***Clarification on Science Testing in 2015***

With the adoption of the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) incorporated in the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS) in June 2013\*, all Kentucky schools are required to implement the new science standards in each grade K-12 beginning in the fall of 2014. Kentucky will embark on the development of a new science assessment system to match the standards. The new system will take time to build. Thus, staff of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) proposed to the Kentucky Board of Education in June 2014 to suspend the K-PREP science testing at grades 4 and 7 in the spring of 2015 since the only test available measures out-of-date standards. However, the United States Department of Education (USED), during the review of Kentucky’s ESEA waiver extension submission, made it clear that there must be a science test at these levels administered in Kentucky in 2015. In order to meet USED requirements, the following will occur:

* Elementary and middle schools will administer at grades 4 and 7 a science Norm-Referenced Test (NRT). The Stanford NRT has been given for the last three years as Part A of the K-PREP science test. The NRT is 30 questions and takes 40 minutes of testing time. National percentile results will be reported, but scores will **not** be used in the state accountability system.
* The high school end of course model has not changed and will continue. In high school, the end-of-course science test (Biology) will be administered in 2015 and its scores will be reported and used in the accountability model.
* Alternate Assessment students will be tested in science in spring 2015 at grades 4, 7 and 11. Grades 4 and 7 will **not** be used in state accountability. The process for Alternate Assessment for grade 11 science is still under development.
* Science tests will continue to be part of the ACT EXPLORE (grade 8), ACT PLAN (grade 10) and the ACT (grade 11). For Alternate Assessment students, the Transition Attainment Record will continue. Results for all will be reported and used in accountability.

As the new science assessment system develops, educators will be kept informed of timelines and other important information.

\*With the incorporation of NGSS into KCAS, the former standards including Core Content 4.1 for Assessment were completely eliminated.