

Remarks to Teacher Effectiveness Steering Committee – January 23, 2013
Commissioner Terry Holliday

In 2009, Senate Bill 1 gave us a new vision for education in Kentucky. A vision that was grounded in college and career readiness for all students. About the same time, the Obama administration was moving us toward a new vision for American public education. A vision grounded in improving America's competitiveness in the global marketplace by improving American education. With the announcement of Race to the Top grants and eventually the NCLB waiver process, the President and Secretary of Education provided the components of the vision. In response to these initiatives, Kentucky assembled a stakeholder group that articulated our state vision and strategies aligned to the national focus. This has become our strategic plan in Kentucky and is guiding the work of KDE, districts, schools, and classrooms. What I consider to be the most important strategy in this work is teacher effectiveness. As Commissioner of Education, I appointed this task force to develop recommendations for the Kentucky Board of Education to incorporate into proposed legislation and subsequent regulation with the charge to Kentucky Department of Education to implement through the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System.

Many other states have done this work **TO** teachers. My intent was to do this work **WITH** teachers. While other states have moved quickly to develop models, Kentucky chose to be deliberate and involve the voice of the teacher and other stakeholders in the development of the professional growth system. There were several goals of a growth system that were considered.

- 1) According to the "Widget Effect", 99% of teachers in states were rated as satisfactory or above while there were significant differences in student achievement between the states. Therefore, a goal could have been to improve the distribution of teacher evaluation ratings so they would be seen as more valid and reliable.
- 2) According to most national reports, the impact of the teacher on student growth and achievement is the most significant school based factor. Therefore, a goal could have been to improve student growth and achievement.
- 3) My charge to this task force was to develop a system of growth and support for teachers. By improving the observation tool, feedback to teachers for instructional growth, and providing the support for a professional learning system, then Kentucky would certainly achieve the first two goals.

This group has done unbelievable work over the last 18-24 months. We arrive now at a point where we must complete our recommendations for the Kentucky Board of Education and move from recommendations to implementation, monitoring and improving the growth system that we developed. I thought it would be helpful to start our meeting with a reminder of the charge to the group and our state/federal requirements that must be met.

(Insert waiver requirements handout given out at meeting)

Questions?

What happens if state does not implement plans and other elements described in the waiver application?

We lose Race to the Top funds and must repay dollars already allocated.

We lose the 13 waivers and flexibility of the NCLB waiver (let me review each one and mention impact)

What happens if LEA does not implement plans and other elements described in the waiver application?

The district will lose Race to the Top funds and must repay dollars already allocated.

The district will have Title I and II funds withheld until district meets requirements.

The district could have SEEK funds withheld until district meets requirements.

What is our final strategy for legislation and regulatory change?

We see 3 possible scenarios.

Scenario 1 – this is our preferred scenario. The General Assembly passes legislation that honors the work of this steering committee and the Kentucky Board of Education implements regulatory language based on the work of this steering committee. This scenario provides us with the most time to implement your recommendations. We would be able to go to districts in February and say we have unanimous support of all stakeholders on the teacher effectiveness steering committee for the legislation and the committee recommendations will be implemented through KBE regulation and the regulation approval process will happen after we review results from the field test. The KBE would receive for first reading the regulation in December of 2013, second reading in February of 2014, and legislative process would happen in the spring of 2014 with full implementation beginning July, 2014 per federal requirements. Districts would implement the state field test as planned, however, any LEA planning on submitting a plan that does not adhere to state plan would have to document how the LEA plan meets the waiver requirements and validity/reliability requirements.

Scenario 2 – this scenario assumes this group is not unanimous in support of legislation and we are unable to move legislation through the General Assembly this session. This would mean that we do not have a state system and LEAs must submit a plan for approval by KDE that meets the waiver requirements and existing statute on teacher evaluation. Should this happen, we would then move quickly to start the regulatory review process defining requirements for LEAs based on the 6 requirements of Principle 3 of the NCLB waiver. We must begin to inform districts at the February regional meetings that we do not have legislative support so local plans must be developed within the guidelines of the proposed regulation. Certainly, the recommendations of the Teacher Effectiveness Steering Committee could be utilized by KDE in forming the content of the regulation and helping districts choose what components of an evaluation plan must be submitted in order to gain KDE approval. The timeline for this scenario would be submission of local plans by December, 2013, however, all districts would follow the field test protocol since we have the regulatory language. Any LEA planning on submitting a plan that does not adhere to state plan would have to document how the LEA plan meets the waiver requirements and validity/reliability requirements.

Scenario 3 – While this is a scenario that we would NOT like to see, we must prepare for this possibility. Should we not get legislation, we doubt that we would be able to get any change in regulation. Therefore, we would move quickly to describe to districts in the February regional meetings that the state field test would have to serve as the local field test of their local evaluation plan. Again, districts

would certainly be informed by the recommendations from this group, however, without legislation and changes to regulation, KDE only has to meet the requirement that all LEAs are held to the requirements of Principle 3 of the NCLB waiver. The timeline for this scenario would be submission of local plans by December, 2013, however, districts would NOT be required to follow the state field test protocol and would develop local plans for processes, weighting of measures, and summative rating. This would result in significant variation among districts and possibly between schools since there would be no state requirements for observer certification and all decisions would be left to districts with eventual review for waiver compliance by KDE.

So.... as you can see, it is essential that we have 2 outcomes from this 2 day meeting. We must have a pledge of support for legislation that supports your work and we must have recommendations for the drafting of regulatory language for KBE to review at the February meeting and have final reading at the April meeting. This group would have significant time to review the proposed regulation if scenario 1 happens, however, this group would not have time to review if scenario 2 or 3 happens.

Again, thank you for your dedication to this work. Should we be successful in our efforts to work WITH teachers to develop a professional growth and effectiveness system, I truly believe that Kentucky would once again serve as a national model on what can happen when we honor and respect teachers. However, should we not be successful in our work as evidenced by failure to pass legislation and subsequent regulatory language, and then we send a signal to the rest of the nation that this work is not possible in a collaborative setting at least in Kentucky. I will be in and out of this meeting and have time scheduled with you during the lunch hour tomorrow to discuss and check on your progress.