

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Report from the Town Hall Meetings

Rationale:

To provide an overview of the Town Hall Meetings and the comments received in order to inform the development of Kentucky's new accountability system.

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.6453; KRS 158.6455; 703 KAR 5:200; 703 KAR 5:225; 703 KAR 5:230

History/Background:

Existing Policy: Kentucky's current accountability system, Unbridled Learning: College/Career Readiness for All, meets both state and federal requirements as defined in law and in the waiver agreement from the No Child Left Behind Act. The three components of the current system are Next-Generation Learners (i.e., individual student data), Next-Generation Instructional Programs and Support (i.e., program review results), and Next-Generation Professionals (i.e., professional growth and effectiveness system data for teachers and leaders). Unbridled Learning incorporates multiple measures into a single overall score.

Under the current system, Kentucky has experienced steady improvement in the rate of students graduating ready for the next step of college or career. Amid this positive outcome, concerns have been voiced about the complexity of the system and unintended consequences. The phase-in of components over time has required the management of frequent changes at the state and local levels.

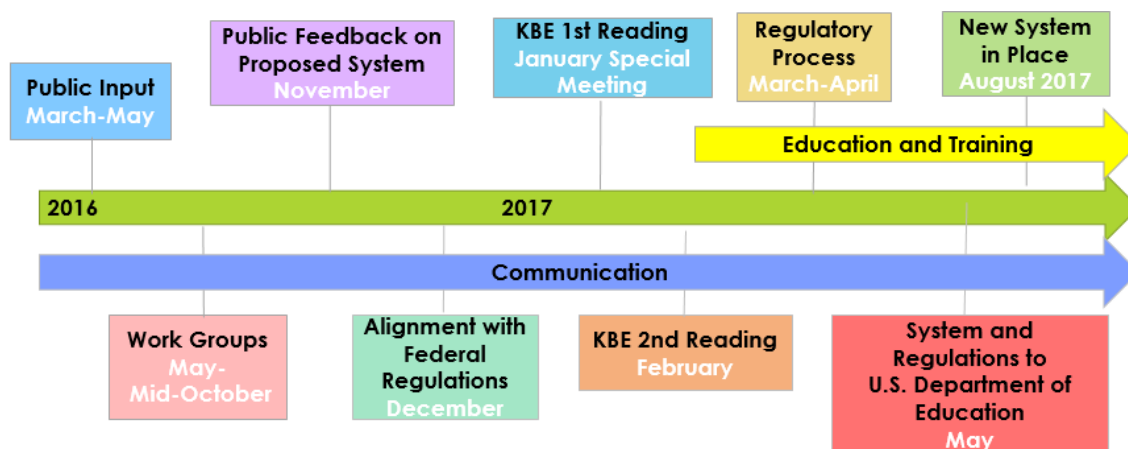
Summary: With the recent passage of the new Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the federal waiver process will end and states have an opportunity to revise their accountability systems to meet new requirements. As Kentucky began the conversation about revisions, it was critical to hear from Kentuckians. On April 28, Commissioner Pruitt completed the five-week Town Hall listening tour. With more than 3,000 attending 11 public Town Halls, he listened to hundreds of Kentuckians, including students, speak (and sign) about what they value in their schools. Two Town Halls also were held for Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) employees.

On May 2, Kentucky superintendents provided feedback on the Town Hall questions and heard about six overarching themes that emerged during the Town Halls. The themes are listed below:

1. Our children must be at the heart of the system.
2. A well-rounded education is important and necessary.
3. All subjects, both tested and non-tested, need to be valued.
4. Access and opportunity for students are critical.
5. An emphasis on teaching is needed.
6. Collaboration instead of competition among schools and districts needs to be the focus.

Throughout the public input process, feedback also has been collected by e-mail at kyedlistens@education.ky.gov. The feedback from the listening tour is already being used by the KDE as staff start to work this month with the new Accountability Steering Committee, which is in the process of being appointed. The committee is comprised of representatives from all of Kentucky's P-12 education partners, teachers, administrators, community members and members of the Kentucky General Assembly. Work groups that will provide recommendations to the Accountability Steering Committee also are being formed and will begin to draft an accountability design and state regulations.

A draft timeline found below lists several steps in the development process. Throughout development, communication will be a key focus.



Commissioner Pruitt's goal is to collaborate with all shareholders across the state to produce a system that is fair, reliable, valid and simpler; a system that celebrates the good things that happen in our schools and districts and one that holds all accountable for providing a quality education for all students.

A complete summary of the Town Hall feedback will be provided under separate cover prior to the June meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). The presentation to the KBE will highlight feedback and discuss the process underway with the Accountability Steering Committee and work groups.

Budget Impact: The cost of the Town Hall Meetings was minimal. As a new accountability system is designed, budget impact will be developed.

Contact Person:

Rhonda L. Sims
Associate Commissioner
Office of Assessment and Accountability
(502) 564-2256
Rhonda.Sims@education.ky.gov

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen L. Pruitt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Commissioner of Education

Date:

June 2016