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March 22, 2017

Sent via email

Dear Superintendent Poe and Board Chair Massey,

Closing achievement and opportunity gaps is more critical than ever given the increasing need for education or training after high school to ensure the future success of individual students and the state as a whole. While board teams continue to work hard to close these gaps, we know that there is more to be done and we'd like to invite *Boone County* to be part of a special project designed to support local boards of education in raising student achievement.

In collaboration with the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence and with generous funding from the Gates Foundation, KSBA is seeking to partner with seven to 10 school board teams across the state whose districts have the highest diversity and widest achievement gaps. In conjunction with the KSBA team and other state partners, board teams will work to identify key strategies, benchmarks and measurable indicators of progress to close achievement gaps in their district.

Outcomes developed as part of this cohort model will be used to build awareness, understanding and public will, as all districts strive collectively to reduce achievement gaps statewide.

We are seeking your participation in this unique opportunity to work alongside your board colleagues and others in the district to address achievement gap challenges. Please consider this a personal invitation to serve as one of the cohort teams. The attached MOU provides detailed information about the project.

The deadline to acknowledge interest in participation is **April 5**. We will be happy to work with the full board to answer questions and/or clarify the project prior to the MOU being signed. Please feel free to direct any questions regarding the project to Dr. Jacqueline Pope-Tarrence, project coordinator. We look forward to having you join us in this important work and appreciate your consideration.

Jacqueline Pope-Tarrence, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Accountability and Research (Retired)
Professor of Psychology
270-779-0434
270-842-0710
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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) and Participating Local School Boards

The Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) seeks to partner with school boards across the state in raising student achievement by assisting a cohort of local school boards with strategic goal setting and the identification of key strategies to close achievement gaps. The work developed as part of this cohort model will be used to enhance board awareness and public will, as well as enhance board capacity to close achievement gaps in school districts across Kentucky.

A. Scope of Work

Kentucky School Boards Association shall:

- Present a one-day working session for participating districts to provide strategies and resources in understanding information and data related to their achievement gap(s)
- Provide state and district-specific data to each participating district related to the achievement gap
- Solicit the participation of state partners, and other state department agencies to share data that can be instrumental at the local level
- Assist school boards with identifying achievement gap issues
- Assist school boards with proactive efforts to address achievement gaps
- Assist school boards with understanding more detailed district data (both quantitative and qualitative) and barriers to addressing the achievement gap
- Assist school boards with developing a district goal and plan related to reduce the achievement gap
- Assist school boards with identifying measurable indicators of progress towards district achievement gap goal(s)
- Assist school boards with framing conversations with the community to ensure information/efforts are shared with the community at large
- Provide ongoing support and assistance with cohort districts to ensure movement toward a "theory of change" (e.g., district driven initiatives, action-oriented, and outcome based)
- Provide opportunities for districts to network and learn about the strategic efforts of the other cohort participants
- Develop in-district and online training to ensure continued conversations with school boards regarding the achievement gap

Local School Board District shall:

- Identify 1-2 board members, the superintendent or his/her designee, and up to two others to serve as part of the cohort team
- Attend the one-day work session on May 12, 2017 to receive district data from KDE and other state agencies regarding the achievement gap, and begin planning strategies for moving forward

- Review district's current comprehensive district improvement plan (CDIP) regarding addressing the achievement gap
- Prepare a meaningful and actionable plan of action to address the achievement gap in your district
- Develop a goal(s) and timelines to begin to close achievement gaps in the district
- Identify supporting strategies to achieve the goal(s) to close the gap
- Develop strategies to address the achievement gap, and create measurable benchmarks
- Develop and implement ways to engage the community in discussion and efforts to reduce the achievement gap
- Attend a one-day meeting in late August (date: TBD) to discuss progress and next steps
- Present and approve a finalized district gap plan at a fall school board meeting
- Provide representation to share district's efforts to close achievement gaps at the KSBA Annual Conference on March 3, 2018

B. Additional Terms and Conditions

1. The term of this agreement shall be March 31, 2017 by and through October 31, 2017. This agreement shall terminate on October 31, 2017 unless extended by mutual written agreement of KSBA, and the Prichard Committee.
2. Districts will receive necessary and reasonable travel expenses required for participation in project-related activities attended at the request of KSBA and the Prichard Committee.

Signed:

Randy Poe

Superintendent
District

4-5-17
Date

Signed:

C. Ed Massey

Board Chair
District

4-5-17
Date

Signed:

Kerri Schelling, Associate Executive Director
for Kentucky School Boards Association

Date