June 7, 2018

Frances J. Feltner, D.N.P., Director

UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health

750 Morton Blvd.

Hazard, KY 41701

Dear Dr. Feltner,

I am writing on behalf of the Breathitt County School District in support of the SAMHSA *Mental Health Awareness Training Grant.* This project will work to increase capacity to treatment for mental health and substance misuse in the Appalachian population. We strongly support this grant application and the focus on improving behavioral health by increasing delivery of evidence-based interventions.

As an organization which provides educational services to the students of this area, it is important for families to have access to the mental health services necessary for students to be successful.

Through this letter, we acknowledge specific roles and responsibilities we will fulfill in this partnership. In the event this proposal is funded, we would expect our role in the *Mental Health Awareness Training* to include:

* forming a genuine partnership to work together to improve behavioral health and wellbeing in our communities.
* welcome Youth Mental Health First Aid training for management and staff who are not currently trained

We are well aware of the need for increased mental health awareness among individuals that routinely interact with school aged youth. The overwhelming epidemic of substance misuse and overdose deaths coupled with the disproportionately higher mental health disorders in our Appalachian communities must be addressed. We look forward to working with you and believe that the interest of our youth can be best served through partnerships of community agencies working to eliminate barriers and improve the wellbeing of our Appalachian citizens.

Sincerely,

Phillip Watts

Superintendent

Breathitt County Schools