



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

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October 12, 2022

Dr. Jason E. Glass, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education
300 Sower Blvd., 5th Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Jason:

Pursuant to the statutory mandate, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) has completed your annual evaluation. The evaluation was verbally shared with you on October 12, 2022, at the regular KBE meeting held in Logan County. This letter serves as the official written record of that discussion.

During your first year as Kentucky's education commissioner, you faced not only the typical challenges associated with a transition to an executive leadership role, but also a global pandemic that affected all aspects of the public-school system in our state. That pandemic persisted into the early months of your second year on the job. In addition to the extreme challenges presented by COVID-19, Kentucky school districts suffered two catastrophic weather events in the form of devastating tornadoes in western KY in December of 2021 and equally devastating flooding in eastern KY in July of 2022. Through it all, your decision-making has been exemplary and educators and other stakeholders across the commonwealth have come to rely on your steadfast leadership.

The KBE conducted this formal evaluation utilizing the CCSSO Chief Evaluation Tool framework and the self-reflection you provided on your performance within the five CCSSO focal areas, associated competencies and the KBE established annual goals. The Board appreciates and concurs with your rich self-reflection and insight.

Using the CCSSO focal areas and associated definitions, the Board provided the following feedback:

Technical Leadership- *develops the sound management techniques needed for the agency to operate efficiently and effectively*

The board members once again praised your effective management of the KDE, particularly your management of the pandemic response and associated federal funds and the extreme challenges faced by tornado- and flood-ravaged districts. As one board member put it: "Dr. Glass has shown exceptional leadership in transitioning from the pandemic back to a better

'normal'." Another board member added: "The Commissioner has dealt with the two major disasters this year by allocating available resources to areas of greatest need." And another board member said, "Dr. Glass has been there for school districts in times of crisis and when it has been time to celebrate. He is trusted for support and guidance."

Human Leadership- *guides the expectations and development of quality employees*

This was identified as an area of particular strength by several board members. As one member highlighted, "Dr. Glass consistently demonstrates that he is an outstanding leader of people. He has worked to build a culture of trust within the Department, and he is the type of leader who helps to lead others to be the best version of themselves." Another board member shared, "Chief Learner and Servant Leader are well earned descriptions for the style in which Dr. Glass engages with KDE staff and with others. His energy, integrity, knowledge and commitment to education and to the job have inspired respect in all quarters." Another board member summed it up by saying: "I think this is one of Dr. Glass's strongest attributes. He values diversity and the opinions of others. He models trust and competency."

Educational Leadership- *establishes high academic expectations for educators and students*

During the past year, you have furthered efforts to reimagine public education as the Kentucky United We Learn initiative has taken root. Board members collectively applauded this work and stressed their appreciation for your bold vision for the future of teaching and learning and your willingness to listen and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to ensure that this effort is collectively *owned* and fully supported by many. In the words of one board member, "Dr. Glass has done a great job leading the United We Learn initiative across the state. He has a forward vision for Kentucky." Another board member remarked: "Commissioner Glass is a cheerleader for deeper learning experiences, opportunity, equity, and authentic assessment for our students." Regarding the Kentucky Education Summit of November 2021, one board member noted: "The Summit event was outstanding. Presentations were focused on the main aspects of United We Learn. The diverse audience gained a necessary understanding of the challenges and opportunities. The Commissioner's closing remarks set an expectation that this major effort is achievable and that progress is already being made."

Your support for and co-creation of the Commonwealth Education Continuum was also noted as further evidence of your educational leadership prowess. One board member wrote: "The formation of the Commonwealth Education Continuum is powerful and will ensure that students and their parents will be able to better navigate their career and life choices."

Cultural Leadership- *fosters an environment of teamwork and trust throughout the education system*

Once again, several board members considered this area as one of your greatest strengths. In the words of one board member: "If you were to ask

my opinion, I would say that this area is the strongest of Dr. Glass's leadership skills." This board member goes on to say, "It is clear from speaking with local district leaders that he has fostered an environment where school districts feel supported by the Department, and [he] truly believes we are all one team for the students of Kentucky." Another board member commented that "Dr. Glass has created a culture of frequent and honest communication with all stakeholders, all focused on the needs of learners. I believe his leadership in this regard has helped us stay focused and acting with integrity during a year of natural disasters and controversial policy debates." One board member's comments seem to summarize your cultural leadership skills: "The Commissioner demonstrates the ability and passion to do the right thing and always keeps the wellbeing of students and teachers in the forefront of his mind."

Symbolic Leadership- *provides a vision and models the behavior and commitment required to achieve it*

The Board believes you continue to be an excellent ambassador and "caster of the vision" for Kentucky schools. Your interactions with the media and public at large continue to be dignified yet personable and you consistently articulate a clear vision for public education in the commonwealth as our Chief Learner.

As one board member stated, "[Jason's] many personal visits across the Commonwealth to 'tell the story' help teachers, students, parents, and members of the community see his commitment to bringing change to the way students are taught. He demonstrates his sincere concern for the betterment of the Commonwealth via a better prepared population."

In addition to the observations provided for each CCSSO focal category, several themes emerged from the board members' feedback.

Strong, Effective Advocacy and Voice

Your commitment to Kentucky's students and educators continues to be unwavering. As one board member noted, "Dr. Glass has earned high regard as a knowledgeable professional educator and reliable collaborator. His performance in this area is the keystone to our successful engagement with all parties, even on the most controversial matters. I note the management of the literacy discussion as an example of an issue that ended with the wisdom of the profession as the prevailing influence. In this instance Dr. Glass was the skilled facilitator of the KBE and General Assembly debate." Another member added: "Dr. Glass has shown a consistent desire to work with legislative leaders and the Governor. It is important that our legislative leaders hear the needs, challenges, and success of public education in Kentucky and it is extremely important that the Commissioner take the lead in these conversations."

Furthermore, with the Board's strong focus on equity, it is critical that the Commissioner be an effective advocate for equitable access to high quality education for all students. You have excelled in this aspect of your role. One board member had this to say: "From the very beginning, the Commissioner

has established the fact that equity, in every aspect of the education process, is a given. The resolution the Student Advisory Committee, and the Dashboard all show a total commitment to ensuring that equity is in the forefront of all considerations.”

Communication with Board Members

All board members expressed high levels of satisfaction for and appreciation of the quality and quantity of your communication with the Board. Newer board members commented on your efforts to communicate with them early in their onboarding process, saying “From my first introductory meeting, I was welcomed on the board. I felt like my voice was not only valued, but essential to the work of the board. The Commissioner greeted me before the start of the first meeting and every interaction following has been positive and personable.” Other board members noted that they appreciated your level of responsiveness to board member calls and concerns. As one board member put it: “Dr. Glass is passionate about assuring that he builds positive relationship with our board, and it shows through his availability to the board and his desire to have the conversations discussed in your Goal 2.”

Board members also shared positive comments about the board retreat, noting that “The Commissioner is doing a great job in building relationships with the Board. The retreat is an effective way to bring all board members together.” Another board member summed it up as follows: “Commissioner Glass has a demeanor that is approachable and genuine. That demeanor has resulted in building some very positive relationships.”

In summary, the board strongly supports your continued tenure as Commissioner and sincerely appreciates your outstanding leadership. We accept and endorse your 2022-2023 growth goals (attached) and offer our resolute support of your efforts to achieve those goals.

Sincerely,

Lu S. Young, Ed.D.
Chair, Kentucky Board of Education