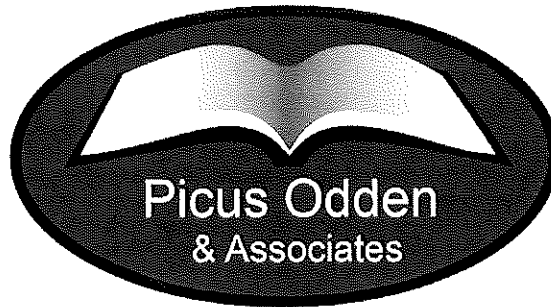




MEMORANDUM

To: Tom Shelton, President, Council for Better Education

From: Michael Goetz, Senior Associate, Picus Odden & Associates

Subject: **Synopsis of Kentucky School Finance Study**

Date: October 15, 2013

A leader in the nation for educational reform, Kentucky again places itself at the forefront of change as the first state to implement curriculum and assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The General Assembly, through passage of Senate Bill 1 (2009), made clear that Kentucky will reform to ensure that students meet aggressive learning outcomes in English/language arts and mathematics. Kentucky now faces the challenge of systematically changing educational goals and the way in which students are educated. As Kentucky grows into this new system, it is imperative that the funding mechanisms to support such an ambitious endeavor meet the constitutional requirements of an equitable and adequate funding system.

Odden Picus & Associates will conduct a contemporary, independent review of Kentucky's school finance system, drawing on our work with many states developing student outcome-focused, adequacy-based funding systems. We are confident our approach to reviewing and evaluating school funding systems will meet Kentucky policymakers' expectations for assessing the state's need to find resource allocation strategies that will lead to improved student outcomes.

The study offers: 1) a complete and user-friendly guide to the KY school finance system, 2) a broader understanding of the international and US context in which the KY educational system resides, 3) a detailed, evidence-based rationale of why funding is necessary in the proportions recommended, and 4) an excel-based, malleable school finance model that details the resources necessary for each KY school district to fit into an equitable and adequate school finance system.

In all aspects of the study, we will work with the stakeholders who ultimately are the policymakers of school finance reform, to realize the implementation of any reforms necessary to meet adequacy mandates. Picus Odden & Associates will take great care to include the diverse voices of the educational and political community in preparation of reports: 1) an advisory

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committee will consist of KY's educational and political leaders, 2) teacher and administrator stakeholder panels will take place in various regions of the state, 3) town hall meetings will occur, as needed, to reach an even broader audience. The intent of this outreach is for Picus Odden & Associates and its advisory committee to have all available input when making the multitude of decisions regarding how resources should be distributed.

We work with individuals who have pioneered this research-based approach to linking school resources to student outcomes and are uniquely positioned to ensure this study will not just be about resources, but about how resources can be turned into effective instruction that boosts student learning. The Picus Odden & Associates team will include project leader Michael Goetz with support from Michael Griffith, Allan Odden, Larry Picus, Anabel Aportela, and Adriane Williams. Short biographies and members' CVs may be found at www.rsecllc.com and www.picusodden.com. Contact: Michael Goetz, Senior Associate, mgoetz@picusodden.com.