**161.027 Preparation program for principals -- Assessment -- Certificates and statements of eligibility -- Renewal.**

(1) The Education Professional Standards Board, pursuant to KRS 161.028, shall by administrative regulation establish requirements for a preparation program in institutions of higher education for all new applicants for principal certification and establish criteria for admission to the program.

(2) The Education Professional Standards Board and the Council on Postsecondary Education shall evaluate the preparation programs for principals and maintain only those institutional programs that can demonstrate both the quality and the capability to enroll adequate numbers of students to justify the resources necessary for maintenance of a quality program.

(3) The Education Professional Standards Board shall develop or select appropriate assessments for applicants seeking certification as principals, including an assessment of the ability to apply knowledge, instructional leadership, management, and supervision skills.

(4) The Education Professional Standards Board shall establish the minimum score for successful completion of assessments and shall establish a reasonable fee to be charged applicants for the actual cost of administration of the assessments. The Education Professional Standards Board shall provide for confidentiality of assessment scores.

(5) The certification of principals shall require the successful completion of the examinations required by subsection (3) of this section. A one (1) year certificate may be given to a person who has:

(a) A comparable certificate from another state; or

(b) All other qualifications except the assessments and is selected as a principal or assistant principal in a district where the superintendent certifies to the Education Professional Standards Board that there is a limited number of applicants to meet the requirements.

Upon successful completion of the assessments, a certificate shall be issued for an additional four (4) years. A person employed in Kentucky as a principal or assistant principal who was certified in another state and practiced in that state for two (2) or more years is exempt from taking the assessment described in subsection (3)(a) of this section.

(6) Upon successful completion of the approved preparation program and the assessments, the Education Professional Standards Board shall issue to the applicant a statement of eligibility for internship valid for five (5) years. If the applicant does not gain employment as a principal within the five (5) year period, the applicant shall reestablish eligibility by repeating and passing the assessments in effect at that time or by completing a minimum of six (6) graduate hours, directly related to instructional leadership, management, or supervision, at a regionally or nationally accredited institution. The option for renewal through completion of graduate hours shall be available only for the first reestablishment of eligibility. Upon obtaining employment for an internship position as principal or assistant principal within the period of eligibility, the applicant shall be issued the

appropriate one (1) year certificate for the position.

(7) Following successful completion of the first year of principalship, the principal certificate shall be extended for four (4) years. Renewal of the certificate shall require the completion of a continuing education requirement as prescribed by the Education Professional Standards Board.

**Effective:** July 15, 2026

**History:** Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 154, sec. 3, effective July 15, 2026. -- Amended 2020 Ky. Acts ch. 113, sec. 2, effective July 15, 2020. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 111, sec. 1, effective June 20, 2005. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 362, sec. 2, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1997 (1st Extra. Sess.) Ky. Acts ch. 1, sec. 65, effective May 30, 1997. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 343, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, Pt. II, sec. 60, effective July 13, 1990. -- Amended 1988 Ky. Acts ch. 275, sec. 1, effective April 9, 1988. -- Created 1985 (1st Extra. Sess.) ch. 10, sec. 22, effective October 18, 1985.

**2026-2028 Budget Reference.** See State/Executive Branch Budget, 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 168, Pt. I, C, 3, (9) at 2075.