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MEMORANDUM

TO: Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee
FROM: Sen. Matthew Deneen and Rep. Timmy Truett, Co-Chairs
DATE: October 6, 2026

SUBJECT: OEA 2027 Study Agenda

Pursuant to KRS 7.410, the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS) shall adopt an annual research agenda for the Office of Education Accountability (OEA). The annual agenda may include studies, research, and investigations considered to be significant by EAARS.

2027 Proposed Study Topics

District Data Profiles, 2026

OEA's 2026 District Data Profiles will report financial, staffing, and performance data for Kentucky's 171 districts and the state as well as the most recently available national comparative data for Kentucky and its surrounding states. The profiles will include district data compiled by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) as well as calculations performed by OEA using data submitted by school districts to KDE. The study will include an appendix reporting any concerns identified by OEA during the course of the study related to the validity, reliability, consistency, or comparability of available data.

Data Trends Of Full-Time Virtual Enrolled Students

The Kentucky Department of Education reports over 60 districts with full-time virtual programs. Most programs enroll students from the operating district or from districts that border or partner with the operating district. Two programs accept students from school districts statewide. This report will examine characteristics of students who attend full-time virtual enrollment programs at the state level including demographic characteristics, attendance, behavior events and academic performance before and during virtual school enrollment. The analysis of

academic performance will include a comparison to demographically similar students in the state.

Information will be reported separately for individual full-time virtual enrollment programs that enroll over thirty students for greater than 100 days.

Research Briefs

Dashboard Indicator of School District Financial Health, SY 2026

This brief will provide an interactive data dashboard compiling information relevant to school districts' financial health. The dashboard will include information available on *OEA's District Data Profiles, 2026* such as the end-of-year balance as a percent of the general fund and changes in student membership compared to changes in district staff. In addition, OEA will analyze districts' audited annual financial reports for SY 2026 for indicators that include:

- general fund budgeted revenue compared with actual revenue;
- general fund budgeted expenditures compared with actual expenditures; and
- the movement of restricted building funds to the general fund.

The brief will also identify and analyze any data issues OEA encounters in calculating these financial indicators.

Years Under Provisional License For Option 6 and 7 Teachers, SY 2022-SY 2027

KRS 161.048 permits alternative pathways to teacher certification that include provisional licenses for educators enrolled in a university program (Option 6) or with a degree in a non-education field, for those teaching in shortage areas (Option 7). Senate Bill 49, enacted during the 2023 Regular Session, increased the number of years that provisional certificates under Options 6 and 7 may be renewed from two (2) to four (4).

This brief will report the number of educators working under provisional licenses through Options 6 and 7 in the SY 2022-SY 2027 school years. For each school year, the report will also include the number of years that educators had worked under a provisional certificate.

K-3 Retention Trends SY 2024-SY 2026

KRS 158.305(9) require a first-grade student and permits a kindergarten student to be retained when schools determine that the students did not meet grade-level benchmarks based on the district's universal screener; did not master Kentucky's reading academic standards based on the district's interim or formative assessment; or was not prepared to be successful in the next grade. This brief will examine retention rates for students in kindergarten through grade three at the state and district levels for SY 2025, SY 2026, and SY 2027.

Review Of Select Indicators On Regional Training Center Contracts, SY 2027

OEA's 2025 *Kentucky Early Childhood Regional Training Centers* report identified several concerns related to the reporting and use of financial data by some of Kentucky's eight Regional Training Centers (RTCs). The concerns included the co-mingling of district funds with funds allocated by the Kentucky Department of Education to RTCs for regional services; differences between budgeted and actual expenditures; and indirect costs exceeding KDE-recommended amounts at least one RTC. This research brief would review a sample of RTC contracts and related financial information to determine the current status of these concerns and whether previously identified issues have been addressed. The review would focus on selected indicators, including the use of funds, budget-to-actual expenditures, indirect costs, and the allocation of KDE funding and district resources.

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