

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Update on Kentucky's Plan to Close Achievement Gaps Through Novice Reduction

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

702 KAR 3:250; 703 KAR 3:205; 703 KAR 3:230; 703 KAR 5:140; 703 KAR 5:190; 703 KAR 5:225; 703 KAR 5:260; 704 KAR 3:095; 704 KAR 3:303; 704 KAR 3:305; 704 KAR 3:390; 704 KAR 3:410; 704 KAR 3:420; 704 KAR 3:440; 704 KAR 3:480; 704 KAR 5:070; 704 KAR 3:530; and 704 KAR 3:540

KRS 157.226; KRS 157.318; KRS 158.070; KRS 158.305; KRS 158.649; KRS 158.6543; KRS 158.6451; KRS 158.6453; KRS 158.6455; KRS 158.6459; KRS 158.782; KRS 158.792; KRS 158.803; KRS 158.842; KRS 158.844; KRS 158.847; KRS 158.848; KRS 160.346; KRS 164.0207; and KRS 164.525

Title I Part A; Title I Part B; Title I Part C; Title I Part D; Title II Part A; Title II Part B; Title II Part C; Title III; Title IV; Title V; and Title IX

History/Background:

Existing Policy: KRS 158.649 requires the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and each local board of education to address achievement gaps between the various groups of students including gender, students with disabilities, students without English proficiency, minority students, and students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Summary: At the December 2014 meeting, *The Education Trust* staff was invited by then Commissioner Dr. Terry Holliday to present before the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). The presenters shared data from Kentucky highlighting that the achievement gaps 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.
- Data for students receiving free/reduced-price meals presents similar trends to those of African American students in comparison to white students.
- The same patterns for proficiency rates appear in college- and career-readiness rates.

Recognizing a moral and ethical responsibility given the significance of these findings and implications for students in the Commonwealth, the KDE implemented the Novice Reduction plan to close the achievement gaps.

At the February 2015 meeting, the KBE heard a report from the KDE on how the novice reduction plan is designed to close achievement gaps. This is the work of the entire agency and will address goals set as part of the commissioner's evaluation.

Associate Commissioners Amanda Ellis and Kelly Foster indicated that the work not only must focus on assessment and accountability but also on the curriculum and instruction issues that are leading some students to achieve and others to not achieve. They identified the following eight core processes that will inform how the work is delivered to practitioners:

- 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.

Changes to 703 KAR 5:200, Next Generation Learners; 703 KAR 5:225, School and District Accountability, Recognition, Support and Consequences; and 703 KAR 5:240, Accountability Administrative Procedures and Guidelines were approved by the Kentucky Board of Education on February 4. These changes are designed to eliminate the masking of achievement gaps and provide incentives to move all students to higher performance levels. The revisions were proposed after analysis of three years of implementation data of the Unbridled Learning System and are focused on making it fairer, more reliable and more valid.

KDE cross-agency teams have been created for six of the eight key core work processes to identify strategies behind each process. They met in February, March, April, and May for large group professional learning opportunities followed by individual team coaching sessions with Susan Allred, Amanda Ellis, and Kelly Foster. Each team completed a linkage chart identifying leaders, strategic goals, stakeholder focus, processes, and methods for measuring results. During coaching sessions, teams completed priority matrices to prioritize the strategic goals from the linkage charts. Once goals were prioritized, each team completed a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle for carrying out the improvement.

During the all-KDE meeting on May 18, 2015, team leaders shared how each key core work process is crucial to the reduction of novice performance in Kentucky.

At the June KBE meeting, KDE staff gave an update on the website being created that will

be the core of a comprehensive plan to support the identified improvement strategies for schools and districts. (<http://education.ky.gov/school/stratclsgap/Pages/default.aspx>)

During the October KBE meeting, KDE staff reported that the department had hired a Novice Reduction (NR) Coordinator and five regional Novice Reduction Coaches. The NR staff have received training and made contact with districts to implement strategies for closing the achievement gaps. The Novice Reduction strategies were introduced to districts through the Kentucky Continuous Improvement Summit in September, and the interactive website for Novice Reduction was launched October 1st. The following districts are currently participating in the Novice Reduction pilot:

- Fayette County Schools
- Estill County Schools
- Silver Grove Independent Schools
- Frankfort Independent Schools
- Carroll County Schools
- Somerset Independent Schools
- Casey County Schools
- Lincoln County Schools
- Lancaster Elementary Schools
- North Middle School (Henderson County)
- Russell Middle School
- Menifee County Schools
- Breathitt County Schools

KDE Novice Reduction staff have met over 3,400 educators through face-to-face meetings across the Commonwealth since the start of the program. Novice Reduction staff has worked to refine the approach and deployment of Novice Reduction, ensuring proper training, common language, and next steps for Novice Reduction efforts. See Attachment A.

As an ongoing effort, Novice Reduction staff have worked to identify and promote, via webpages, resources and information gathered by KDE partners. In December, visits were made to Hub Schools so as to locate evidence of sound Novice Reduction practices and to obtain feedback regarding the effectiveness of the webpage resources. Additional improvements were made to the webpages through feedback by content experts, Hub School leaders, and Novice Reduction staff. Work on the webpages is ongoing as maintaining current information and continuously improving the quality of the webpages is a high priority.


Looking forward, the next steps in further expansion of Novice Reduction resources and practices are in development. In that effort, connections with college and universities regarding teacher preparation and leadership preparation are being explored so as to deliver the message of the moral and ethical imperative of reducing the number of novice performers throughout the Commonwealth.

Budget Impact: Allocation for six staff members at \$100,000 per person for a total of \$600,000 is necessary for this work.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen L. Pruitt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Pruitt" clearly legible.

Commissioner of Education

Date:

February 2016