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October 1, 2021

Co-Chairs Sen. Max Wise & Rep. Brandon Reed  
Education Assessment & Accountability Review Subcommittee  
700 Capital Avenue  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Co-chairs Sen. Wise and Rep. Reed:

Please allow this letter to serve as the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) response to the Office of Education Accountability's (OEA) draft Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) report. KDE provided OEA with the contents of this response under separate letter.

The Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS) approved SEEK as a study topic last November and it is our understanding that OEA has spent the majority of 2021 working on the report. It is understandable that a topic of this complexity, coupled with the broad scope of the study, required significant hours on the part of OEA staff. Over the months, KDE has provided access to documents and materials as well as access to KDE staff and their time to assist in the preparation of the report. As a result, the report is lengthy and detailed, stretching approximately 140 pages. There are significant numbers of supporting charts and graphs produced by OEA.

Regrettably, as we have previously shared with OEA, KDE does not feel there was adequate time to review the full draft report. KDE received the first draft chapter on August 26, 2021 with other chapters delivered on August 30 and September 1 respectively. KDE and OEA met in an online meeting to discuss the report on September 20 with preliminary feedback. However, KDE did not receive the final OEA report until September 28, 2021. Given the ongoing pandemic and the daily challenges facing school districts which require KDE staff's ongoing and immediate support, our time to review was more limited than usual. August and September are typically busy times with the start of school, but especially this year with the added turbulence of the Delta variant challenging district operations.

Therefore, at this time, KDE is addressing only those sections where it agrees or disagrees with assertions and findings set forth primarily in draft Chapter 4. We have provided a few additional comments on the other chapters. We have not validated the information contained in Chapter 2, but appreciate the analysis done on surrounding states. The content in Chapter 3 are potential changes opined by OEA and KDE makes no comments on the pros nor cons of the implementation of any of the proposals. KDE would note

that any changes made to the SEEK funding formula should be done with thoughtful and careful analysis in order to avoid any unintended negative consequences for local school districts.

We appreciate the opportunity afforded to us by OEA to provide comments on the report and will continue to review its contents in the entirety.

Sincerely,

*Robin Fields Kinney*

Robin Fields Kinney  
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Office of Finance and Operations

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