

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Action/Discussion Item:**

Approval of Districts of Innovation (District recommendations under separate cover)

#### **Applicable Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 156.108, 160.107, 701 KAR 5:140

#### **Action Question:**

Should the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approve the districts recommended by the Districts of Innovation Review Team for District of Innovation status?

#### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy.*** In the 2012 regular session, the Kentucky General Assembly passed and Governor Beshear signed into law, House Bill 37 related to Districts of Innovation. HB 37, now codified in KRS 156.108 and 160.107, authorizes the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to approve “Districts of Innovation” for the purposes of improving students' educational performance. These statutes, along with KBE regulation 701 KAR 5:140, provide Kentucky public school districts the opportunity to apply to the KBE to be exempt from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions, as well as waiving local board policy, in an effort to improve the learning of students. By “re-thinking” what a school might look like, districts will be able to redesign student learning in an effort to engage and motivate more students and increase the numbers of those who are college and career ready.

KDE established an application review team made up of staff from each of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) offices as well as staff from the Education Professional Standards Board, the Council for Postsecondary Education and the Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Center. After initial review by Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement staff to ensure the requirements of the statutes and regulation had been followed, the review team read and scored each application against a holistic scoring rubric.

Following the May 1, 2013 application deadline, a total of sixteen (16) districts had submitted applications that met the initial review for meeting the requirements of the statutes and regulation.

The review team conducted its review and scoring of these sixteen districts and will provide a list of recommended applications to become the first Districts of Innovation in

Kentucky. Under separate cover, you will be provided a summary of each application and whether that application is recommended for final approval as a District of Innovation.

**Staff Recommendation(s) and Rationale(s):**

Staff recommends that the KBE approve all of the districts recommended by KDE. The applications from the recommended districts were determined by the review team to meet the criteria for District of Innovation status.

**Impact on Getting to Proficiency:**

KRS 156.108 and 160.107 will have a significant impact on improving proficiency and college and career readiness for all students in Kentucky if the effort is properly resourced. By allowing selected districts and schools flexibility in how they provide instruction, the potential for greater teacher and student engagement is increased and subsequently offer the opportunity to move more rapidly toward our college and career readiness goals.

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