



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

Number 18-063

April 20, 2018

MEDIA CONTACT: Nancy Rodriguez

Office: (502) 564-2000, ext. 4610 | **Cell:** (502) 330-5063 | **E-mail:** nancy.rodriquez@education.ky.gov

INTERIM COMMISSIONER LEWIS TO VISIT JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOLS

(Frankfort, KY) – The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) announced today that Interim Commissioner Wayne Lewis will visit Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) next Wednesday and Thursday as part of an ongoing management audit.

Lewis said he has read the audit and supporting documents and wants to get a firsthand look at the district before he makes any recommendation to the Kentucky Board of Education based on the audit results. During his visit next week, Lewis will talk with key personnel and Jefferson County board members. He also will visit schools in the district.

“Whatever decision I make will be based on the facts and what is in the best interest of the children attending school in Jefferson County,” Lewis said. “The students’ well-being and opportunity to be successful will be the driving force behind how we move forward.”

Former Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt called for an audit of the district in February 2017 per KRS 158.785 after data and information from a six-month management review of the district found “critically ineffective or inefficient management” within JCPS. The audit has been ongoing since that time.

Before resigning his position earlier this week, Pruitt told reporters he was waiting for a report on the district’s collective bargaining agreement for certified employees before releasing the audit and issuing a recommendation. Lewis has said while the analysis will provide evidence for any needed improvements in the district, it will not factor into his recommendation, which he expects to issue by the end of April.

KRS 158.785 states the management audit is designed to determine whether there is “a pattern of a significant lack of efficiency and effectiveness in the governance or administration of a school district.” According to the statute, the findings can result in a recommendation of:

- **state assistance** – KDE would provide management assistance to develop and implement an improvement plan to correct deficiencies found in the management audit. Subsequently, if monitoring shows the plan is being inadequately developed or implemented, the chief state school officer shall make a recommendation for state management of the district.
- **state management** – The state takes over “all administrative, operational, financial, personnel and instructional aspects of the management of the school district formerly exercised by the local school board and the superintendent.” These duties shall be exercised by the chief state school officer or his designee.
- **no action**

(more)

Page 2 – Lewis to visit JCPS

Since October 2017, JCPS has been under corrective action plans in the areas of career and technical education, implementation of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and safe crisis management.

Once Lewis makes a recommendation to the Kentucky Board of Education based on the audit findings, according to KRS 158.780, KRS 158.785 and 703 KAR 3:205, the Jefferson County Board of Education would have 30 days to ask for a formal hearing on the matter before the Kentucky Board of Education, or accept the findings of the audit and waive a formal hearing. In that case, the KBE would consider the matter in an open meeting and vote to approve or not approve the commissioner's recommendation.

###

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

Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/kydeptofed and Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kydeptofed