



### **1 Implementing High Expectations, Helen Mountjoy Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet**

Ms. Mountjoy will discuss the need for implementing high expectations for students, teachers, and administrators to ensure public school systems adequately prepare students to enter college and the workplace. Prior to her appointment as Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary, Mountjoy was vice-president of the Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation, where she worked primarily in the areas of workforce development and education. Her experience includes work at Hager Educational Foundation, director of alumni and public relations at Brescia University, and executive director of the Owensboro-Daviess County Labor Management Committee. She served on the Kentucky Board of Education for 15 years (1991-2006) and as chair of the board from 1998 to 2004. Under her leadership, the board established a statewide assessment system and student performance standards. Secretary Mountjoy has served on the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce's Postsecondary Education Task Force, the Partnership for Successful Schools' Board of Directors, and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.



### **2 Crisis Among Black Males: Closing the Achievement Gap Dr. C. B. Akins, Kentucky Board of Education**

At the elementary level in 2008, there was a 12.7-point difference in the scores of white students compared to African-American students in reading in Christian County. By tenth-grade, the gap was 20 points. In math, elementary scores revealed an 18.9-point gap, while the difference at the high school level in math was 28.8 points. Dr. Akins will discuss the roles of the home, community leaders, the educational system, and local businesses in impacting the learning of black students to reverse these trends and close achievement gaps. Dr. Akins currently serves as Vice-Chair of the KY Board of Education. He is also the pastor of First Baptist Church Bracktown in Lexington. He earned a bachelor's degree in social work (with honors) from the University of Kentucky and both a master's of divinity and doctorate of ministry from Lexington Theological Seminary. Dr. Akins served in the U.S. Air Force as a multilingual interpreter and later taught foreign languages in the military intelligence division of the U.S. Army Reserves. His ministry includes Adopt-A-School, a program of the African-American Educational Coalition.



### **3 Maximizing Community Involvement Jamie Vollmer, Vollmer, Inc.**

Jamie employs humor, logic, and statistics to encourage teachers, support staff, administrators, and board members to build a new conversation with their communities that increases active community support for schools and that gives all students the opportunity to unfold their full potential. During the last twenty years he has worked with hundreds of school districts, chambers of commerce, and educational foundations to improve student success. Praised as both practical and energizing, this session presents an inspiring call-to-arms and a powerful case for the need to increase local support for public schools. Jamie Vollmer is President of Vollmer, Inc., a consulting firm working to increase student success by strengthening community support of America's schools. Jamie is a businessman and attorney who became a founding member of the Iowa Business and Education Roundtable in 1988. He has served on the boards of the North Central Educational Laboratory and the National PTA.



### **4 Parents and Teachers Talking Together (PT3) Sheila Cruse Johnston, Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership**

In the mid-1990s, the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence surveyed teachers and parents to identify their respective attitudes towards issues facing Kentucky education. Both groups expressed nearly identical values and identified one common problem: better communication. However, each group thought of the other as the source of the problem. Research shows where there is open, two-way communication between those closest to students positive change will result. To facilitate such communication, Parents and Teachers Talking Together (PT3) was developed. This can be a first step to helping your school engage parents as partners. Experience an abbreviated PT3 session with Ms. Johnston, a community support coordinator for the Prichard Committee. She has been the executive director for the KY Association for Gifted Education, the staff development coordinator for a Jacob K. Javits Project at Western Kentucky University, a teacher of the gifted, and an elementary classroom teacher. Mrs. Johnston graduated from Murray State University with a B.S. in elementary education. She received a Masters degree in education and gifted education certification from Murray State University. She also earned a graduate degree in educational administration from Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky.



**5 Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Gifted and Talented Children  
Lynette Baldwin, Kentucky Association for Gifted Education**

Every school has a unique group of students who are gifted and talented. Separate studies conducted during the last few decades have demonstrated both the need for and the benefits of gifted education programs for this special group. However, lack of knowledge about giftedness, myths, and budget restraints get in the way of appropriate educational planning for them. Lynette Baldwin will discuss ten broad points essential to understanding the needs of gifted and talented children. Ms. Baldwin is the executive director of the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education, a non-profit volunteer group of parents, teachers, administrators, educators, and citizens interested in being advocates for appropriate educational opportunities for gifted and talented youth in Kentucky. Baldwin is retired from the Paducah Public School District where she was first an elementary teacher and then teacher coordinator of the district's Gifted Talented Creative Program.



*Brady M. Link, Jr.  
Christian County*



*Mike Kenner  
Todd County*



*Tim McGinnis  
Trigg County*

**6 Superintendent Q & A**

Want to learn more about the direction of area school districts? Have a question about public school administration? Now is your chance to ask. Brady Link has been a teacher, principal, and superintendent throughout his 35-year career. This is his first year in Christian County, after leading Graves County to among the top 6 percent of Kentucky districts for four consecutive years. Mike Kenner, an educator for 29 years, is currently in his second year as superintendent. During his tenure, he has taught at the middle and high school levels and served as an elementary, middle, and high school administrator. Tim McGinnis has been a teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent for 32 years, 23 of which were in Christian County Public Schools. Trigg County Public Schools ranks 4th in West Kentucky in student academic achievement and 13th in the Commonwealth.



**7 Early Childhood Education  
Paulette Robinson, KY Parent Information & Resource Center**

Ms. Robinson will outline resources available to parents with an emphasis on how parents can become more involved in their child's early education. Ms. Robinson is the Region 1 Early Childhood Parent Educator for KYPIRC which provides research-based curriculum materials and training programs for parent involvement leaders.



**Ready to Read  
Sandy Cunningham, Christian County Literacy Council**

*Ready to Read* is aimed at providing early literacy, child, and language development information to parents, childcare providers, and others working with the birth to age 4 population. Learn tools to help all children begin school with age appropriate literacy skills so that the cycle of illiteracy can be broken and the achievement gap closed within our schools. A retired elementary teacher of 27 years, Ms. Cunningham was selected as one of three finalists for National Family Literacy Teacher of the Year.



**8 College & Workforce Readiness**  
**Janie Tomek, Christian County Public Schools**

This session will draw a connection between increased graduation requirements, curriculum, ACT testing, and state-mandated assessments to successful transition from high school to the workforce, college, or technical college with a focus on “threshold skills” essential to the real world. Janie Tomek has been a teacher, a principal, an instructional supervisor, an assistant superintendent, an interim superintendent, and KY Department of Education highly skilled educator during her 25-year career.



**Hopkinsville Rotary Scholars Program Information & Enrollment Session**  
**Russ Guffey, Rotary Club of Hopkinsville**

The recently-unveiled Hopkinsville Rotary Scholars Program is a one-of-a-kind initiative to allow any graduate from a Christian County high school to attend college... tuition-free! Russ, a life-long Hopkinsville resident, holds community service and development close to his heart. Russ draws from his experiences as a former teacher and coach and positions with Leadership Hopkinsville, Hopkinsville Community College Foundation and other boards, taskforces, and organizations.



**9 Bridging the Gap to Secure Special Education Resources**  
**Ellen Nicholson and Sheila Mason, The Arc of Kentucky**

Effective communication is essential when working with a student’s individual learning plan team. Team members play important and specific roles and should know how best to use them to secure resources for each individual child. Working collaboratively, while focusing on the individual, is the key to success. Do you know your specific role? Would you like to learn information that will help you become an enthusiastic member of a child’s team? If so, please plan to join us for an informative, fun session that will teach you how to bridge the gap. Mrs. Nicholson has more than 30 years experience working with persons with disabilities in community-based settings. She is the executive director of Bridge 41, Inc. Mrs. Mason serves as education director for Bridge 41, Inc. and as secretary for the Board of Kentucky Rural Initiatives Corporation.

