

**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**STAFF NOTE**

**Consent Item:**

Option 9 Application, Owensboro Independent Schools and Eastern Kentucky University

**Staff Recommendation:**

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should approve the application.

**Rationale:**

Owensboro Independent Schools and Eastern Kentucky University have submitted an Option 9 application that meets the requirements of KRS 161.048 and 16 KAR 9:110. Eastern Kentucky University holds accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation and their educator preparation programs have been approved by the EPSB.

**Applicable Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 161.028, KRS 161.048, 16 KAR 9:110

**History/Background:**

***Existing Policy:*** KRS 161.048(10) establishes the Option 9 alternative route to certification. This route provides for the expedited certification of a person to teach at any grade level through a cooperative program between a college or university and a school district. The expedited certification program will result in a bachelor's degree and initial certification within three school years. The candidate is not certified while completing the route but shall complete a residency/paraprofessional component and receive coaching and mentoring from experienced teachers. 16 KAR 9:110 establishes the standards and procedures for Option 9 and contains sections covering providers, residency, field experience, student teaching, application review, continuance of program approval, revocation for cause, reconsideration, data reports, and professional certificates.

***Summary:*** Owensboro Independent Schools has partnered with Eastern Kentucky University to develop a proposed Option 9 program for P- 5 Elementary Education. In accordance with Section 5 of the regulation, staff has reviewed the application and found that it meets the requirements of KRS 161.048 and 16 KAR 9:110. A copy of the application is included in the Board Meeting Materials tab for EPSB review. As part of the proposal, each party has agreed to take on the following:

Owensboro Independent Schools will:

- Only recommend Option 9 participants who are employed by the district and able to gain work experience to supplement the reduced coursework in the Option 9 program.
- Ensure the availability of funding for each participant employed within the district and pursuing Option 9 certification under this Agreement for the duration of the participant's Option 9 program.
- Ensure the participant receives training on the Professional Code of Ethics for Kentucky Certified Personnel.

- Utilize experienced teachers employed by the district to provide coaching and mentoring to the participant.
- Ensure at least one mentor is certified in the area in which certification is being sought.
- Ensure at least one year of employment provides hands-on experience in the area in which certification is being sought.
- Ensure the participant completes a minimum of two hundred clock hours of field experience in a variety of school settings from primary through grade twelve.
- Provide opportunities for the student teacher to assume major responsibilities for the full range of teaching duties, consistent with their planned certification content and grade range, during the third year of Option 9.
- Maintain and share with Eastern Kentucky University all required electronic records.
- Continue this partnership until the district's employed participants for Option 9 certification complete the program or are no longer employed by the district.
- No longer accept new candidates to the program after the district chooses to end this partnership.

Eastern Kentucky University will:

- Ensure that Option 9, as set forth in this Agreement, does not negatively impact its accreditation.
- Ensure admission requirements are met for Option 9 participants.
- Provide participants the coursework and instruction necessary to, when coupled with the work experiences provided by the employing district, complete a bachelor's degree and initial certification within three (3) years.
- Assign a university supervisor to work with the participant during the third year of the program.

In accordance with 16 KAR 9:110, Section 5, initial program approval will be for a period of three years. After that time, the providers may apply for continuing program approval and provide evidence of program quality.

***Budget Impact:*** There will be costs associated with the oversight of this route.

**Contact Person:**

Dr. Melissa Diebel, Academic Program Manager  
 Division of Educator Preparation and Certification  
 Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness  
 (502) 564-4606  
 Email: [melissa.diebel@education.ky.gov](mailto:melissa.diebel@education.ky.gov)