



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
Terry Holliday



August 10, 2012

## Innovation and Transformation on the Horizon

This week, I'm pleased to turn over my blog space to David Cook, director of the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement. David is leading the agency's work around innovation, and he provides some details on the efforts coming soon.

This past week, the Kentucky Board of Education made two crucial decisions related to transforming the education system in our public schools. Most significantly, the board heard a first reading of 701 KAR 5:140, the administrative regulation that will provide the guidance to Rep. Carl Rollins' "Districts of Innovation" legislation that became law this spring ([House Bill 37](#), enacted 2012). The draft regulation has been met with very positive feedback and now goes through the public comment period before coming back to the board in October.

The regulation describes the conditions for innovation; the types of innovation that are acceptable and what statutes and regulations can be waived under the law; the application process; and the monitoring of and potential revocation of "District of Innovation" status. You can see the proposed administrative regulation (Item XXX. C. 3.) [here](#).

Also, during its meeting on Thursday, the board gave its blessing for staff to move forward with the filing of articles of incorporation for the Fund for Transforming Education in Kentucky. The fund is a crucial element to the success of the Districts of Innovation legislation and all of the state's innovation efforts. The fund has been garnering quite a bit of support, most notably from the Prichard Committee, which sees its role as assisting with innovation implementation as an excellent complement to its role as the state's chief education advocate.

The fund will seek resources to support innovative practices in Kentucky's public education system as well as conduct research, spur dialogue, broker partnerships and identify proof points that can lead to the scaling of promising practices. All of these things are beyond the scope of our traditional federal and state funding streams. The fund also will give Kentucky a leg up on national and local funding opportunities for innovation that continue to shift away from grants to state education agencies in favor of independent entities like the fund.

The fund will exist as an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation with its own staff and board of directors. This independence will allow the fund to create opportunities that might not be available through the Kentucky Department of Education, as well as supplement the innovation efforts of the agency. Commissioner Terry Holliday will serve as a non-voting member of the fund's board.

Finally, we are not going into this effort without a model from which we are learning about best practices and potential challenges. The [Colorado Legacy Foundation](#) (CLF) has been in existence since 2008. The CLF is responsible for many crucial innovative strategies in Colorado that mirror initiatives in Kentucky. The CLF is the grantee for the Gates Integration Grant around the integration of the common core and new teacher effectiveness systems, the National Math and Science Institute grant around Advanced Placement (i.e., AdvanceKY) and the Expanded Learning Opportunities work that Kentucky is doing through the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Legislation, state board policy and a partner organization to assist the department in incubating the innovative ideas that we hope can eventually go to scale -- to me, that sounds like a “perfect storm” of opportunity that will most assuredly transform education in Kentucky.