

**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**STAFF NOTE**

**Action/Consent Item:**

Test Window Flexibility to Support Online Testing

**Commissioner's Recommendation:**

The Commissioner recommends that the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) allow a future change to the state test window to enable implementation of online administration of the state-required content area assessments.

**Rationale:**

The national landscape for successful online test administration has flourished in recent years. Many states now administer their state-required assessments online. Additionally, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) now conducts fully digital test administration. With our “best in the nation” K-12 Internet connectivity in all 173 school districts and a history of successful test administration, Kentucky has the right foundation to launch online test administration. Kentucky statute allows the KBE to change the state test window to allow for innovation and online testing.

**Action Question:**

Should the KBE indicate its willingness to modify the future state testing window to support online test administration?

**Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 158.6453

**History/Background:**

***Existing Policy:*** Currently state-required assessments in grades 3-8 and writing at high school are administered in a consecutive five-day test window during the last fourteen (14) days of the district's instructional calendar. Districts set their five-day test windows for each grade span (i.e., elementary, middle and high). Because the tests are paper and pencil format, a school develops a testing schedule that administers simultaneously the same part of the test to all students of a particular grade.

Through the 2016-17 academic year, Kentucky purchased End of Course (EOC) tests from ACT, Inc. Schools administered these tests when students completed the course. The largest majority of EOC testing also occurred during the last 14 days of the school year. In the last years of the EOC contract, the tests were available in online or paper and pencil formats. Schools that tested

using paper had to test students simultaneously. Online administration had to complete each part of the test with the appropriate students during a single day.

Kentucky Revised Statute 158.6453(6) states “the Kentucky Board of Education may change the testing window to allow for innovative assessment systems or other online test administration and shall promulgate administrative regulations that minimize the number of days of testing and outline the procedures to be used during the testing process to ensure test security, including procedures for testing makeup days, and to comply with federal assessment requirements.”

In April 2018, Kentucky field-tested new End of Course tests for Algebra II, English II and Biology. The tests were developed by Kentucky teachers and are designed to measure the Commonwealth’s content standards. Pearson, our current test vendor, has experience with large scale online testing and Kentucky had the opportunity to administer the EOC field test online. This allowed a tryout of not only assessment items including multiple choice and constructed formats, but the online delivery of a large scale assessment. Because many schools do not have one computer to one student, the administration window for the field test was expanded across a two-week test window.

KDE’s Office of Education Technology and Office of Assessment and Accountability worked together with districts and our vendor partners to achieve significant and historic success with online field test in the Commonwealth. During the two-week administration, 169 districts had over 100,000 KY students successfully take and finish over 130,000 online EOC exams with virtually zero technology issues.

This kind of success required Kentucky to have a quality and reliable education technology environment and an on-line test vendor that could handle many students simultaneously testing using a variety of instructional devices (Chromebooks, Windows laptops, Apple desktops/iPads, etc.).

**Summary:** The use of online testing can bring a number of significant advantages including faster results, standardization of administration (including accommodations) and less time in handling test materials. Students will benefit from quicker information on their performance. Indirectly, students using technology during testing will encourage the greater use of technology with instruction. Students using testing accommodations receive consistent delivery of these testing supports in the online environment.

While there are multiple positive reasons to move to online testing, it is important to research how our younger students will handle the testing environment and keyboarding. During the recent release of NAEP results, some national reviews expressed the concern that online testing might disadvantage students in poverty. KDE will want to analyze our state experience in light of this concern.

In order to accomplish online testing, schools will need more flexibility and a test window with more days. Few schools could test all students in the current five-day timeframe. With the support of the KBE, staff can develop a plan to move to online testing and create appropriate guidance and regulatory language.

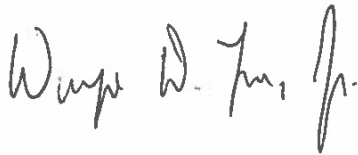
**Budget Impact:** When states fully implement online testing reduced costs are realized. Kentucky's current test contracts are scheduled to expire soon. With KBE approval, staff can include in the bid process the requirement for online test administration.

**Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:**

The online field testing was debriefed with the Office of Assessment and Accountability's District Assessment Coordinator Advisory. Overall online testing was viewed positively. The most common concern was the use of an online calculator in Algebra II.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne D. Lewis, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

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**Interim Commissioner of Education**

**Date:**

June 2018