

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Consent Item:**

Option 9 Application, Science Hill Independent Schools and University of the Cumberlands

#### **Staff Recommendation:**

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

#### **Rationale:**

Science Hill Independent Schools and University of the Cumberlands have submitted an Option 9 application that meets the requirements of KRS 161.048 and 16 KAR 9:110. University of the Cumberlands 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, 19 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:** Science Hill Independent Schools has partnered with the University of the Cumberlands to develop a proposed Option 9 program. 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 Document Library for EPSB review. As part of the proposal, each party has agreed to take on the following:

Science Hill Independent Schools will:

- Employ the participant in a residency or paraprofessional program within the school district for the duration of the program as long as the participant is making successful progress in the Option 9 program.
- 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.

- Require mentor teachers to submit evaluations to the university for each candidate each semester.
- Ensure the availability of funding for each participant for the duration of the candidate's participation in the program as long as the participant is making successful progress in the Option 9 program.
- Ensure candidates have a variety of experiences.
- Ensure at least one-year of employment provides hands-on experience in the area in which certification is being sought.
- 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 if the district decides to end the partnership.

University of the Cumberlands will:

- Ensure that the completion of coursework and field experience will result in a bachelor's degree and initial certification.
- Ensure that courses are sequenced and offered to allow for a three-year program completion.
- Ensure that candidates document 200 hours of field experience and the eight categories of field experiences through electronic records.
- Ensure that all educator program admissions regulations are followed and documented.
- Accept work experience in place of student teaching.
- 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)