



## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### NEWS RELEASE

No. 17-096

August 1, 2017

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Nancy Rodriguez

Office: (502) 564-2000, ext. 4610 | Cell: (502) 330-5063 | E-mail: [nancy.rodriguez@education.ky.gov](mailto:nancy.rodriguez@education.ky.gov)

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NAMES CHARTER DIRECTOR**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – The Kentucky Department of Education today named Earl Simms as the Director of its newly created Division of Charter Schools in the Office of Legal, Legislative and Communication Services.

Simms has nine years of experience working to improve urban education in the state of Missouri, most recently as the St. Louis director of the Office of Charter Schools with the University of Missouri College of Education. In his role, Simms worked to improve charter schools in St. Louis by monitoring school compliance and the performance of 10 (K-12) charter schools serving approximately 4,000 students.

Simms also has served as the Senior Director of the Missouri Charter Public School Association, where he managed the association's lobbying efforts and communications, and represented the association and member schools on a variety of matters with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

In addition, he participated in the 2015 cohort of the Leaders Program with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Simms is a product of the Kentucky public schools and is a graduate of duPont Manual High School in Louisville. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science and in Public Relations from Murray State University.

"We are fortunate to hire a Kentuckian and someone with Earl's professional experience to lead our charter school work in Kentucky," Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. "His familiarity with charters will be essential as Kentucky moves forward to establish quality public charter schools in the Commonwealth."

Earlier this year, the Kentucky General Assembly approved, and Governor Bevin signed House Bill 520, which clears the way for the first charter schools in Kentucky.

"I look forward to returning to my home state to support the establishment of public charter schools in Kentucky," Simms said. "I appreciate the opportunity and am eager to get started working with the Charter Schools Advisory Council, local districts, the mayors of Louisville and Lexington and charter operators to provide another option for the students of Kentucky to access and experience excellent education and high-quality learning opportunities."

Simms will earn a salary of \$90,000. His first day at the Kentucky Department of Education will be August 16.

###

Visit our website at <http://www.education.ky.gov>

Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/kydeptofed](http://www.twitter.com/kydeptofed) and Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/kydeptofed](http://www.facebook.com/kydeptofed)