

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE

Topic: Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS Operational Plan for School Year (SY) 2021-2022

Date: August 2021

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

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

SUMMARY OF ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

To approve the use of Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) funds in the amount of \$15.4M for the 2021-2022 school year.

The KBE has already approved \$366M in annual KY K-12 education technology needs as part of the SY 2018-2024 Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) Master Plan. Since 1992, the KBE is requested and required to annually approve the use of KETS funds (i.e., \$15.4M for SY 2021-2022) as one of the annual funding sources to help address the annual KY K-12 education technology needs. There is another \$341.3M in annual funding sources beyond the \$15.4M KETS funds that also help address that \$366M in annual need that are provided as an attachment to this staff note for informational purposes only and this \$341.3M does not need or require KBE approval. Since 1992, the KBE is requested and required to annually approve the use of KETS funds (i.e., \$15.4M for SY 2021-2022) as one of the annual funding sources to help address the annual KY K-12 education technology needs. There is another \$341.3M in annual funding sources beyond the \$15.4M KETS funds that also help address that \$366M in annual need that are provided as an attachment to this staff note for informational purposes only and this \$341.3M does not need or require KBE approval.

COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The Commissioner recommends that the board approve the SY 2021-2022 KETS operational management resources of \$15.4M in accordance with KRS 157.665(3) to help address the KY K-12 education technology operational management needs.

APPLICABLE STATUTE OR REGULATION:

KRS 156.670, KRS 157.655, KRS 157.660, KRS 157.665, 701 KAR 5:110

BACKGROUND:

Existing Policy:

The KETS SY 2018-2024 Master Plan for Education Technology highlights the administrative technology (or school efficiency technology) as well as the integration of instruction with educational technology to transform the way curriculum is delivered and provides students with access to technology. The driving force behind the Master Plan is ensuring that student classroom performance and students' preparedness for professional certifications, higher

education, the military and the workforce are kept at the forefront of any educational initiative that involves technology. We have moved far past the time of implementing technology for technology's sake or as a system that does not have direct connections with teaching, learning, productivity, student work, communications, decision making and leadership.

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Since 1992, in either June or August of each year, board members are reminded of the annual KY K-12 education technology needs (i.e., up to \$366M) that are based upon the most current and already KBE approved version of the KETS Master Plan (i.e., the 2018-2024 KETS Master Plan).

In accordance with KRS 156.670, this projection establishes the baseline education technology need for all Kentucky public schools and districts and includes the annual resources required to sustain the education technology shared services provided by the KDE to all schools and districts statewide. Each Master Plan item represents an industry standard "best practice" approach as opposed to a requirement and carries the expectation that a wide variety of local, state and federal resources should be leveraged to address the ongoing need to implement and incrementally replace all technology components and services (701 KAR 5:110). This up to \$366M figure is derived from the 2018-2024 KETS Master Plan that contains the initial acquisition, ongoing operational, incremental replacement and average lifespan of each technology component.

This need projection does not reflect the additional technology components and/or services that districts choose to implement above and beyond the baseline need (e.g., security cameras, video surveillance systems, environmental technology, personal data storage devices, smartphones, etc.), but are recognized as flexible priorities that districts may address exclusively with available local and/or federal resources.

Each district is required to report overall implementation progress for all baseline technology components, services, and staffing on an annual basis. The annual statewide reporting cycle consists of three required components in order to participate in the statewide KETS program:

1. District Technology Plan
2. Digital Readiness Feedback
3. Technology Activity Report

The Master Plan also anticipates that as technology components and services continue to evolve,

innovation will possibly reduce the dependency on a particular technology component. As an example, it's expected that as end-user access to digital content increases, the reliance on printing services will naturally decrease over the six-year span of our current plan. Conversely, as the expectation of high-speed access to digital content continues to escalate, it is anticipated that the bandwidth need associated with Internet access will continue to increase at a moderate rate. The KY K-12 education technology need projection worksheet is found in Appendix H of the approved 2018-2024 KETS Master Plan.

Summary of Issue:

The KETS SY 2018-2024 Master Plan includes seven major areas of emphasis. The areas of emphasis established through a strategic planning process are intended to highlight the groundbreaking progress made over KETS program history and continue placing major emphasis on this work as a primary goal. Additionally, this will help prevent duplicate initiatives, which create confusion and lost time, while simultaneously focusing energy on areas of improvement in order to get better.

These areas will focus efforts during the life of this Master Plan to continue the delivery of quality, opportunity and access to students and staff:

1. Robust Infrastructure and Ecosystem
2. Data Security, Safety and Privacy
3. Budget and Resources
4. Partnerships
5. Digital Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
6. Personalized Professional Learning
7. Use of Space and Time

One main objective of the KETS 2018-2024 Master Plan is to recognize and build upon the state's past successes. The Master Plan describes how education technology will be used to improve teaching and learning for every child in Kentucky. Its goals are to ensure equity and ease of access to technology, enhance the learning experience in the classroom for students, and prepare Kentucky's children to work in the Information Age after graduation.

There are a variety of federal, state, local and private resources that can address the technology operational management need identified in the KETS SY 2018-2024 Master Plan. The SY 2021-2022 KETS Operational Plan addresses education technology need in the context of technology ownership including initial acquisition, recurring operational management needed to support implementation, continuous improvements in technology, professional capacity of teacher and the people side of technology.

The attached KETS Timeline provides a history of the program's successes since its inception in 1992 while the attached KETS Infographic provides a visual depiction of analytics from multiple sources reflecting the varied technology trends taking place over the past year. KETS Offers of

Assistance only represent part of the operational management strategy needed to support each district's technology services.

Budget Impact:

The KETS Trust Fund is one resource used to address districts' education technology operational management need. It was established in the Finance and Administration Cabinet by KRS 157.665(1) and is administered by the School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) to provide education technology for the public school system. Funds are appropriated to the Trust Fund in each biennial budget by legislation. Expenditures from the KETS Trust Fund require the initial approval of the Kentucky Board of Education (KRS 157.665(3)); this approval is accomplished through board approval of the KETS Operational Plan. Resources approved by the KBE, for a KETS Offer of Assistance, project or service in a previous fiscal year, are not required to be approved again. Monies are drawn from the KETS Trust Fund on a fiscal year basis.

The SY 2021-2022 KETS Operational Plan establishes expenditure levels from the KETS Trust Fund for new SY 2021-2022 KETS funds available for the KETS Offers of Assistance program as well as KETS Shared Discounted Services and projects for schools. State Shared Services for schools are those aspects of the KETS system that are provided as direct discounted services to districts and schools at no local cost. KETS Offers of Assistance are sent and equally matched by local school districts. These funds are used in accordance with the KETS Master Plan and the local district's technology plan.

The following must occur before a district receives its resources:

1. State board approves the education technology needs for each district,
2. School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) approves the education technology need,
3. The district successfully meets all the statutory requirements of KRS 157.655 and KRS 157.660,
4. The district verifies its final ADA count to KDE, and
5. KDE calculates the KETS Offers of Assistance based on these variables. The districts must follow requirements of the SFCC by receiving approved board action and proof of deposit into a local interest-bearing technology account. The SFCC will then wire to the district's technology account.

The SY 2020-2021 KETS Operational Plan also includes the federal, state and local resources that can go toward the SY 2020-2021 education technology needs. For example, the federal E-rate rebates, local district's match of KETS Offers of Assistance, and school facility construction funds all play a significant role in annually addressing a district's education technology needs.

The resources beyond the \$15.4M listed in the SY 2021-2022 KETS Operational Plan are not part of the KETS Trust Fund and, therefore, do not require the board's approval; they are only listed for the board's informational purposes so the board is aware of all of the possible funding resources beyond the KETS resources that can go toward addressing the SY 2021-2022 education technology needs. While there has been a large influx of recent federal funds that will

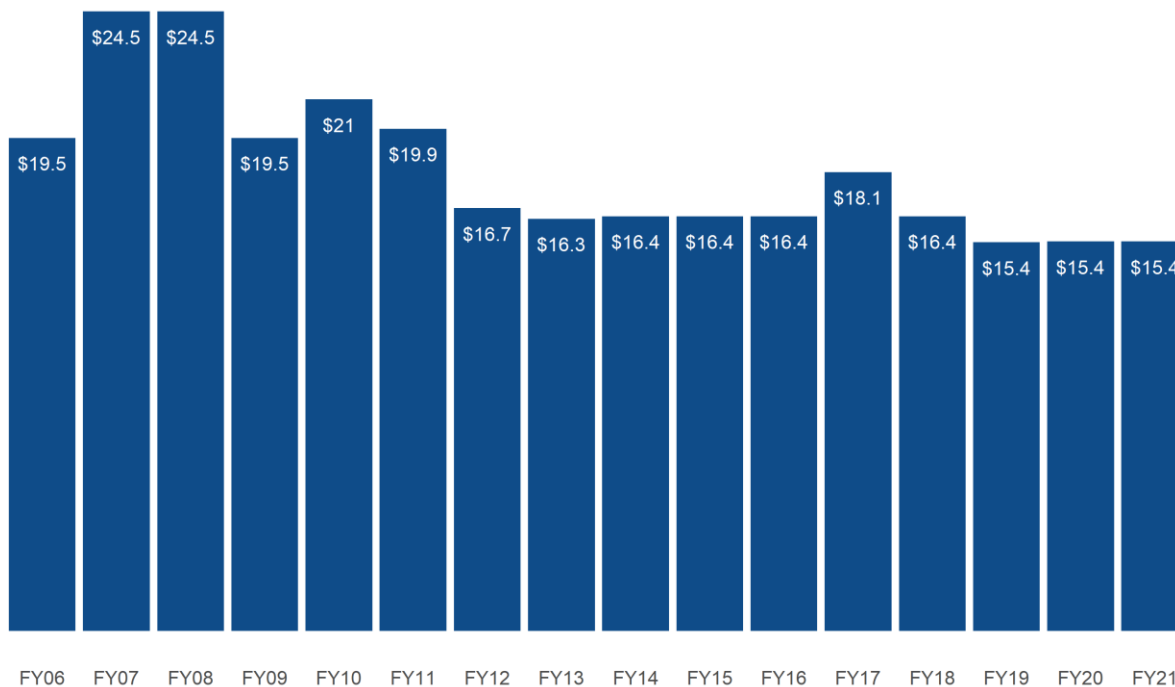
go towards education technology needs in the K-12 environment, these are temporary and planning should include how to maintain and sustain these investments after federal funding has been expended and/or expires.

Since 2010, the KETS allocation, approved by the legislature through their budget language, has been steadily reduced from \$19.5M to \$15.4M. The previous and most recent budget cuts have also impacted the state's K-12 Internet funds during a time over the past 36 months where there has been a 52% increase in Internet usage by our students and teachers. Although KETS was one of the top additional budget priorities in the 2020-2022 KDE Biennial Budget Request approved by the KBE and submitted to the Governor for consideration during the 2020 Legislative Session, additional funding was not included by the General Assembly in the enacted 2020-2021 nor the 2021-2022 Executive Branch Budgets.

Below is a slide prepared by the Office of Finance and Operations showing the historical KETS funding from FY 06 to FY 21. The result is an overall 3.9 % annual decrease over time.

KETS funding is at an all-time low of \$15.4M in 2021. On average, KETS funding decreased 3.9% per year from 2006 to 2021.

Total dollars (in millions)



Source: Kentucky Department of Education

The following paramount education technology needs continue to exist now more than ever in KY K-12 and action must occur to appropriately fund these areas through an additional budget request (ABR):

1. To help properly address the people side of edtech in districts so there are the right number of technicians, digital learning coaches and other basic edtech leadership responsibilities in

districts (data accuracy, cybersecurity/cybersafety/cyberprivacy, strategic planning, emerging technology) that help ensure the school technology is kept reliable for students and teachers, is maximized in instruction, is cybersecure/cybersafe and is of high quality (e.g., data);

2. To address the rapid annual increase in the numbers (e.g., districts going to 1 to 1) and types of tech devices (e.g., HVAC using the Internet, phones over the Internet, school safety devices that use the Internet) and services (e.g., KY K-12 Internet bandwidth service) being used by over 750,000 KY K-12 students & adults for instructional, communication, physical safety, cybersafety and cybersecurity purposes;
3. To address the needs of schools for online daily formative testing, intermediate/quarterly testing and end of year high-stakes summative testing that provide quick feedback/results to both students and teachers;
4. To restore the significant cuts (i.e., \$5M+) of over the past 10 years to the basic KY K-12 edtech funding. The legislature has provided a KETS allocation each year since the Kentucky Education Reform Act which remained at \$19.5 million from SY 1992-SY 2009. Through a series of budget reductions, the KETS allocation was reduced to \$15.4 million from SY2013-SY2021; and,
5. There have been zero increases to counteract the effects of inflation to KETS since 1992 which is very unrealistic if the expectation is to maintain basic high-quality services for schools and districts.

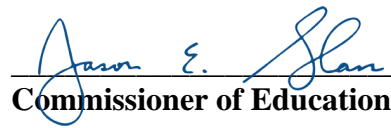
GROUPS CONSULTED AND BRIEF SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:

- KY K-12 Local Superintendents Advisory Council (LSAC) through approval of the KETS SY 2018-2024 Master Plan for Education Technology
- KY K-12 District chief information officers (CIOs) and education technology leaders (The CIO or edtech leader represents education technology at the district level educating and receiving feedback from the superintendent and other district leadership)
- Kentucky Society of Technology in Education (KySTE)
- KDE Commissioner, KDE Associate Commissioners and their representatives on KDE's Technology Planning Council (TPC) (The TPC provides representation, input and feedback from all KDE offices)
- Kentucky K-12 Educational Cooperatives
- All KDE office representatives in our Technology Planning Committee and senior leaders
- KY K-12 education technology vendors and partners (e.g., KY K-12 educational cooperatives).

These groups/individuals are in support of the SY 2021-2022 KETS trust fund allocation.

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Associate Commissioner David Couch
Office of Education Technology
Email: David.Couch@education.ky.gov
(502) 564-2020 ext. 2229


Commissioner of Education

Category: ☒ Educator Workforce Diversity ☒ Portrait of a Graduate Partnerships ☒ Racial Equity
Commitment ☒ Student-Centered Accountability System ☒ Early Childhood ☒ District Support