



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Nancy Rodriguez

Office: (502) 564-2000, ext. 4604 | **Cell:** (502) 330-5063 | **E-mail:** nancy.rodriquez@education.ky.gov

BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES BUDGET, LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – At its meeting in Frankfort today, the Kentucky Board of Education approved its budget and legislative priorities for the 2018 session of the General Assembly, among other items.

The KBE's primary focus in the upcoming legislative session is to maintain current appropriated funding levels for K-12 education, and increase funding for several critical programs including full reimbursement of local district pupil transportation costs, expenditures required by Senate Bill 1 (2017), and the cost of full day kindergarten. The board also is requesting the legislature establish a permanent funding formula for charter schools.

Among its legislative initiatives, the board is asking the General Assembly to appropriate money for an existing emergency loan fund for districts that are facing serious financial challenges due to a change in the way the unmined coal tax is calculated and declining revenue collections. Also, the KBE is asking lawmakers to amend statutes to authorize county district to county district merger in a situation of financial insolvency in one of the districts. Currently, a similar provision exists for financially insolvent independent districts but not for financially insolvent county districts.

“Our focus is to provide a quality education by working with districts to manage their financial situation,” Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. “However, as a Commonwealth, we ultimately have to consider whether a district has adequate resources to provide a quality education to its students in this fiscal environment.”

The board is asking the legislature to create new statutes to address dyslexia. The Commissioner's Task Force on Dyslexia made several recommendations for how districts and schools can better provide services to students with dyslexia.

Among its policy priorities, the board is seeking to:

- Create a task force of key state education and industry leaders to pursue the creation of a Kentucky Work Ethic Certificate.
- Expand a task force to help children build skills beyond academic knowledge with a focus on student well being/social and emotional learning (SEL) including school climate initiatives, anti-bullying work, positive behavior supports, and other SEL efforts.
- Establish a 3rd-grade reading initiative to review retention and promotion efforts, with an emphasis on promotion efforts that require non-proficient readers to participate in programs such as targeted intervention services, summer reading camps and the completion of reading portfolios.

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Finally, the board approved the following statement of support on tax reform and pension reform:

“The Kentucky Board of Education supports the Governor and the General Assembly in determining revenue options that provide and sustain sufficient resources for the educational goals of the Commonwealth as well as finding solutions for long-term sustainability of the pension systems.”

In other action, the board approved changes in the charter school application as incorporated by reference in 701 KAR 8:020, Evaluation of Charter School Authorizers, as well as the statements of consideration for:

- 701 KAR 8:030, Charter School Appeal Process;
- 701 KAR 8:040, Conversion Charter School Petition, Conversion, And Operation; and
- 704 KAR 3:370, Kentucky Framework for Personnel Evaluation

The regulations, along with charter regulations and Kentucky’s new accountability regulation that the KBE approved during a special meeting yesterday, now move through the legislative regulatory review process.

At its December meeting, the board also approved:

- Carl D. Perkins Consolidated Annual Report of 2016
- amendments to 704 KAR 3:540, Uniform Academic Course Codes
- 704 KAR 7:090, Homeless Children Education Program
- waiver of the minimum classroom space requirements and the minimum physical education program space requirements found in Section 304 of the Kentucky School Facilities Manual, as incorporate by reference into 702 KAR 4:180, and waiver of the bleacher seating requirements (Part 2-b.10) and the outdoor physical education space requirements (Part 2-a.13) found in the Facility Programming and Construction Criteria Planning Guide, as incorporated by reference in 702 KAR 4:170 for the Boone County School District
- reappointment of Louisville parent and community business leader Mike Flynn and parent Brandi Hitzelberger to the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) Advisory Board
- the adoption of a civics test for the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) and Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD)
- a new district facility plan for the Henderson County School District
- a facility plan amendment for the McCracken County School District
- 2017-18 Local District Tax Rates Levied
- the commissioner's evaluation document

The board also reviewed the commissioner's goals for the coming year with him. Commissioner Pruitt said he would share some plans to address those goals with the board at its February meeting.

The board heard the first reading on several proposed regulatory changes to Title 703, Chapter 5 (Assessment and Accountability):

- 703 KAR 5:191, Repeal of 703 KAR 5:190, Assistance to Low-Achieving Schools and Repeal of 703 KAR 5:260, Intervention in Priority Schools
- 703 KAR 5:225, School and District Accountability, Recognition, Support and Consequences
- 703 KAR 5:280, School Improvement Procedures

Also during Wednesday’s meeting, the board received an update on:

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- Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) Youth Apprenticeship Program
- Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) School Energy Managers Project
- Hope Street Group (HSG)
- Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Strategic Plan
- 2017-18 Local District Working Budgets

Visit the board portal at <http://portal.ksba.org/public/Agency.aspx?PublicAgencyID=4388&AgencyTypeID=1> to access the agenda and supporting materials online.

The next regular meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education is scheduled for Feb. 7, 2018.

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