

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Review Item:**

Priority Schools Report

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

KRS 160.346, 703 KAR 5:225

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

***Existing Policy:*** Beginning in 2009, the US Department of Education (USED) required states to identify their persistently lowest-achieving (PLA) schools to receive federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds and other funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). HB 176 (2010), which amended KRS 160.346, was passed to implement these requirements in Kentucky and provided the criteria for identifying the PLA schools.

In order to receive approval from USED of Kentucky's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver, the state was required to identify the lowest-achieving schools in the state as Priority Schools. The schools previously identified as PLA became the Priority Schools.

***Summary:*** Since 2009, a total of forty-four (44) schools have been identified as Priority Schools in four cohorts:

- 2009-10 - ten schools
- 2010-11 - twelve schools
- 2011-12 - nineteen schools
- 2014-15 - three schools

Eleven schools have exited Priority status with the release of the 2014-2015 School Report Card: Bryan Station High School, Fern Creek High School, Greenup County High School, Knox Central High School, Lawrence County High School, Lee County High School, Lincoln County High School, Newport High School, Perry Central High School, Trimble County High School and Waggener High School. These 11 schools met the exit criteria of making the annual measurable objective (AMO) for three consecutive years, having a graduation rate of greater than 70 percent and being above the bottom 5 percent of schools in reading/math combined scores. Fifteen schools have exited Priority status since the beginning of the school turnaround work.

The Priority School Report provides an update on the performance of the schools in the first three cohorts relative to their progress on the statewide assessment results. A great number of schools are making substantial gains and give us much opportunity for celebration; however, some schools are still struggling to improve. All continue to need support – some to institutionalize the gains they have worked diligently to achieve, others to attain the levels of improvement necessary for their students to graduate college- and career-ready.

Two attachments provide background and data for this report:

- Kentucky's Priority Schools: What the Data Tells Us
- Priority Schools Update PowerPoint

***Budget Impact:*** There is an ongoing fiscal impact upon KDE based upon the assignment of personnel and resources from the Office of Next Generation Schools and Districts to support the work in the schools and districts. Federal Funds: FY16 \$4,639,000.00; General Funds: FY 16 \$1,644,000.00

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**Commissioner of Education**

**Date:**

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