Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
Study • Inform • Engage

2018 Annual Report
Prichard Committee Vision & Beliefs
“A world-class public education for every Kentuckian”

Since 1983, the Prichard Committee has worked to study priority issues, inform the public and policy makers about best practices, and engage citizens, business leaders, families, students, and other stakeholders in a shared mission to move Kentucky to the top tier of all states for education excellence and equity for all children, from their earliest through postsecondary years.

- We believe public education is critical to the economic and social well-being of Kentucky, requiring an ambitious agenda that ensures educational success for every Kentuckian.
- We demand excellence through meaningful standards, strong accountability, effective teaching, and adequate and equitable funding from early education through postsecondary.
- We are committed to engaging Kentuckians on education issues—inspiring and equipping them to act to improve education outcomes at the state and local levels.
- We are independent, solutions-oriented, and trusted to study, analyze, and communicate research-based information and best practices for education success in Kentucky.
A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If there had been a theme for our work in 2018, it surely would have been about community partnerships. In the following pages, you’ll read about how we’ve implemented a dedicated approach to ensuring our state policies support the success of each and every student through the establishment of an equity coalition; how we’ve developed community education profiles for all 173 school districts in the state as a tool to mobilize communities for better education outcomes; launched the first annual statewide Parent Leadership Summit; and how we’re partnering with regional community-based organizations to support increased family engagement on behalf of all students.

Community partnerships are just the beginning of a revitalized effort to build a groundswell of support for public education and better education outcomes - from early childhood through postsecondary.

With the goal of moving Kentucky into the top tier of all states for education outcomes in this generation, we must support engagement at the local level where thoughtful citizen leaders can come together to understand and respond to the unique needs of students in their own community.

In 2019, you’ll hear about how citizens from every corner of the state can be part of the Prichard Committee’s work by joining the Groundswell Initiative for Engagement in Public Education. It’s time to draw new leaders into the most important and longest-standing campaign in Kentucky’s history – the campaign for better education.

William H. Wilson, Chair

Brigitte Blom Ramsey, Executive Director
Judith Bradley of Louisville received the 2018 Beverly Nickell Raimondo Leadership Award from the Prichard Committee recognizing an outstanding parent advocate for all students. Bradley, a prominent voice for redesigning special education programs, is pictured, from left, with Rachel Belin of the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team; Bradley’s daughter Rachel; her husband Dan; Brigitte Blom Ramsey, the Prichard Committee executive director; William H. Wilson, the current chair of the group; and Cindy Heine of Lexington, a longtime member of the Prichard Committee staff. In addition to the recognition, a panel discussion at the November annual meeting focused on current efforts by education advocates in Hopkinsville. In particular, they described efforts to provide mentoring and guidance to all students at Christian County High School. The panelists said their work has been inspired and supported by Maddux’s example and encouragement.

Judith Bradley of Louisville received the 2018 Beverly Nickell Raimondo Leadership Award from the Prichard Committee recognizing an outstanding parent advocate for all students. Bradley, a prominent voice for redesigning special education programs, is pictured, from left, with Rachel Belin of the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team; Bradley’s daughter Rachel; her husband Dan; Brigitte Blom Ramsey, the Prichard Committee executive director; Tony Raimondo; Bradley, Marty Polio superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools; and Lisa Wilner, a Jefferson County school board member recently elected to the Kentucky General Assembly. The award honors the late Bev Raimondo, pioneering leader of the Prichard Committee’s parent leadership efforts.

Generous Support for the Beverly Nickell Raimondo Leadership Award came from:
BUILDING A MOVEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE

The Prichard Committee became a prominent voice in the 2018 process to revise Kentucky’s graduation requirements, imploring the State Board of Education to engage with stakeholders and ensure opportunities for students to succeed and excel.

The Prichard Committee continued working with a coalition created to draw attention to reducing achievement gaps during a 2017 overhaul of Kentucky’s school accountability system. In 2018, the group weighed in on provisions that determine the focus of students’ high school experience.

The Prichard Committee worked with Berea College Partners in Education, Kentucky State Conference of NAACP Branches, Louisville Urban League, Teach for America-Appalachia and the Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County. The “equity coalition” warned that the state’s proposal to implement exit exams, require transition readiness for graduation, and eliminate Algebra II as a foundation of learning could exacerbate gaps in student outcomes and reduce Kentucky’s ability to improve in education overall.

“The Prichard Committee understands that in order to achieve lasting and meaningful change, we must work alongside communities, families, and students, and place them at the center of all we do.”

Dr. John B. King Jr., president and CEO of The Education Trust based in Washington, D.C., said that the Prichard Committee, the coalition, and Prichard’s Student Voice Team are all examples of building strong grassroots voices and action to improve education options and results. “The Prichard Committee understands that in order to achieve lasting and meaningful change, we must work alongside communities, families, and students, and place them at the center of all we do,” King said.

Emphasizing the needs of underserved students is an important role that the Prichard Committee not only fills, but also enlists citizens and partners to expand its influence, King noted.

“Advocates must fight to make sure that all students have access to rigor, relevancy and relationships,” King said. “We should support educators in giving students the skills they need today to build a better tomorrow. And, most of all, students need to know that there are adults in school and in communities who care deeply about them and are invested in their success.”

King, a former U.S. Secretary of Education, delivered a similar message in person at the Prichard Committee’s annual meeting in Lexington in November. There, he applauded Prichard’s longstanding push for stronger schools and student learning. “Our task is not only to study the problems but do the work of bending the arc toward moral justice,” King said. “If we want a strong society, we can’t afford to leave anybody behind.”

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Building local voices to advocate for public education, explore solutions to achievement gaps, and promote higher achievement at all levels will require deeper and sustained local engagement efforts. A key step in that process is for citizens to become more informed about student outcomes in local schools and launch conversations about how to reach more students, both in schools and outside classrooms and beyond the school day or school year.

The Prichard Committee launched a handy tool to spark such conversations while increasing awareness through local data. Its new Community Profiles debuted at the Prichard Committee annual meeting in November. In early 2019, it was updated to include 2018 academic data released as a dashboard by the state education department.

The four-page guides display education and demographic data tailored by school district. Built around eye-catching data graphics, they show achievement starting with kindergarten screening results and continuing through college- and/or career-readiness rates and postsecondary attainment. Local school district measures are shown versus state averages.

Lu Young, an associate professor in the education leadership studies department at the University of Kentucky College of Education, sees great promise in the Community Profiles.

“We talk a lot about how important it is to engage communities, but we don’t often live up to the chatter,” said Young, a former local school superintendent. “I think the time is now to commit to open and genuine conversations about the needs of our public school kids and teachers because the challenges we face are complex and multifaceted.”

She said the Prichard Committee is a natural source for such an endeavor because of its nonpartisan approach and reputation for providing trusted information. “Community organizers will trust the process more because Prichard is behind it,” she said. “Prichard has proven leadership experience in grassroots advocacy and is willing and able to help communities grapple with educational issues that really matter.” She also pointed to open-access tools the Prichard Committee is developing to guide communities through a meaningful engagement process.

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“This could very well lead to ongoing community conversations that become more sophisticated over time. The real beauty of this effort is in the capacity building that can result at the local level. I think local organizers are hungry for ways to authentically engage neighbors as owners and leaders of their own communities and schools, and these tools can help make that happen.”
A statewide Family Engagement Center in Kentucky will offer intensive training for parents and school personnel through a five-year grant awarded to the Prichard Committee by the U.S. Department of Education. This was built on the foundation of the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership, the 20-plus year-old program of the Prichard Committee.

The award recognized the Prichard Committee’s track record and plan, based on research showing that family, school and community engagement improves student and school results and helps meet student needs, particularly students in poverty and students historically underserved. The grant, awarded in September, will total almost $5 million and focus on Eastern Kentucky, Northern Kentucky and Jefferson County with intensive training for parents and school personnel.

“Providing parents opportunities to lead within their child’s classroom, then school, and then district provides parents with the opportunity to develop strong leadership skills that are then transferrable. We continue to see parents move along this spectrum — from advocating for their child, to advocating for their child’s classmates, to advocating for all children.”

Gentry said that the Family Engagement Center is positioned to build skills among parents while helping school systems and students. She is eager to see that result in Eastern Kentucky.

“By including a regional center that supports the parents in the Appalachian counties, the Prichard Committee is recognizing the value of these counties, these parents, and these students,” Gentry said. “Too often organizations are seduced by the number of families/students that can more easily be served in urban areas, and they forget about our rural places, parents, and students.”

To deliver deeper services to traditionally underserved families, the Prichard Committee will partner to establish Regional Family Engagement Centers. Collaborators include Partners for Education at Berea College in eastern Kentucky, Children, Inc. in northern Kentucky, and the National Center for Families Learning in the Louisville area. Training will be provided through Prichard’s Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership.

Dreama Gentry is the executive director of Partners for Education at Berea College, which co-designed the program. Gentry called the Prichard Committee “uniquely suited to lead this work,” citing the group’s longstanding role in building citizen and parent leaders. “The Prichard Committee is a trusted entity that works across the entire state,” she said.

Engaged communities — with families at the center — are vital to improving student and school outcomes. The Prichard Committee’s Groundswell Initiative was created to help build and sustain engagement support and resources for Kentucky families in this critical work. Hand-in-hand with partners across the state, we are working to inspire change, one community at a time.

For more information on the Groundswell Initiative visit: groundswell.prichardcommittee.org
2018 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1st Annual Parent Summit: With support from Toyota, State Farm, St. Elizabeth Healthcare, Duke Energy, LG&E and KU Energy LLC, Raymond B. Preston Family Foundation, Public Life Foundation, Gannett Foundation, and the Elsa Heisel Sule Foundation we held our first Kentucky Parent Leadership Summit in Lexington. The Parent Summit is designed to inform and inspire parents to be effective education advocates and leaders. The Summit is a unique opportunity to connect with other Kentucky parents and community leaders across the state to share ideas and get energized for action.

CIPL Fellowship: Twenty-six parents from fourteen different Kentucky cities are participating in the 2018–19 CIPL Fellowship which kicked off in September 2018. Participants complete a series of “Deeper Dive” webinars to build foundational knowledge of key issues in Kentucky education such as navigating school accountability and reporting, closing achievement gaps, ensuring adequate and equitable school funding, understanding academic standards and more. To be named a CIPL Fellow, candidates complete 12 hours of virtual or in-person learning and then take action on what they’ve learned in a way that engages other parents/citizens and helps deepen commitment to success for all students in their community. Those completing these requirements will be inducted as a CIPL Fellow at the second annual Kentucky Parent Leadership Summit on March 30, 2019.

Education Trust Family Fellowship: In early 2018, Kentucky was one of four states chosen to partner with The Education Trust to pilot a national Family Fellowship program. Eight Kentucky Fellows were nominated and selected through an interview process and attended a national kickoff meeting on September 29 in Washington DC. The Fellows are required to complete a series of in-person and virtual trainings on key education policy topics and advocacy strategies, and then take three advocacy actions by June 2019.
Strong Start Meetings: Strong Start hosted four meetings in 2018 around the state. The coalition heard from legislators, local business representatives and state officials. In September, the Strong Start policy team worked together to develop the policy priorities document, in time for the October tour/site visit at the Louisville Scholar House at UofL.

Increasing Access & Quality Infant-Toddler Care in KY: In 2018, the Prichard Committee was awarded a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to develop and implement strategies that increase access to infant-toddler child care and improve the quality and delivery of that care.

An advisory group has been put in place to review data and pre-existing strategies in other states to recruit in-home child care providers, improve home-based child care quality, and educate families on the importance of early learning. The project staff highlighted practices of programs like All Our Kin (CT and NY) and the services and programs currently engaging child-care in Kentucky.

In 2019, the advisory group will convene to formally plan and produce pilots for the northern, eastern, southern, and western parts of the state. There will be an additional pilot for Louisville, as well, to provide targeted support in their priority zip codes as a densely populated urban area.

Bright Spots: Each month, the BRIGHT SPOTS blog showcases impressive learning in Kentucky schools. In 2018, we showcased public schools across Kentucky.
The Prichard Committee Student Voice Team works to integrate students as partners in the Prichard Committee’s efforts to improve Kentucky schools. The SVT ended the 2018 school year with a membership totaling 125 students from middle school through college from across the Commonwealth. Priority initiatives in 2018 involved student-led education research, policy recommendations, and advocacy work related to both school climate and college readiness and underscoring a commitment to promoting equity in education.

Blog and Social Media: The Student Voice Forum is the SVT’s independent blog which is meant for student thought and critical feedback on a range of education issues. The student editorial board behind the blog expanded the platform in 2018 in order to be especially intentional about lifting the voices of students who may otherwise be least heard in the public education system. The Forum’s efforts to focus on education equity developed in tandem with the expansion of a student social media team that launched #StudentsofKentucky, an Instagram series amplifying student voices on education policy issues and contextualizing stories with credible research data.

March for Our Lives Teach-In and Rally: In March, the Student Voice Team held a statewide Teach-In and Rally at the Capitol. The idea came in response to the wave of student activism following the school shootings in Benton, Kentucky and Parkland, Florida, and the team’s takeaways from conducting several student-led school climate audits. The goals were to build capacity in students to better understand issues around school safety, lift student voice around the subject so that policymakers might consider working with students in seeking solutions, and broaden the discussion beyond physical safety to also include attention to school climate and social and emotional health. In addition to writing a series of op-eds, the team was featured in over a dozen Kentucky newspaper and television stories and in Teen Vogue, which reaches over one million readers.

As a direct result of these efforts too, a SVT member was asked to serve on the School Safety legislative work group that led to SB 1, the School Safety and Resiliency Act, a bipartisan bill that was noted for its holistic approach to school safety and climate.
2018 Financials are based on unaudited numbers as of December 31, 2018.
*A portion of National Grant Support and Program Support is for expenses in subsequent years.
View our most recent audited financials at prichardcommittee.org/financial reports.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Prichard Committee had 234 donors in 2018.
89 gifts (38%) were $100 or less!
THANK YOU!

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**Gifts of Stock:** Gifts of appreciated securities may offer substantial tax advantages. These include capital gains tax entirely and an income tax charitable deduction for the fair market value of the securities.

**Sponsorships:** Sponsorship of any of our upcoming events or projects.

**Planned Giving:** A gift through your estate can provide significant support to the Prichard Committee, now and in the future. You can give to the Prichard Committee through your will or from a living trust.

**Life Insurance:** Life insurance may be given to the Prichard Committee and the cash value deducted from income tax. However, the Prichard Committee can also be named as a beneficiary on life insurance policies. Donors may wish to establish a fund at the Prichard Committee by naming the Prichard Committee as a sole beneficiary, a contingent beneficiary, or a beneficiary of a fixed percentage of the policy.

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