

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE

Topic: Approval of Request from Jefferson County School District to Waive 704 KAR 5:070, Common Kindergarten Screener

Date: April 2021

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

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

SUMMARY OF ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

To take action on a request from Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) to waive the requirements set forth in 704 KAR 5:070, *Common kindergarten entry screener*, for the 2020-2021 school year.

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.

COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The Commissioner recommends approving the waiver to exempt JCPS from the requirements set forth in 704 KAR 5:070, *Common kindergarten entry screener*, for the 2020-2021 school year.

APPLICABLE STATUTE OR REGULATION:

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

BACKGROUND:

Existing Policy:

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.

The BRIGANCE assessment is typically administered 15 days before the first day of school through the 30th instructional day after. In August 2020, Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approved a waiver to remove the restricted screening window. At that time, it was recommended that districts and schools who feel they cannot administer the screener during the school year

may apply 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.

Summary of Issue:

JCPS is requesting an exemption from administering the BRIGANCE kindergarten screener for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. The Jefferson County Board of Education approved the request at their March 23rd meeting.

In-person learning for JCPS kindergarten students began on Wednesday, March 17, 2021. Following the hybrid schedule, kindergarten students will have a maximum of 20 days of in-person learning. They feel strongly that this limited time should be spent on building relationships, establishing norms, and addressing potential learning loss through differentiated instruction, all through a trauma-informed approach.

To evaluate the status and progress of kindergarten students in the JCPS district, JCPS kindergarten teachers have been using a variety of data points throughout the 2020-21 school year. They administer multiple types of formative assessments as a way to triangulate the data to inform their instruction. As teachers prepare for guided reading, they begin with the letter/sound assessment. This assessment provides the teacher information about which letters and sounds students know and the ones that need to be taught. Other formative ways that teachers use to assess reading behavior are (1) running records, (2) measures of how student hears and records sounds in words, and (3) measures of sight words that students can read and write. These practices provide the teacher with information on which words should be targeted in a guided reading lesson.

Similar to ELA instruction, kindergarten teachers in mathematics provide formative and summative assessments to analyze and triangulate multiple data points to customize instruction. Schools have the autonomy to use the priority standards from the district's curriculum frameworks to prepare for personalized instruction or to use purchased additional resources to screen students for guided math groups. Those assessments and tasks provide data about each student beginning with the early stages of counting with spatial patterns and number recognition to determine if students are perceptually or conceptually substituting numbers, determine rote counting and 1-to-1 correspondence capabilities, and assess adding on and taking from through images. The data directs the teacher to scaffold the content standards with multiple representations and tools to meet students where they are to facilitate the learning forward.

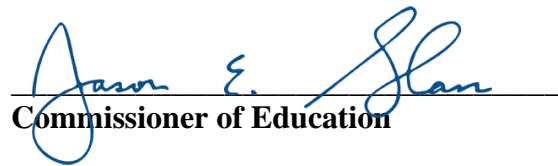
As JCPS returns to in-person learning this school year, the kindergarten teachers are committed to continuing to provide differentiated instruction informed using the formative and summative assessments outlined above which provide similar information to the BRIGANCE assessment. Approval of this request will allow JCPS to focus on addressing the most critical needs of our youngest students, thereby ensuring that they have a successful return to in-person learning.

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.

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner
Office of Assessment and Accountability
Email: rhonda.sims@education.ky.gov
(502) 564-4394


Commissioner of Education

Category:	<input type="checkbox"/> Educator Workforce Diversity Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/> Portrait of a Graduate Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial Equity
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student-Centered Accountability System	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District Support