



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS ADVISORY

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ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY POSITIONS FILLED WITH VETERAN EDUCATORS

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Rhonda Sims, currently director of the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of Support and Research, has been named associate commissioner of the Office of Assessment and Accountability.

Sims replaces Ken Draut, who retired March 1.

In her new position, Sims will oversee the Division of Assessment Design and Implementation and the Division of Support and Research. The office and its divisions provide services to Kentucky public school districts, including management of all statewide assessments, data reporting, the Unbridled Learning College and Career-Readiness for All Accountability Model, federal compliance and communications.

Sims joined the Kentucky Department of Education in August 1994 as a social studies consultant in the assessment development area and has continued to work with multiple aspects of the state assessment and accountability program. Since 2005, she has handled much of the day-to-day work with district assessment coordinators and the logistics of the state-required testing programs. She also has played an important role in developing, implementing and communicating the state's accountability model. Sims is a frequent presenter to state and national groups and the public regarding Kentucky's assessment and accountability system.

In July 2010, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators presented her with the William T. Nallia Educational Leadership Award for her visionary leadership, which has contributed significantly to the quality of public elementary and secondary education in Kentucky. The Kentucky Board of Education, in October 2014, named her the recipient of the Kevin M. Noland Award for outstanding public service to Kentucky schools.

Sims is a graduate of Casey County High School. She holds degrees from Campbellsville University and Western Kentucky University as well as certification from Eastern Kentucky University. Sims is married to Jay Roberts, a retired KDE educator.

Jennifer Stafford, who has served as a policy advisor in the Office of Assessment and Accountability since 2009, has been selected to fill Sims' position as director of the Division of Support and Research.

(more)

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Page 2 – Sims/Stafford named to OAA positions

Stafford has more than 18 years of experience in education. Prior to joining the department, she was a principal at the Carroll County Area Technology Center and a classroom teacher with Owen County Schools. Currently, she serves as chair of the ACT State Assessment Committee and co-chair of the planning committee for the National Conference on Student Assessment.

Stafford is a graduate of Walton-Verona High School and holds degrees from Berea College and Northern Kentucky University. She lives in Owenton with her husband, Rob, and children, Tylor and Briton.

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