COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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January 31, 2014

Mr. Mitchell Chester
Chair, PARCC
1400 16th Street, NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Chair Chester:

This letter serves as written notice of Kentucky's withdrawal from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARRC). This withdrawal takes effect ten (10) days from the date of this letter. There are several strategic reasons for this decision:

1. Kentucky anticipates that it may have to engage in a Request for Proposal (RFP) process as part of the next wave of assessments for the Commonwealth. Kentucky state law requires a fair and equitable RFP process. We want to ensure that PARCC has the opportunity to participate in this process as a potential bidder, if it wishes to do so, without any perception of a conflict of interest or bias being created. Accordingly, it makes practical sense for Kentucky to withdraw from PARCC, before any competitive bid process is initiated.

2. Kentucky's current "participating state" status has caused some confusion in the state and on the national scene. Teachers, the media, and the public do not understand the subtle differences between "participating" and "governing" status. This leads to misinterpretation of Kentucky's role in PARCC and causes Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff to constantly explain the role of a participating state and to address rumors about upcoming PARCC launch dates. Our official withdrawal will eliminate such confusion.

3. Finally, resources are extremely limited in Kentucky and, with competing priorities, we are finding it difficult to monitor and significantly contribute to this work, thus opening the door to the state missing out on important PARCC evolutions. By missing these keystone events, it lends itself to more confusion with our public and withdrawal makes sense for this reason also.

It has been a pleasure to have coordinated with PARCC since its inception. We will continue to observe the work of PARCC at arms-length, as we would work the work of any other potential vendors, and we would hope that PARCC would participate in any future procurement opportunities in Kentucky to the extent it is interested in doing so. We wish you well on the upcoming field test and the eventual operational test.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Beshear, Governor
Commonwealth of Kentucky

Terry Holliday, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education

Roger L. Marcum, Chair
Kentucky Board of Education