



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEETING ADVISORY

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DEADLINE QUICKLY APPROACHING FOR FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED FEDERAL RULES ON SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Only days remain to provide input to the United States Department of Education on its proposed regulations on Accountability, State Plans and Data Reporting under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

ESSA, which was signed into law in December 2015, is the new federal law governing public education in the United States and replaces No Child Left Behind. It promises states more flexibility and autonomy to design and implement an accountability system that will improve education for all children.

“As we saw under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), states do not achieve quality teaching and learning or improved student outcomes simply by checking a box that they complied with a law,” Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. “There also must be fidelity in the implementation of the law through sound regulations. While all this may just seem like a just bunch of education policy talk, these regulations are important to every parent, grandparent and future parent in the Commonwealth and will impact Kentucky schools for years to come.”

Pruitt said, in his opinion, the proposed regulations go beyond what the law intended.

“Instead of guardrails along a multi-lane highway, the proposed regulations are more like concrete barriers along a one lane road with so many restrictions and requirements, that state choices are severely limited.”

Pruitt has been an outspoken critic of the proposed regulations, and this summer testified before both the House Committee on Education and the Workforce as well as the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

“The proposed regulations stifle creativity, innovation and the sovereignty of states to govern their own education policies,” he told the committees. Many lawmakers who crafted the law and others seem to agree.

Earlier this week at a meeting of Kentucky’s Accountability Steering Committee, consultant Brian Gong, of the non-profit Center for Assessment, told members that the proposed regulations could result in the over-identification of schools for support.

“This brings back the worst of NCLB and stifles states’ ability to devise systems that are both technically better and more sensitive to the state’s own goals and context than the proposed federal regulations,” Gong said.

(more)

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He told the group that in one state, preliminary calculations showed that as many as 50 percent of the schools would be in line for targeted support.

Other issues include a very aggressive timeline for accountability system development and implementation; the mandate for states to use a single score to determine school success; potential inequities in resources to support school improvement; and the over-prescriptive nature of the regulations overall.

A summary of the issues can be found online at <http://bit.ly/ESSAregs1issues>. Pruitt said the summary can be used as a basis for feedback or shareholders can read the regulations for themselves and provide their own opinions.

“Whether you agree with me or not, Kentuckians owe it to our students to provide comment on these important regulations,” Pruitt said. “It’s too important for our students and our schools to leave to chance. By making our voices heard, we are more likely to be able to develop an accountability system based on Kentucky values.”

Kentuckians can read the regulations and provide feedback online at <http://bit.ly/ESSAdraftregs1>.

The deadline is Monday, August 1.

More information on Kentucky’s efforts to develop a new accountability system under ESSA can be found on the Kentucky Department of Education’s ESSA webpage, <http://bit.ly/ESSAKY>.

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