” The program will expand access to high-quality and equitable college and career pathways for all learners. CPE is collaborating with 10 state partners, including the Kentucky Department of Education, Commerce Lexington, Inc., Kentuckiana Works, Kentucky Center for Statistics, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Kentucky Community and Technical College System, Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet, Fayette County Public Schools, Jefferson County Public Schools and Shelby County Public Schools. This effort is supported by the following national organizations: Advance CTE, Education Strategy Group, ExcelinEd, Jobs for the Future (JFF) and New America, with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Carnegie Corporation, Joyce Foundation, and the Walton Family Foundation.

Summer Bridge Program Awards: CPE awarded a third round of funding for summer bridge programs at Kentucky colleges and universities totaling \$1.2 million. Twenty-three campuses will receive grants of up to \$50,000 to fund programs for incoming students to improve their academic and emotional readiness for college. The initiative is

supported by American Rescue Plan funds provided to CPE by the Kentucky Department of Education.

New ALDI Cohort Named – CPE announced the fifth cohort of its Academic Leadership Development Institute (ALDI) program, which prepares minority faculty and staff members for leadership roles in Kentucky higher education. ALDI is a year-long leadership development program that builds the skills of early career, underrepresented minority faculty and staff who are on track for professional advancement. Participants are nominated based on their leadership ability, interest in advancement and dedication to higher education. This year’s 21 participants were chosen from Kentucky’s public universities and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

Recent Publications – CPE’s Data & Research unit recently published a report looking at degrees awarded by program over the last five years, focusing on which programs have expanded and contracted the most. Leading the way are programs in the trades, computer science, and healthcare. The unit also is preparing to release a report examining how unmet financial need impacts first-year to second-year retention at Kentucky public institutions; a draft has been provided in your meeting materials. I encourage you to download and read CPE’s research reports posted on the data section of our website.

Dual Credit Professional Development Series – CPE is hosting a professional development series focused on Kentucky’s dual credit efforts for postsecondary faculty and staff. The webinars began in February and will continue through May. The series will provide information about dual credit policy, scholarships and available resources.

CPE Podcasts – The Higher Education Matters podcast released two recent episodes – one featuring my conversation with Reverend Andrew Baskin of Berea College about the college’s early desegregation efforts, and the other about the FAFSA and college affordability. The Well Advised podcast released episodes on early career awareness and opportunities and diversified support.

Speaking Engagements

In February:

- I appeared on “Kentucky Newsmakers” with Bill Bryant.
- I was panelist for ACT’s virtual conference for state organizations, where I participated in a general session about the pandemic and its effect on academic performance and readiness.

In March:

- I was interviewed by Renee Shaw about the state auditor's report on KSU for KET's Kentucky Edition.
- I spoke to Kentucky students at the "Posters at the Capitol" event and again at the Higher Education Rally at the Capitol.
- CPE testified to the Budget Review Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education about asset preservation projects, Bucks for Brains, and the Healthcare Workforce Collaborative.
- I also testified with Leslie Sizemore of our staff and Rep. Ken Fleming in support of HB200, which will enable CPE and postsecondary healthcare programs and providers to match public/private dollars for scholarships for students to pursue healthcare careers.
- I gave a presentation at the first quarter Board of Director's meeting of the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers.
- I traveled to Pikeville, Manchester and Hazard for another round of community conversations, where CPE talks with education and business leaders about the importance of higher education to regional and local workforce development efforts, among other issues.
- I gave a presentation on systemic and institutional transformation for the Lumina Foundation's board retreat.