

**COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION REPORT**  
**1/16/09**  
**FROM COMMISSIONER JON E. DRAUD**

**January 7, 2009, Kentucky Board of Education Special Meeting, Frankfort, KY**

Highlights of the meeting were as follows:

➤ ***BOARD ACCEPTS COMMISSIONER DRAUD'S RESIGNATION AND APPOINTS INTERIM***

At a special meeting held on January 7, the Kentucky Board of Education accepted the resignation of Commissioner Jon Draud and agreed to waive the 90-day notice clause in his contract. In December, Draud announced that he would resign his position effective in early February due to health reasons. Draud asked that his resignation date be modified to January 31, and the board accepted that change.

The board also approved a motion naming Deputy Commissioner Elaine Farris as interim commissioner. She will serve in that capacity until the position is filled permanently and will not be a candidate for the position.

➤ ***NATIONAL SEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED FOR NEXT COMMISSIONER***

In its discussion on the process to find the next commissioner of education, Kentucky Board of Education members agreed to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a firm to conduct a national search. They also agreed to include all members on a screening committee to review applications for the commissioner's position.

The state board indicated it desires to follow a timeline that will have the new commissioner on board by the start of the 2009-10 school year. Thus, the RFP will be released as soon as possible so that a search firm can be selected and officially conduct the search process.

**December 10-11, 2008, Kentucky Board of Education Meeting, Frankfort, KY**

Highlights of the meeting were as follows:

➤ ***STATE BOARD ENDORSES GOVERNOR'S REVENUE ENHANCEMENT PLAN***

At its December meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education discussed the serious budget shortfall and its potential devastating effect on P-12 education. On the first day of the meeting, the Board asked Secretary of Education Helen Mountjoy to take its request to the Governor to spare SEEK from the budget cuts and then learned the next day that the

Governor's plan did in fact exempt SEEK, along with requiring only a 2% cut in the Kentucky Department of Education's budget and state grants. However, the Board was informed that this will be contingent on the passage of revenue enhancement by the General Assembly, specifically a 70 cent increase in the cigarette tax and increasing the tax on other tobacco products. As a result, the Board voted to support this revenue enhancement plan.

Once the numbers for budget reduction are finalized, Kentucky Department of Education staff was requested to come back to the Board with recommendations on how to make cuts using an approach of minimizing the impact on student learning.

➤ **2009 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA APPROVED**

In preparation for the upcoming General Assembly session, the Kentucky Board of Education approved its 2009 Legislative Agenda. The elements of that agenda are as follows:

- Interstate Compact on Education Opportunity for Military Children
  - Amend SB 68 to require that the Compact provisions also apply to the children of civilians that work for the military.
- School Facilities Evaluation Committee Recommendations
  - Allow Capital Outlay to be used for maintenance without forfeiting the district's participation in SFCC upon approval of the commissioner. Maintenance does not include property insurance.
  - Allow rapid-growth districts to use restricted or special funds for operational purposes during the first biennium of a new school's operation.
  - Modify KRS 157.420 to allow land for new schools or modifications to existing schools to be purchased with restricted cash for projects noted on the District Facilities Plan for use in the next eight years. Land would not be counted in the calculation of need.
- Dropout Prevention Grants
  - Amend KRS 158.146(4) to remove priority in the awarding of dropout prevention grants to districts with chronically high dropout rates, remove the requirement to direct 75% of available funds to elementary and middle school students and 25% to high school students, and focus the grant program on supporting promising and proven practices that are systemic, scalable, and replicable and are aligned with the principles of secondary reform.
- Blue Ribbon Panel on Interventions in Low-Performing Schools Recommendations
  - Add chronic low student academic performance as a cause for removal of a superintendent or school board members (KRS 156.182).

- Funding
  - Fund the Student Information System in the second year of the biennium (\$6,832,100).
  - Fund Read to Achieve and Math Achievement grants for the full biennium (\$10,518,500 Read to Achieve; \$1,400,000 Math Achievement).
  
- Assessment and Accountability Task Force Recommendations
  - Amend KRS 156.6453 to permit school level arts and humanities program evaluations to be used in addition to or in place of student assessment items in the assessment program.
  
- Preschool Funding Procedures
  - Amend KRS 157.226(3) to fund a district's next school year's preschool program on the basis of an average of the December 1 and the March 1 preschool membership with no further adjustments to the funding level.
  
- Post 2009 Items
  - Amend KRS 157.440 (Facilities Support Program of Kentucky) to increase the five-cent equivalent tax rate for facilities to ten cents. All districts should be required to levy ten cents. Those districts already levying ten cents or more are authorized to levy an additional five cents, but are not required to do this. All facility funding (except the growth levy) should become part of the FSPK program.
  - Raise the compulsory school age first to 17 and then to 18 in the following year.
  - Expand pre-K learning opportunities.

**Next Meeting: February 10-11, 2009, Frankfort, KY**