Dear Kentucky Teachers and Parents,

It’s a pleasure for me to introduce to you the Kentucky Association of Counties’ County Government Booklet. This booklet is designed to help teach county government civics to elementary students. The goals of the project are simple: to present the importance and functionality of county governments to Kentucky students and to unite schools with their respective county government officials. I encourage teachers to reach out to their county officials and invite them to actively participate in the lesson.

This is the first initiative produced by KACo of its kind and we are very excited about the opportunities that this endeavor presents. This activity booklet will be produce through the KEY Program, which stands for KACo Educating Youth. Throughout this booklet, you will notice a “key.” Not only does the key stand for KACo Educating Youth, but it also represents the “key to learning” for that page. The “key” will help the kids learn about the duties of the county officials in Kentucky.

We are rolling out this project during the month of April as part of our celebration of National County Government Month (NCGM). NCGM is celebrated each April by the nation’s counties to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of county government. Contact your county government officials to find out how you and your county government can celebrate National County Government Month.

Without the efforts of many, this project would have not been possible. Therefore, we would like to thank the affiliate associations of KACo, the Department of Education and a group of local teachers for the part they played in creating this booklet. To make sure this is a productive tool in the classroom, we took appropriate measures to ensure that the booklet is aligned with third grade and above Core Content for Social Studies Standards.

It is our goal to play a small role in the education of tomorrow’s future and we hope this is just one of many projects that accomplishes that goal. Please feel free to visit our website at www.kaco.org for more county information.

Sincerely,

Denny Nunnelley
Executive Director/ CEO
Kentucky Association of Counties
Dear Fellow Teachers,

It has been a pleasure working with the Kentucky Association of Counties to create this activity booklet. We have included a lesson plan, which aligns with current social studies standards, to provide you with useful activities to teach your students the importance of county government. The content included is not limited to social studies, but also addresses integrated writing, arts and humanities, practical living, speaking and listening components. In addition, there are technology resources available at www.kaco.org. We encourage you to contact your county government officials to enrich this learning experience.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Young — 3rd Grade Teacher
Julie Moudy — 3rd Grade Teacher
April Johnson — Special Education

Day 1-4: County Official Positions (Pages 2-12)
I can define the roles of my county officials and explain their function in my community.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
As a class read about each elected county official. Discuss as a class how you see them in your community. Complete short answer at the bottom of the page as a formative assessment.

Day 5-7: CUMULATIVE ACTIVITY:
Materials needed: scenario cards (page 18), role cards (page 19)
1. Review roles with role cards. Think of necessary work skills that would be required for each elected office.
2. Have students nominate their classmates based on their work skills. If more than one nominee, hold a class election.
3. After all elected offices are filled, hand out role cards. Those who were not elected receive community member role cards.
4. Students with community member role cards will choose a scenario card to read to the class. If the scenario involves the elected official they will stand and say why that scenario involves them. Some scenarios may involve more than one elected official.

EXTENSION:
Students create the scenarios and act them out.

Day 8: Unlocking County Government (Page 13)
I can define the vocabulary of county government.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
Independently or in groups, students will complete crossword puzzle.

Day 9-10: Key Rule Makers (Page 14)
I can explain the purpose of rules and compare the rules in my community, home and school.
Materials needed: 3 pieces of chart paper and markers
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
Hang chart paper around the room labeled, HOME, SCHOOL, COUNTY. Have your students do a gallery walk and write the rules they find for each of those places in their lives. As a class, highlight rules that are similar across the areas. For example, walking in hallway (school), not running in the house (home), and not driving over the speed limit (county). Discuss why we have rules (to keep us safe – common good). Complete the Rule Makers activity.

Day 11: Key Purpose of County Government (Page 15)
I can identify the basic purposes of county government, give examples of services they provide and explain how they pay for the services.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
Brainstorm services that your government provides (policeman, fireman, road and snow removal, garbage pickup, etc.). Split the class into small groups. Give each group a service. Have them draw a picture of their community with the service and their community without the service. Each group presents their drawing. As a class discuss how they pay for these services. Complete the writing activity independently on page 15.
EXTENSION: Go to www.kaco.org and click on the “COUNTIES WORK” game.

Day 12: Organizing County Government (Page 16)
I can spell the key roles in county government.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
Complete the word jumble.

Day 13: Finding Kentucky Counties (Page 17)
I can locate the counties of Kentucky.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:
Complete the seek and find.

Scenario Cards (Page 18)
Role Cards (Page 19)
Position Description (Page 20)
Courthouse

- There is a courthouse in each of Kentucky’s 120 counties.
- It’s the building that houses county government offices.
- The place where decisions are made for the county by the fiscal court and other county officials.

My Courthouse is located in what County? ____________________________
How do you see the County Judge/Executive working in your community?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

**County Judge/Executive**

- Leader of the county.
- Head of the Fiscal Court.
- In charge of day-to-day projects of the county.

The name of my County Judge/Executive is ________________________________.
The names of my Magistrates/Commissioners are ____________________________.
Why is the County Clerk important to your community?

County Clerk

- Duties include: keeping legal records for the county, registering and removing voter rolls and giving license plates.
- Serves as the bookkeeper for the fiscal court.

The name of my County Clerk is _________________.

License  Vote  Taxes
The name of my Sheriff is **Sheriff**.

**Chief Law Enforcement Officer** in the county. Duties include: serving as bailiff, criminal court, serves warrants, collects property taxes, and investigates motor vehicle accidents.

Whose is this Sheriff important to your community?
What would happen if your county did not have a Jailer?

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**Jailer**

- In-charge of the county jail and all persons in the jail.
- Duties also include transporting inmates to court, monitoring visitors, and maintaining prisoner’s paperwork.
- They treat each prisoner kindly, provide food, and supply appropriate bedding.
- The jail must be kept warm and clean.

The name of my Jailer is ________________________.
How would your community be different without a County Attorney?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

County Attorney

- Serves as the lawyer for fiscal court.
- Duties include attending the fiscal court meetings and conducting all business that involves the rights and interest of the county.
- Fights against drug crimes, child abuse and stealing.

The name of my County Attorney is __________________________.
PVA

- PVA stands for Property Valuation Administrator.
- The PVA is a locally elected state official.
- The main duty of a PVA is to set the value for all property in the county such as land, buildings, houses, and trailers.

How do you see the PVA working in your household and/or community?

The name of my PVA is ___________________________.
Coroner

- Investigates, reports, certifies deaths.
- Duties include conducting death investigation, gathering information, medical history, and evidence at the scene of the death.
- Determines the cause of death.
- Coroners must be notified of all deaths in the county.

The name of my Coroner is ________________________________.
The name of my Circuit Court Clerk is [Name].

Circuit Court Clerk

Provides professional recordkeeping for the courts, collects money due to the courts, records and provides legal documents.

Maintains the jury system, administers oaths (promises), handles affidavits ( sworn statements).

Issues driver licenses and non-driver ID cards.

What important work skills would a Circuit Court Clerk need to be successful?
How would your community be different without a Commonwealth's Attorney?

Commonwealth’s Attorney

- Represents all citizens of Kentucky in felony cases.
- They make sure that the victims of crimes are taken care of and justice is done.

The name of my Commonwealth’s Attorney is ________________________________.
Unlocking County Government

Using the words in the word box, complete the crossword puzzle.

ACROSS:
1. Elected group that makes rules for the county
4. Keeping you safe
6. Members of the fiscal court that vote on rules
8. People agreeing on the same purpose
11. Organization that helps counties
12. Leader of the county
13. Money collected by the government to pay for services

DOWN:
2. Local group that makes the rules
3. Rules created to keep order
5. A group of people that make decisions
7. Represents people in court; lawyer
9. What county governments provide to citizens
10. Group of people living in an area with similar interests
KEY Rule Makers

In our lives, many people make laws to keep us safe. Match each rule maker with the building where they work.

1. Why do we have rules and laws?

2. Compare your rules at school with the laws in your county.
The KEY Purpose Of County Government

DIRECTIONS:

After learning about the purposes of your county government, complete the short answer question.

Our county government helps us in many ways.

A. Identify 2 basic purposes of county government.

B. Give an example of a service county government provides.

C. Identify how they pay for these services.
Using these letters, complete the correct spelling of these jumbled KEY words.

Fiscal Court, Magistrates, Common Goal, Taxes, County Judge Executive, Organization, Laws, Attorney, Services, Community, Security, KACo, County Government
Scenarios

Scenario 1: There has been a robbery at the gas station in my county. Which county official will attend court meetings and fight against this crime in my community?

Scenario 2: My parents decided to buy a new house. Which county official sets the value of the property?

Scenario 3: There has been a death in my community. Which county official must be notified of the death and investigate to determine the cause of the death?

Scenario 4: There is a criminal in my community. Which county official will serve a warrant to arrest the criminal?

Scenario 5: There is a new county jail being built in my community. Which county official will be in charge of the county jail and all people in the jail?

Scenario 6: My sister just passed her driver’s test. Which county official will issue her a driver’s license?

Scenario 7: There has been a felony or a serious crime committed in my community. Which county official will represent the victims and make sure justice is served?

Scenario 8: My aunt wants to vote. Which county official should she contact to find her voting location?

Scenario 9: My community needs a new county park. Which county official will lead and prepare the budget for this project?

Scenario 10: We need a new stop sign in my community. Which county officials will vote on approving this project?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Cards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Clerk</td>
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<td>Commonwealth Attorney</td>
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<td>County Attorney</td>
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<td>Property Valuation</td>
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<td>Circuit Court Clerk</td>
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<td>County Judge/Executive</td>
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<td>Citizen</td>
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Glossary

The government positions below are elected officials that are voted into office by people of the county.

**County Courthouse:**
The courthouse is home to the Fiscal Court and other county government offices. The courthouse is located in the county seat which is usually the largest city within a county. In most counties, the courthouse is where the county judge/executive’s office is located as well as some other elected county officials.

**County Judge/Executive:**
The county judge/executive is the leader of the county, and the head of the Fiscal Court. Other duties of the county judge/executive include enforcing all rules of the fiscal court. The county judge/executive is also responsible for preparing the county budget and manages the day-to-day projects of the county.

**Magistrate/Commissioner:**
Magistrates and commissioners are members of the Fiscal Court and work with the county judge/executive in making decisions for the county. Magistrates and commissioners represent the people of the county on matters that come before the fiscal court. In most counties they are known as magistrates, but in some counties they are known as commissioners.

**County Clerk:**
The county clerk is responsible for keeping various legal records, collecting delinquent real estate taxes, registering and updating voter lists, and conducting elections. In addition, the county clerk must register all motor vehicles, trailers, campers, and boats owned by people living in the county.

**Sheriff:**
The sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer in the county. In addition to working criminal investigations, the sheriff serves as law enforcement officer for the criminal courts, serves warrants, collects property taxes and investigates vehicle accidents that occur on public highways.

**Jailer:**
The jailer is in-charge of the county jail and the safety of all persons in the jail. The jailer must provide each prisoner food, housing, bedding and all medical needs. In addition, the jailer may also transport inmates to court, perform general duties around the jail, monitor visitors and maintain prisoner paperwork.

**County Attorney:**
The county attorney serves as legal advisor to the fiscal court. Their general duties include attending the fiscal court meetings and defending the county’s rights and interest. The county attorney also fights against crimes which occur within the county. Examples of these crimes include murder, drug offenses, child abuse and stealing.

**PVA (Property Valuation Administrator):**
The PVA must assess the value for all property in the county. The property in a county includes all land, farms, buildings, businesses, and homes. The value of a property is how much it would probably sell for in a fair market. After the PVA determines the property values, the county clerk will prepare a tax bill for each property owner. Property owners will pay their tax bills to the sheriff each year.

**Coroner:**
The main duty of a coroner is to determine the cause and manner of death. When a death is reported to the coroner, he/she conducts an investigation into the circumstances related to the death. The coroner gathers information, medical history, evidence, and many times requests an autopsy from the Medical Examiner.

**Circuit Court Clerk:**
Circuit court clerks provide professional recordkeeping of legal documents, receive money due the courts, pay money to required parties and to the state, maintain the jury system, administer oaths, handle affidavits and issue driver’s licenses and non-driver ID cards.

**Commonwealth’s Attorney:**
The Commonwealth’s Attorney primarily prosecutes felony crimes. Felonies are the most serious crimes we have under our laws and can carry punishment including prison sentences. The Commonwealth’s Attorney represents all the citizens of Kentucky when a jury trial in a criminal case is held on a felony.
A Brief History of the Kentucky Association of Counties

Since its creation in 1974, KACo has been representing the needs of county government in legislative matters and offering a variety of services to promote the progress of Kentucky counties. Some of the services that KACo offers its members are insurance, financing, continuing education, procurement services and training.

KACo is made up of ten affiliate groups representing the county elected offices including the County Judge/Executive, Magistrate/Commissioner, County Clerk, Sheriff, Jailer, County Attorney, Commonwealth's Attorney, PVA, Circuit Clerk, and Coroner. By working with these groups, KACo is able to assist in creating better communities throughout the Commonwealth.

KACo serves all 120 counties of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As a service organization, KACo is dedicated to providing assistance to its members and political subdivisions to improve county government for years to come.

Special Thank You!

KACo would like to thank a special group of people for their hard work on this project.

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Julie Moudy, Teacher, Collins Lane Elementary School

April Johnson, Teacher, Collins Lane Elementary School

Kimberly Young, Teacher, Collins Lane Elementary School

Kentucky Association of Counties’ Staff