

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Districts of Innovation, Cohort 3

Commissioner's Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Kentucky Board of Education approve Boone County, Metcalfe County, and Corbin Independent as Districts of Innovation.

Rationale:

These three applications were determined by the review team to meet the criteria for District of Innovation status.

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approve Boone County, Corbin Independent, and Metcalfe County for District of Innovation status?

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.108, 160.107, 701 KAR 5:140

History/Background:

Existing Policy: During the 2012 Regular Session, the Kentucky General Assembly passed, and Governor Beshear signed into law, House Bill 37 which created Districts of Innovation. HB 37, now codified in KRS 156.108 and 160.107, authorized the 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 KBE to be exempt from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions, as well as waive local board policy, in an effort to improve the learning of students. By “re-thinking” what a school might look like, districts will be able to redesign student learning to engage and motivate more students and increase the number of those who are college- and career-ready.

Summary: The District of Innovation application process is a rolling one that allows for districts to submit applications any time up through February 1st of each year for implementation in the subsequent school year. The applications included with this staff note were received prior to November 30, 2015.

Per 701 KAR 5:140(3)(5)(a): “A committee designated by the commissioner shall review and recommend approval or denial of a completed application to the Kentucky Board of Education within sixty (60) days from receipt of the completed application based on use of the District of Innovation Application Scoring Rubric.” The review team is made up of staff from each of the offices at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) as well as staff from the Education Professional Standards Board. After Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement staff performed an initial review of the applications to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, during December the review team reviewed and scored each application against a holistic scoring rubric. In January, the KDE legal staff reviewed the applications for alignment to 701 KAR 5:140 and the viability of the official waiver requests.

As a result of that process, the following districts are recommended for Districts of Innovation status:

1. Boone County
2. Metcalfe County
3. Corbin Independent

Budget Impact: No additional state funds are allocated for the Districts of Innovation program.

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

The Districts of Innovation review team considered each application and approved the above districts for District of Innovation status. Additionally, KDE legal staff and the Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement staff provided review support for each application. Attached is a summary of each recommended application and corresponding recommendations on specific waiver requests.

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Commissioner of Education

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