

President's Report to the Council on Postsecondary Education

Robert L. King – November 6, 2009



Senate Bill 1 Update

The Kentucky Department of Education and CPE – in collaboration with the Education Professional Standards Board, the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, college of education faculty, elementary and secondary teachers, and workforce representatives – have been working diligently over the past six months to plan and implement Senate Bill 1 legislation. Finding ways to reduce remediation rates and increase the graduation rates of underprepared students has been a top priority of the SB 1 work groups. Ongoing cooperation between KDE and CPE will ensure that the revised standards for P-12 language arts and mathematics are ultimately aligned with postsecondary education course and assessment standards.

The college readiness workgroups are developing unified strategies to promote college and workforce readiness and college completion. The work here centers on four key areas:

- (1) Accelerated learning opportunities;
- (2) Secondary intervention programs (e.g., senior year transitional courses);
- (3) Postsecondary intervention programs and services (e.g., summer bridge programs, developmental education programs with accelerated coursework, advising, and student support services); and
- (4) College and career readiness advising (e.g., monitoring students' progress using the Individual Learning Plan).

Other SB 1 activities in progress include the comparison of the current Kentucky readiness benchmarks in English and mathematics and the college readiness core content standards of the National Governors' Association and Council of Chief State School Officers. Work groups are developing a catalog of evidence-based college readiness and degree completion strategies; reviewing teacher professional development models, assessments, and accountability systems; and developing a communication plan for the SB 1 work.

Kentucky Virtual Library's Strategic Plan

Earlier this year, KYVL initiated a strategic planning process called *Revisioning at 10 Years* or reV@10 with the intent of completing a 3-year plan in time for its 10th anniversary in November. A steering team and larger planning team, over 40 individuals representing all sectors benefitting from KYVL services and resources, were involved throughout the process. Feedback from students, educators, librarians and others was collected with focus groups across the state and a survey with over 400 responses.



The teams provided invaluable direction and expertise as they reviewed feedback and completed the analysis necessary for a complete “reVisioning” of Kentucky Virtual Library’s strategic direction. In the last two months, the planning team members completed a SWOT analysis of the KYVL and an environmental scan that included trends and best practices. The planning team also conducted a situation analysis using data from the focus groups and began to draft new goals and objectives. The steering team finalized the new core values, vision and mission for KYVL as well as refined the goals and objectives. The Virtual Library Advisory Committee will endorse the plan this month, which will be submitted to the Council leadership later this month.

Race to the Top

The Race to the Top (RTTT) proposal due date is approaching. The presidents, chief academic officers, and deans of education for both the public and independent institutions met with Education Commissioner Terry Holliday on October 13 to discuss the RTTT proposal. It was decided that CPE would host a second meeting of university presidents, chief academic officers, and deans of the colleges of education, arts and sciences, and engineering for a brainstorming session devoted to new models for teacher preparation and professional development. The group met on November 4 and received an update on SB 1 and RTTT from KDE Associate Commissioner Sally Sugg and CPE President Bob King. A brainstorming session was conducted around two specific questions: 1) what can the colleges and universities do to create a top quality professional development system for K-12?; and, 2) what they can do to enhance their teacher education departments to ensure that a higher quality of teachers are going into the K-12 system. It was concluded that there will be several suggestions coming from higher education that would be submitted to KDE Commissioner Holliday to consider for inclusion in the RTTT proposal.



Senate Bill 1 fits nicely with the RTTT proposal in that it charges the Council to work with K-12 to impact student learning outcomes so that students are better prepared for college and workforce readiness. This requires the creation of premier teacher preparation and career professional development programs throughout Kentucky.

The federal Race to the Top Fund (\$4.35 billion) includes money for competitive grants designed to encourage rigorous standards for high school students, program development, leadership professional development, teacher professional development, and formative assessment and development for better assessments (formative and summative) for student learning standards.

Agency Audit Report

Due to the complexity and amount of funds flowing through the agency’s budget, the Council contracted with an independent auditor to conduct the annual review of its financial statements. This audit is not statutorily required, but serves the Council well by having an outside entity review Council finances, internal controls, and regulatory and grant compliance. Potter and Company LLP, a certified public accounting agency in Lexington, conducted the audit this year.

For the year ending June 30, 2009, the auditors issued an unqualified opinion with no findings, stating that the Council’s financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the agency. The firm noted a couple of areas that could be strengthened in terms of internal controls and

operating efficiencies. One related to timely submission of sub-recipient reports and the other related to timely submission of invoices from sub-recipients. Although both of these areas are dependent on outside agencies submitting documents to the Council, Council staff continues to work on monitoring the activity of its sub-recipients in order to improve in both of these areas. The Executive Committee met this morning to discuss the report and recommendations with representatives from the auditing firm.

Staff Notes

Reecie Stagnolia, Vice President for Adult Education, has been appointed to Governor Beshear's Reentry Task Force, created to establish a collaborative group of agencies and individuals to address the issue of prisoner reentry. The task force will research best practices in reentry, including innovative drug treatment, causes of recidivism, and methods to improve education and vocational training while incarcerated. The goal is to reduce recidivism by 50 percent over a five-year period. Link to press release - <http://www.governor.ky.gov/pressrelease.htm?PostingGUID={10780957-CA30-420F-825D-7DCDA38993CB}>