

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Consent Item:

16 KAR 5:040. Request to Waive Student Teacher Days Due to District School Closures for a Student at Northern Kentucky University

Staff Recommendation:

The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) should approve Northern Kentucky University's request to waive student teaching days for a student teacher impacted by district closures as well as by a pregnancy-related condition of the student teacher during the Spring 2026 term.

Rationale:

Approval of this waiver would recognize that impacted student teacher met the intent of the applicable regulation and allow this student teacher to timely proceed with program completion and licensure eligibility. Specifically, the impacted student teacher faced extraordinary and unavoidable circumstances during the Spring 2026 term, including but not limited to multiple district-mandated school closures related to inclement weather. The student teacher also was pregnant during the placement, missing approximately four (4) days for a personal illness and/or pregnancy-related condition and then being unable to return to her placement after giving birth on April 7, 2026. These circumstances resulted in a shortfall in in-person student teaching days that could not be fully recovered within the placement timeframe, particularly in light of the student teacher's maternity leave, without extending the university's academic term or altering district placements.

Action Question:

Should the EPSB approve Northern Kentucky University's request to waive student teaching days for the listed student teacher, who was impacted by district closures as well as by a pregnancy-related condition of the student teacher during the Spring 2026 term?

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 161.028, 16 KAR 5:040

History/Background:

Existing Policy: 16 KAR 5:040, Section 5(4) requires each education preparation provider (EPP) to "provide a full professional semester to include a period of student teaching for a minimum of seventy (70) full days, or its equivalent, in instructional settings that correspond to the grade levels and content areas of the student teacher's certification program."

Summary: District closures coupled with a pregnancy-related condition of the student teacher prevented a student teacher attending Northern Kentucky University from completing the required seventy (70) full days in instructional settings before the close of the Spring 2026 academic

semester at the EPP. The student teacher was placed in a rural school district that closed for six (6) days as well as used all available Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI) virtual learning days due to inclement weather. Further, the student teacher did have to seek hospital care for a personal illness and/or pregnancy-related condition during the placement, which resulted in missing another four (4) days in the instructional setting. These circumstances were out of the control of the student teacher and the EPP; however, efforts have been made to meet the intent of the applicable regulation by including supplemental instruction while completing as many hours as possible during the Spring 2026 academic semester. Specifically, the student teacher, who gave birth on April 7, 2026, did start her placement during the fall semester in an effort to plan ahead for her pregnancy. Northern Kentucky University also reports that the student teacher scored “Exemplary and Target on all of her supervisor and mentor lesson observations” and received “very high marks” from her supervisor.

Northern Kentucky University has submitted a Regulation Waiver Request on behalf of the student teacher and, therein, seeks a waiver for eighteen missed “days in instructional settings” for the student teacher.

Budget Impact: There is no budgetary impact.

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