

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE

Topic: 2020-2021 Kindergarten Screener Waiver for Administration Dates and Reporting

Date: August 2020

Action Requested: ☐ Review ☐ Action/Consent ☒ Action/Discussion

Held In: ☒ Full Board ☐ Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment ☐ Operations

SUMMARY OF ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

To discuss and take action on waiving the timeframe for administration and reporting window requirements set forth in 704 KAR 5:070, *Common kindergarten entry screener*, for the 2020-2021 school year.

COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The Commissioner recommends waiving the timeframe for administration and reporting window requirements set forth in 704 KAR 5:070, *Common kindergarten entry screener*, for the 2020-2021 school year. In the event that districts and schools cannot administer this exam during the school year, the Commissioner of Education recommends the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) grant him the authority to waive the Kindergarten Screener requirements if the district submits a letter to the Commissioner showing good cause why they are unable to do so.

APPLICABLE STATUTE OR REGULATION:

KRS 156.070, 156.160, 704 KAR 5:070, KRS 157.3175

BACKGROUND:

Existing Policy:

KRS 156.070 gives the KBE the management and control over all programs operated in the public schools. KRS 156.160 gives the KBE specific authority to promulgate administrative regulations establishing standards which school districts shall meet in student, operational, and program service to students.

In December 2011, the KBE approved 704 KAR 5:070, *Common kindergarten entry screener*. This administrative regulation establishes minimum requirements for administration of a common kindergarten entry screener in school districts, to determine a student's readiness for school in the five domains of school readiness.

Readiness data, along with other data sources, is used for planning instruction, initiating the Response to Intervention (RtI) process and communicating with the public about the importance of quality early care and education environments. While the screener is not an exam to determine entrance into school or rate a school's performance, it provides a snapshot of what each child knows and is able to do when starting school for the first time.

Summary of Issue:

704 KAR 5:070, Section 3, states that the screener shall be administered during a window no earlier than 15 days before the first instructional day and no later than the 30th instructional day of the academic year. With social distancing and other protocols required of schools to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the administration of the screener itself will be longer (under normal circumstances 20-25 minutes per student). Disinfecting the required manipulatives, books, desks, doorknobs, etc. also will add additional time between student screens. Accordingly, the window may not be adequate.

Section 4 states that each school containing kindergarten students shall enter the data from the common kindergarten entry screener in the student information system within 15 instructional days of the district's administration of the common kindergarten entry screener but no later than October 15 of each academic year. If districts choose a late start date in fall 2020, this may not allow adequate time to screen and enter data by October 15. In addition, districts may utilize non-traditional instruction, or a resurgence of COVID-19 may occur that inhibits districts from completing this requirement by the October 15 deadline.

The KDE recommends a waiver for the administration and reporting windows for the Kindergarten Screener for the 2020-2021 school year. The required Kindergarten Screener will still be available for district and schools to administer; however, this waiver will give districts and schools additional time and more flexibility when administering this exam to students and the reporting of results to the KDE. In the event that districts and schools cannot administer this exam during the school year, the Commissioner of Education recommends the KBE grant him the authority to waive the Kindergarten Screener requirements if the district submits a letter to the Commissioner showing good cause why they are unable to do so.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The KDE provides the screener to all districts at a cost of approximately \$240,000 annually. Districts and schools will still be provided the materials and resources needed to administer the screener; therefore, the budget will not be impacted by the approval of this waiver.

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Interim Commissioner of Education

Category:	<input type="checkbox"/> District Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Strengthening Educators	<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Community Involvement
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Family Supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Interventions	<input type="checkbox"/> Coursework Completion
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability Reporting