

**CHAPTER 437 (SB 280)**

AN ACT relating to the Office of Education Accountability.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

Section 1. KRS 7.410 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to provide an efficient system of common schools which shall be operated without waste, duplication, mismanagement, and political influence. The system of schools shall have the goal of providing all students with at least the seven (7) capacities referred to in KRS 158.645.
- (2)
  - (a) An Office of Education Accountability is hereby created and shall be under the direction of the Legislative Research Commission ***and shall be advised and monitored by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee.***
  - (b) The Office of Education Accountability shall be administered by a deputy director appointed by the Legislative Research Commission upon recommendation of the director of the Legislative Research Commission. The deputy director shall have the qualifications set by the Commission. The salary of the deputy director shall be set by the Commission. The Commission shall have exclusive jurisdiction over the employment of personnel necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. The deputy director shall be subject to the direction of and report to the director of the Legislative Research Commission.
  - (c) The Office of Education Accountability shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
    1. Monitor the education system and implementation of the provisions of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, including actions taken ***and reports issued*** by the Kentucky Board of Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, the chief state school officer, the Department of Education, local school districts, and vocational and higher education as affected by the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476.
    2. Establish a Division of School Finance which shall conduct an ongoing review of the finance system. The review shall include an analysis of the level of equity achieved by the funding system and whether adequate funds are available to all school districts; a review of the weights of various education program components, which are to be developed by the Department of Education no later than October 1, 1991. The division shall develop recommendations for the base per pupil funding for the support education excellence in Kentucky program and a statewide salary schedule. It shall conduct studies of other finance issues identified as needing further study, including a review of the transportation formula required in KRS 157.360. The division shall submit an annual report of its activities, findings, and recommendations to the ***Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. Upon approval of the subcommittee, the annual report shall be forwarded to the*** Governor, the Legislative Research Commission, and the Kentucky Board of Education no later than October 1 each year.

3. Verify the accuracy of reports of school, district, and state performance by conducting, ~~contracting for, or~~ requesting, ***or upon approval of the Legislative Research Commission contracting for*** periodic program and fiscal audits as necessary. ***Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, the Office of Education Accountability shall monitor and verify the accuracy of reports of the Department of Education and the Kentucky Board of Education, including but not limited to the annual fiscal conditions of grants, categorical programs, and other educational initiatives set forth by the General Assembly*** ~~[may request an audit from the State Committee for School District Audits as established in KRS 156.265].~~
4. Investigate allegations of wrongdoing of any person or agency, including, but not limited to, waste, duplication, mismanagement, political influence, and illegal activity at the state, regional, or school district level which have not been resolved or satisfactorily explained by the local superintendent, local board of education, the chief state school officer, or the Kentucky Board of Education, and make recommendations for ***legislative*** action to the ***Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee***. ***Upon approval of the subcommittee, recommendations for legislative action shall be forwarded to the Legislative Research Commission. The Office of Education Accountability shall submit to the subcommittee, for each of its regular meetings, a report that summarizes investigative activity initiated pursuant to this subparagraph. The subcommittee may consider each report as it determines and in its discretion. Each report, and the consideration thereof by the subcommittee, shall be exempt from the open records and open meetings requirements contained in KRS Chapter 61.***
5. ***Under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, conduct studies,*** ~~[and]~~ ***analyze, verify and validate the state assessment program through other external indicators of academic progress including, but not limited to American College Test scores, Scholastic Assessment Test scores, National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test scores, Advanced Placement Program participation, standardized test scores, college remediation rates, retention and attendance rates, dropout rates and additional*** available data on the efficiency of the system of schools and whether progress is being made toward attaining the goal of providing students with the seven (7) capacities as required by KRS 158.645.
6. Make periodic reports to the ***Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee as directed by the subcommittee. Upon approval of the subcommittee, the reports shall be forwarded to the*** Legislative Research Commission ~~[as directed by the Commission].~~
7. ***Make periodic reports to the Legislative Research Commission as may be directed by the Commission.***
8. Prepare an annual report on the implementation of the provisions of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, including recommendations for improvement which shall be submitted to the ***Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. Upon approval of the***

*subcommittee, the annual report shall be submitted to the* Governor, the Legislative Research Commission, and the Kentucky Board of Education.

- (d) The Office of Education Accountability shall have access to all public records and information on oath as provided in KRS 7.110. The office shall also have access to otherwise confidential records, meetings, and hearings regarding local school district personnel matters. However, the office shall not disclose any information contained in or derived from the records, meetings, and hearings that would enable the discovery of the specific identification of any individual who is the focus or subject of the personnel matter.
  - (e) In compliance with KRS 48.800, 48.950, and 48.955, the Finance and Administration Cabinet and the Governor's Office for Policy and Management shall provide to the Office of Education Accountability access to all information and records, other than preliminary work papers, relating to allotment of funds, whether by usual allotment or by other means, to the Department of Education, local school districts, and to other recipients of funds for educational purposes.
  - (f) Any state agency receiving a complaint or information which if accurate may identify a violation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, shall notify the office of the complaint or information.
  - (g) The Office of Education Accountability may contract for services as approved by the Legislative Research Commission pursuant to KRS 7.090(7).
- (3) The provisions of KRS 61.878 or any other statute, including Acts of the 1992 Regular Session of the General Assembly to the contrary notwithstanding, the testimony of investigators, work products, and records of the Office of Education Accountability relating to duties and responsibilities under subsection (2) of this section shall be privileged and confidential during the course of an ongoing investigation or until authorized, released, or otherwise made public by the Office of Education Accountability and shall not be subject to discovery, disclosure, or production upon the order or subpoena of a court or other agency with subpoena power.

Section 2. KRS 158.647 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) A permanent subcommittee of the Legislative Research Commission to be known as the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee is hereby created. The subcommittee shall be composed of eight (8) members, no more than five (5) of whom shall be members of the same political party. The Legislative Research Commission shall appoint from the membership of the General Assembly, the members of the subcommittee for terms of two (2) years, and the members so appointed shall elect one (1) of their number to serve as chair. Any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the subcommittee shall be filled by the Legislative Research Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting after the occurrence of the vacancy.

- (2) The subcommittee shall review administrative regulations and advise the Kentucky Board of Education concerning the implementation of the state system of assessment and accountability, established in KRS 158.6453, 158.6455, and 158.782.
- (3) *The subcommittee shall advise and monitor the Office of Education Accountability in the performance of its duties according to the provisions of Section 1 of this Act.*
- (4) The subcommittee shall meet at a time and place as the chair may determine. The members of the subcommittee shall be compensated for attending meetings as provided in KRS 7.090.
- (5)~~(4)~~ Any professional, clerical, or other employees required by the subcommittee shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of KRS 7.090.

**Approved April 21, 2000**