# School Technology and Digital Learning

Today's technology offers new options for students to control part of their learning, maybe studying a subject their schools do not offer, or learning at a different pace or a different time of day or in a different way than is possible within their school's current schedule.

## HOW DOES KENTUCKY SUPPORT ACTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION?

Since 1990, Kentucky has been committed to strong technology implementation under a series of statewide Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) master plans. KETS sets standards for school technology purposes, provides technical services, ensures high speed network access, and funds technology strategies to support the learning environment. Because technology innovation is so rapid, that system needs regular upgrades to allow students and teachers to use current software and applications. Annually, Kentucky also offers matching funds to help school districts make purchases to keep up with those rising standards.

KETS also provides key support platforms for school system operations, including:

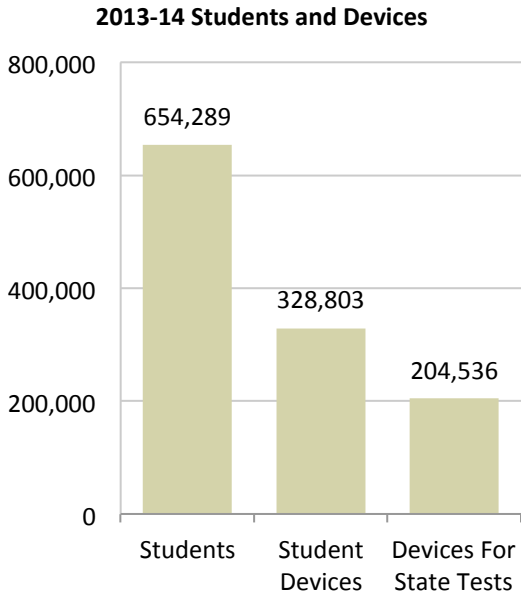
- Infinite Campus, a student information system that tracks students' grades, test scores and other information
- The Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS, often pronounced "sits"), which gives educators access to a wide array of teaching tools and opportunities to develop and share their own curriculum approaches
- ASSIST, which provides an on-line approach to school improvement planning and to submitting required documentation to the Kentucky Department of Education
- MUNIS, which handles district accounting and fiscal reporting.

## WHAT IS DIGITAL LEARNING?

Digital learning uses technology to give students new learning options including "some element of control over time, place, path and/or pace," according to www.digitallearningnow.com. That can include classes conducted entirely on-line as well as blended or hybrid courses with some learning in a conventional classroom along with some on-line learning. It can also include on-demand or "just in time" learning available at any time of day or night. Read broadly, digital learning also includes all personal paths of study that students tackle on their own without seeking school credit—but this EdGuide is limited to digital learning that is part of a student's Kentucky public school education.

## SEEING THE NUMBERS

The chart below shows the number of students and student instructional devices in Kentucky schools, plus the number of those devices that students can use to take state required assessments. In district with "bring your own device" policies," students can also make use of their smart phones and other devices for in-school learning.




Source note: student membership comes from http://applications.education.ky.gov/SRC/ and device counts from Technology Readiness Survey data available at www.education.ky.gov.

## LEARNING MORE

Added information on how Kentucky schools serve students can be found in other Kentucky EdGuides offered at www.prichardcommittee.org, including those on:

- Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and High Schools
- Career Technical Education
- Students Who Need Added Support
- Students With Disabilities
- Students Ready for Added Challenge

## WHAT KINDS OF DIGITAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

Districts and schools may create digital learning courses or select courses that are offered by other providers, provided they "align explicitly to the Kentucky approved academic standards appropriate for each course and be endorsed by a highly qualified content teacher." To learn about local options, ask at your school or district board of education office.

Eagle Eye digital transitional courses help high school students ensure that they are ready for credit-bearing college courses. Courses in English, mathematics, and reading target 12th grade students who did not meet college readiness ACT benchmark scores, allowing them to work at their own pace during school hours and at home until they succeed.

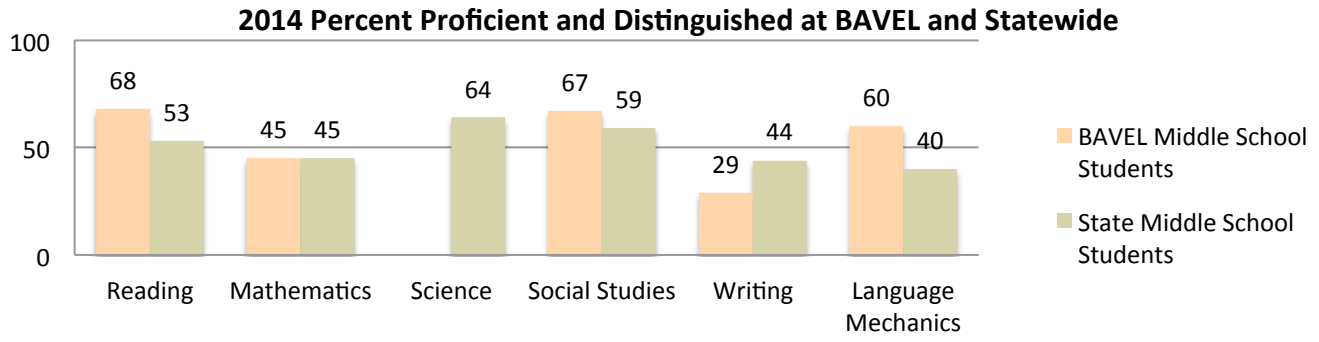
The Kentucky Virtual Campus for K-12 Students (www.kyvc4k12.org) allows students to register for courses from three providers: Kentucky Educational Television, JCPSeSchool, offered by the Jefferson County Public Schools, and the Barren Academy of Virtual and Expanded Learning (BAVEL), offered by the Barren County school system. The offerings include middle and high school courses in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, and other fields.

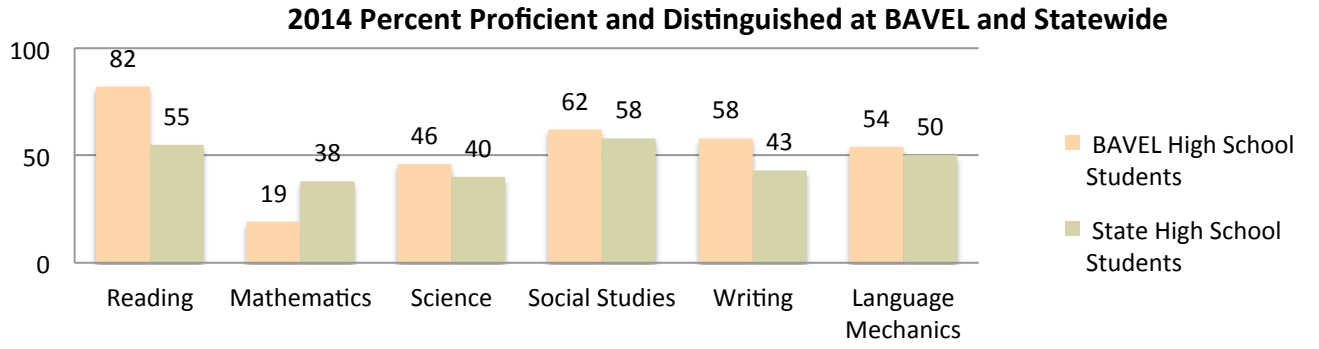
Digital learning can also be used when weather conditions and other emergencies make it impossible for students to come to school. School districts can make digital options part of an alternative instruction plan that can count for up to ten student attendance days if the Commissioner of Education approves. 44 districts now participate in the non-traditional instructional time program.

Beginning in the fall of 2015, Kentucky's Microsoft IT Academy will allow high school students to pursue industry-recognized certifications in productivity tools, programming, information technology administration, and computer science. Schools can provide courses guided by teachers, or students can use the curriculum resources.

## WHAT EVIDENCE SHOWS DIGITAL LEARNING RESULTS FOR KENTUCKY STUDENTS?

Of the three providers at the Kentucky Virtual Campus for K-12 Students, only BAVEL has its own school report card. The chart below shows how BAVEL's most recent K-PREP scores compare to statewide average.




This and other Kentucky EdGuides are available at www.prichardcommittee.org as tools for engaging students, parents, teachers, and other Kentucky public education stakeholders. © 2015 by the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence