

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action Item:

Option 9 Application, Simpson County School District and University of the Cumberland

Staff's Recommendation:

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

Rationale:

The Simpson County School District and the University of the Cumberland have submitted an Option 9 application that meets the requirements of KRS 161.048 and 16 KAR 9:110. The University of the Cumberland holds accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and its 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: The Simpson County School District has partnered with the University of the Cumberland 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 has been provided for review by the EPSB but will be sent under separate cover. As part of the proposal, each party has agreed to take on the following:

The Simpson County School District 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.
- 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 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.
- If the school district determines to end the partnership, the district will no longer accept new candidates to the program.
- Ensure funding for all candidates accepted in the program and for the duration of the program (i.e., three years).
- Require mentor teachers to submit evaluations to the University of the Cumberlands for each candidate each semester.
- Ensure candidates have a variety of experiences.

The 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.

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