

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Approval of Districts of Innovation, Cohort 2

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 its regular session for 2012, 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, authorized the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to approve “Districts of Innovation” for the purpose of improving students' educational performance. These statutes, and the accompanying administrative regulation, 701 KAR 5:140, provide Kentucky public school districts the opportunity to apply to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to be exempt from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions, as well as the ability to waive local board policy, in an effort to improve the learning of students. By “re-thinking” what a school might look like, districts can redesign student learning in an effort to engage and motivate more students and increase the numbers of those who are college- and career-ready.

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

At the time of the deadline for application submissions for the 2014-2015 school year, a total of four (4) districts had submitted applications that met the initial review criteria for meeting the requirements of the statutes and regulation.

Following the review team’s review and scoring of these four applications, site visits were conducted in each district that received a “proficient” or better score on the

application review. As a result of that process, the following districts are recommended for District of Innovation status:

Owensboro Independent
Owsley County
Trigg County

Under separate cover, board members will be provided a summary of each application and legal staff's recommendations on waiver requests contained in each application.

Staff Recommendation(s) and Rationale(s):

Staff recommends that the KBE approve Owensboro Independent, Owsley County and Trigg County as Districts of Innovation. The applications from the recommended districts were determined to meet the criteria for District of Innovation status.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

KRS 156.108 and 160.107 and 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 as well as the opportunity to move more rapidly toward college and career readiness goals.

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