

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Kentucky's Plan to Close Achievement Gaps Through Novice Reduction

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

See Attachment A.

History/Background:

Existing Policy. KRS 158.649 requires the Kentucky Department of Education and each local board of education to address achievement gaps between the various groups of students including male and female students, students with and without disabilities, students with and without English proficiency, minority and nonminority students, and students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch and those who are not eligible for free and reduced lunch.

At the December meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) heard a presentation from The Education Trust staff. The presenters shared data from Kentucky highlighting the achievement gaps that exist as follows:

- The average math proficiency rates of African American students at schools earning a Distinguished rating are about equal to the math proficiency rates of white students in Needs Improvement schools.
- Results for African American students in Distinguished schools are about the same as the results for white students in Needs Improvement schools.
- The same patterns for proficiency rates appear in college- and career-readiness rates.

As the KBE considers changes to the accountability model to address achievement gaps, the Kentucky Department of Education must ensure that the focus of the work is on not only assessment and accountability but also on the curriculum and instruction issues that are leading some students to achieve and others to not achieve.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is refining an approach to support schools and districts in the reduction of novice student performance. After performing an analysis of the data, KDE has determined that, despite increases in college and career readiness, increases in graduation rates and more students taking Advanced Placement courses and attaining qualifying scores, achievement gaps still exist.

The flow chart that is included as Attachment B illustrates that in planning for novice reduction, KDE has reviewed inputs (e.g., statutes, regulation, ESEA waiver application) and identified core work processes that will inform how the work is delivered to practitioners.

The eight core work processes are:

- Design and deliver curriculum;
- Design and deliver instruction;
- Design and deliver assessment literacy;
- Review, analyze and use data results;
- Design, align and deliver support processes;
- Establish learning culture/environment;
- Align community support partners; and
- Monitor legal requirements

At the December meeting, the KBE heard the proposal that novice reduction become an important component of Kentucky's accountability model. It is imperative that the accountability model used does not allow achievement gaps to be masked. The KBE will make the final decision on that regulation at its February meeting. The work of KDE around novice reduction will support schools in meeting the needs of all students and, therefore, eliminating achievement gaps.

The outlined processes reflect that the work of novice reduction will be the work of the entire agency and will address the goals set for the Commissioner in his evaluation.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Ensuring that all groups of students are proficient and prepared for success and to be college- and career-ready is essential for the successful future of the Commonwealth.

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Commissioner of Education

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