

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Committee on April 28, 2026

Who: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type: Committee on Educational Opportunities
Date: January 26, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m. ET
Location: ZOOM Teleconference

CALL TO ORDER

The Committee on Educational Opportunities (CEO) met Monday, January 26, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., ET. The meeting occurred by ZOOM teleconference. Chair Elaine Walker presided.

ROLL CALL

There was a quorum of 4 voting committee members in attendance.

- Rev. CB Akins – attended
- Whitney Allen – did not attend
- Dr. Rochelle Brown – did not attend
- David Carpenter – did not attend
- Robert Croft – attended
- Dr. Kellie Ellis – attended
- Elaine Walker - attended

Dr. Dawn Offutt, Executive Director for Student Access, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the October 27, 2025, meeting were approved as distributed.

WELCOME/CPE UPDATES

CPE President Aaron Thompson provided a data update on increasing percentage of students reported in the areas of enrollment, retention, and persistence. He stated while those are increasing, it's at a slower rate. He also shared information related to CPE's latest report on student debt levels, which shows that six out of ten Kentucky undergraduate students are now graduating debt-free, among other findings. Dr. Thompson reiterated the importance of the work of the CEO in support of identifying and closing gaps for students

from opportunity populations and through developing strategies that outline opportunities for growth.

REPORTS FROM KENTUCKY STUDENT SUCCESS COLLABORATIVE, STUDENT BASIC NEEDS, AND ADULT LEARNERS

Dr. Lilly Massa-McKinley, Assistant Vice President of the Kentucky Student Success Collaborative (KYSSC), shared an update on the unit's work as a first-of-its-kind statewide center that connects two- and four-year institutions with policymakers and business leaders to accelerate degree completion and economic mobility across the Commonwealth. This update was supplemented by more directed information regarding the statewide Student Basic Needs Action Network, which facilitates the placement of benefit navigators on campuses and creates data-driven strategies to tackle food and housing insecurity. Additionally, Ms. Tracy Teater, Associate Director, discussed the unit's initiatives to support adult learners through the Kentucky Adult Attainment Network; this work focuses on removing institutional barriers and awarding credit for prior learning to ensure Kentuckians aged 25 and older can successfully re-engage with postsecondary education. Ms. Maddie White, Senior Associate with the CPE Data and Advanced Analytics unit, shared data to support these efforts, highlighting notable increases over the last five years.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 1:55 p.m. ET.