

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Recommendation to remove Danville Independent Schools from District of Innovation probation status

Commissioner’s Recommendation:

The Commissioner recommends that the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) remove Danville Independent Schools from District of Innovation Probation Status.

Rationale:

To remove Danville Independent from probation status due to the district meeting the requirements of the Corrective Action Plan and demonstrating commitment to foundational elements of its initial Innovation Plan. Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff has verified the progress and recommends removal from probation.

Action Question:

Should the KBE remove Danville Independent Schools from District of Innovation probation status?

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.108, KRS 160.107 and 701 KAR 5:140

History/Background:

Existing Policy: KRS 156.108(2) states: “The Kentucky Board of Education is hereby authorized to approve districts of innovation for the purposes of improving students' educational performance. Districts of innovation shall be provided flexibility from selected Kentucky Administrative Regulations, Kentucky Revised Statutes, and local board of education policies for school administrators, teachers, and staff to meet the diverse needs of students. The initial approval of a district of innovation shall be for a five (5) year period. Each renewal of a district of innovation shall not exceed five (5) years and shall comply with administrative regulations promulgated by the board pursuant to subsection (4) of this section.”

Subsection 3 of 701 KAR 5:140(4) states that at the end of the second year after plan approval and each year thereafter for the term of the approval status, a district approved as a District of Innovation shall receive an annual site visit from a review team selected and trained by the department. The purpose of the visit shall be to monitor progress and interview

staff and students to collect qualitative data on the effect of the innovation plan and for future research needs.

701 KAR 5:140(5)(1) gives the KBE the authority to place a District of Innovation on probation based on the documentation submitted and results of the site visit as follows: “. . . after its annual review of a district’s implementation report and the report of the site visit team, the Kentucky Board of Education may, on the anniversary of the application approval, determine that a district shall be placed on probation and shall provide the district with a corrective action plan.”

Summary: Pursuant to 701 KAR 5:140(4), during the spring of 2015, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff collected documentation of implementation from Danville Independent Schools as required for second year of implementation monitoring. In addition, a site visit was conducted and interviews occurred with teachers, building principals and district administrators. During the initial year of implementation of the District of Innovation plan (2013-14), Danville Independent made adequate progress. In the second year of implementation, it was determined that the district no longer was making progress in the implementation of the plan. In June 2015, KDE staff recommended, and the KBE approved to place Danville Independent Schools on probation status as a District of Innovation.

Over the course of the 2015-2016 school year, Danville Independent Schools has successfully met the requirements of the corrective action plan. As part of the corrective action plan, teams of KDE staff and external partners conducted multiple visits to the district. During these visits, monitoring teams observed effective implementation of the revised plan. Additionally, the Danville Innovation Plan has returned to its foundational concept of the “Danville Diploma” during the 2015-2016 school year. Based on the documentation collected as well as the observations and interviews conducted during monitoring visits, it is clear that Danville Independent Schools has made significant progress in implementing the innovation plan and has met expectations with regard to the corrective action plan. The Danville Independent Schools’ monitoring report is attached.

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

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

Interviews with shareholder groups and classroom observations were conducted as part of monitoring visits in the district. The data gathered from these support the recommendation to remove the district from probation.

Contact Person:

Kelly Foster
Associate Commissioner
Office of Next Generation Schools and Districts
(502) 564-5130
kelly.foster@education.ky.gov

David Cook
Director
Innovation and Partner Engagement
(502) 564-4201
david.cook@education.ky.gov



Commissioner of Education

Date:

June 2016