

***Commissioner of Education's Report
February 5, 2014 Kentucky Board of Education Meeting***

Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines – The Kentucky Department of Education Digital Learning Team has designed the Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines as guidance for schools, districts, and digital providers when selecting or creating developmentally-appropriate digital learning resources for instruction, as well as online and blended learning courses in Kentucky schools. The digital guidelines can be accessed on the Digital Learning website at the following link:

<http://education.ky.gov/school/diglrn/Documents/KY%20Digital%20Guidelines%20v4.0.pdf>.

ESEA Waiver Extension Update – KDE staff are completing the first draft of the proposed updates/edits to Kentucky's ESEA waiver that once finalized, will be submitted to the United States Department of Education (USED) as the submission requesting a one-year extension of the waiver. The due date for the extension request was given as Feb. 28 or 60 days after a state receives its final monitoring report on implementation of the waiver. KDE has not yet received the monitoring report and Kentucky's contact at USED indicates it is making its way through the federal approval process with KDE hopefully receiving the draft for review to make technical edit suggestions in about two weeks.

Our plans are to get the waiver extension submission ready, and then once we receive the monitoring report, we will insert any additional changes that may be required to address any findings we might receive, as required by USED. We will keep you posted on our progress and let you know when the monitoring report is received.

KDE Personnel Changes – As you are aware, Associate Commissioner Felicia Cumings-Smith will be leaving KDE to take a position at the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL). It is with mixed emotions that I share this news. We are very proud that Felicia will be leading a national organization. This position is not only evidence of Felicia's outstanding leadership but also a testament to the tremendous work she has done in Kentucky in implementing core academic standards and new models of teacher/principal effectiveness. While the loss of such an outstanding leader as Felicia will have an impact on KDE and implementation of reform efforts, we have many outstanding leaders in the department that will assume responsibilities until a permanent replacement can be named. Felicia will make the transition to NISL in early March. Join me in congratulating her on this new opportunity in her career!

To assist with a smooth transition upon Felicia's departure, KDE recently announced that within the Office of Next Generation Learners, Dr. Amanda Ellis will be serving as acting director of the Division of Next Generation Professionals until we move through the process of finding a permanent director. And, Todd Davis (formerly a member of KDE's coordinated school health team) will be serving as Assistant Director. This is the division where the work on the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System is centered.

Additionally, Susan Allred, who formerly served as KDE's Associate Commissioner of the Office of Next Generation Schools and Districts, will be coming back on an interim basis as the

Associate Commissioner of Next Generation Learners until we can find a permanent replacement for that position. Join me in welcoming her back to KDE!

AP Exams and College Board Update – While no decisions have yet been made regarding federal funding for AP Exam subsidies for low-income students, the College Board believes that due to ongoing federal budgetary constraints, the 2014 AP exam administration may cost low-income students approximately \$20 per exam, up from \$10 in 2013. As a result, we are concerned that this cost may deter some of districts' low-income students from taking AP Exams and potentially qualifying for college credit and placement they worked hard for and deserve. The following table shows the AP exam fee breakdown for low-income students.

Projected 2014 Low-Income Student AP Exam Fee Breakdown	
Federal Contribution	\$35*
College Board Contribution	\$26*
Student Contribution	\$20*
School Rebate (waived for low-income students)	\$8
Total Fee per Exam	\$89
*Federal, College Board, and student contributions are estimates.	

We are providing this information to districts now to give them sufficient time to plan any local efforts to support these students. KDE will communicate final funding information once the final exam fee subsidies are determined by the U.S. Department of Education.