

# **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

## **STAFF NOTE**

### **Review Item:**

Process for Developing a New Accountability System

### **Rationale:**

To update the board on the current work to improve Kentucky's 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. 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 passage in December 2015 of the new elementary and secondary education act, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the federal waiver process ends and states have the opportunity to revise their accountability systems to meet new requirements. To begin the conversation about revisions, it was critical to hear from Kentuckians. The first step was a series of eleven Town Hall meetings across Kentucky. The Town Halls asked parents, educators, elected officials, community members and students about the things they value in our schools. 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.

After the initial information gathering and discussion with the Kentucky Board of Education, Commissioner Pruitt asked many Kentuckians to join work groups to draft an

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

Work on the new accountability system is moving forward and reaching a point where substantive content is emerging. The five work groups (assessment, college- and career-readiness, educational innovations, opportunity and access, and school improvement) have sent their initial recommendations to the Systems Integration Work Group and that group has reviewed these to ensure the recommendations make sense as a whole. The Systems Integration Work Group then forwarded its initial recommendations to the Accountability Steering Committee. Several high level Accountability Design Statements have been discussed with multiple advisory groups this fall and feedback collected.

The following schedule is now underway:

- November 1 – Consequential Review Work Group held first meeting to begin looking at any unintended consequences from the recommendations of the Systems Integration Work Group.
- November 2 – Accountability Steering Committee meeting held to provide feedback to the Systems Integration Work Group on their recommendations.
- November 14 and 15 – Focus Groups were held with higher education and business and industry to secure additional feedback from these constituencies.
- November 15 – Regulatory Review Work Group held its first meeting to look at shaping regulations for the new accountability system.
- November 16 – Systems Integration Work Group met to consider feedback from the Accountability Steering Committee.
- November 30 and December 1 – (new meeting dates) Systems Integration Work Group to continue its work.
- December 6 – Discussion of accountability work with superintendents at the KASS Winter Conference.

*Note: From this point on, subsequent meeting dates are scheduled for January due to holidays and school breaks.*

- January 6 (rescheduled from November 21) – Consequential Review Work Group to continue its work on looking at unintended consequences from the recommendations made for the system.
- January 9 and 10 (rescheduled from November 30 and December 1) – Accountability Steering Committee to meet, look at feedback from the Systems Integration Work Group and finalize its recommendations on the new accountability system.
- Early February – Content of the new accountability system made available for public review and comment.

Be aware that these dates are all tentative and have already been adjusted to give the Systems Integration (SI) Work Group additional time to develop a complete system with detail. The development of an accountability system is complex and challenging work. The SI Work Group continues to strive for a system that best reflects the critical elements for student opportunity and access, and educational innovation. The SI work includes

how to include these important elements in both future reporting and ratings for Kentucky's schools.

Commissioner Pruitt has said from the beginning of this process, the work is too important not to take the time needed to do it right. The timeline for the development process has been delayed. The proposed system will not be ready for the Kentucky Board of Education to review a first reading of the related regulations in January.

KDE is also awaiting from the U.S. Department of Education information regarding an adjustment of the timeline for implementation through the final ESSA regulations. We are hearing at this point the regulations may be released in December.

***Budget Impact:*** As a new accountability system is designed, budget impact will be developed.

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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.

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**Commissioner of Education**

**Date:**

December 2016