

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Consent Item:

University of Kentucky Program Approval: Moderate to Severe Disabilities

Staff Recommendation:

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should approve the University of Kentucky's Moderate to Severe Disabilities program as recommended by the Program Review Committee.

Rationale:

The submitted programs have demonstrated compliance with the EPSB regulations for admission and standards alignment requirements. The proposed educator preparation programs follow the appropriate regulations (16 KAR 5:010; 16 KAR 2:010) outlining program requirements for program approval as established by the EPSB. The programs have completed the review process and received a recommendation for approval from the Program Review Committee

Applicable Statutes and Regulation:

KRS 161.028, KRS 161.030, 16 KAR 2:010, 16 KAR 5:010

Action Question:

Should the EPSB approve the Moderate to Severe Disabilities Certification program submitted by the University of Kentucky?

History/Background:

Existing Policy: KRS 161.028 and KRS 161.030 require the EPSB to establish curricula for educator preparation programs in Kentucky and approve such programs for Educator Preparation Providers. The Educator Preparation Branch and the Program Review Committee evaluated the program review documents submitted for approval against performance-based program certification guidelines established by the EPSB. The program proposal meets all the requirements set forth by the EPSB.

Summary: The University of Kentucky is requesting to add the Master of Arts in Teaching, Moderate to Severe Disabilities Initial Graduate and Advanced Master's Rank 1 and Rank 2 degree programs in order to address the shortage of teachers for students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities in Kentucky. The University currently has one option for obtaining a master's degree in special education. The special education teacher leader master's degree results in graduates earning a Master of Science degree with a teacher leader endorsement. Candidates select from three tracks of specialization: moderate and severe disabilities (MSD), learning and behavior disorders (LBD), and assistive technology. None of these tracks result in a recommendation for teacher certification. Rather, most commonly at the University of Kentucky, practicing teachers enroll in the teacher leader master's program to obtain advanced training and receive a recommendation for a rank change. The current master's program has restricted criteria for admission. That is, candidates who are admitted are required to hold an undergraduate degree or certification in MSD or LBD. These criteria for admission limit the type of individuals who can

be admitted into the program and thereby limit the numbers of teachers who are certified to teach. In addition, it only allows UK to prepare existing teachers as master level teacher leaders but does not provide for training new teachers obtaining their initial certification. Given the current shortage of special educators in Kentucky, it is important to have additional options for individuals to obtain master's degrees that will lead to advanced preparation and rank changes as well as those that will provide initial certifications in special education at the graduate level. The approval of the new Master of Arts in Teaching program will increase the university's ability to serve the needs of individuals seeking a special education master's and initial teacher certification and increase the number of certified teachers available for employment in the schools.

Budget Impact: There is no budgetary impact.

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

OELE staff and the Program Review Committee have reviewed this program proposal and determined that the program meets the requirements for approval. The program has completed the review process and received a recommendation for approval from the Program Review Committee per 16 KAR 5:010.

Contact Person:

Kim Arington, Program Consultant
Division of Educator Preparation and Certification
Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness
(502) 892-6580
Email: kimberly.arington@education.ky.gov