

**CHAPTER 138****( HB 257 )**

AN ACT relating to the education assessment and accountability system.

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

➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 158 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

(1) *As used in this section:*

(a) *"Locally developed indicators of quality" means measures or indicators created or adopted by a local school district that:*

1. *Are aligned with the academic standards established in Section 2 of this Act;*
2. *Allow all students to demonstrate their ability to apply grade-appropriate, standards-driven knowledge, content, and skills in real-world applications; and*
3. *May include additional locally identified indicators related to priorities established by the local community that serve to complement the requirements in subparagraphs 1. and 2. of this paragraph. These indicators may include student well-being, fiscal responsibility, or school safety; and*

(b) *"Vibrant learning" means an educational experience that is:*

1. *Characterized by student agency and the application of knowledge and skills aligned with the academic standards established in Section 2 of this Act;*
2. *Developed in partnership with students' families, local communities, and the local workforce; and*
3. *Demonstrated through personalized projects, outputs, experiences, or other produced results reflecting each individual student's academic and career interests.*

(2) *Each local school district may develop and implement a system of locally developed indicators of quality in accordance with administrative regulations promulgated by the Kentucky Board of Education. The locally developed indicators of quality shall include:*

- (a) *Student participation in vibrant learning experiences; and*
- (b) *Locally developed indicators of performance.*

(3) *A local school district utilizing a system of locally developed indicators of quality shall:*

- (a) *When an indicator involves student data, include student performance data for all students, disaggregated by individual subgroups, where permissible; and*
- (b) *Develop a publicly available, online display that clearly communicates each applicable school and the district's performance on the locally developed indicators of quality, disaggregated by individual subgroups, where permissible.*

(4) *The Kentucky Department of Education:*

- (a) *Shall offer technical assistance to local school districts in their development of locally developed indicators of quality; and*
- (b) *May offer a one (1) time payment to offset costs incurred by local school districts in the development of locally developed indicators of quality. A financial payment provided under this paragraph shall not exceed fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) per district.*

(5) *The Kentucky Board of Education may promulgate administrative regulations in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A necessary to administer the provisions of this section.*

➔Section 2. KRS 158.6453 (Effective July 1, 2026) is amended to read as follows:

(1) *As used in this section:*

- (a) "Accelerated learning" means an organized way of helping students meet individual academic goals by providing direct instruction to eliminate student performance deficiencies or enable students to move more quickly through course requirements and pursue higher level skill development;
  - (b) "Advanced coursework" means educational programs or opportunities designed to challenge students with more rigorous content beyond the standard curriculum, including but not limited to advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, and honors courses;
  - (c) "Constructed-response items" or "performance-based items" means individual test items that require the student to create an answer rather than select a response and may include fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, extended-answer, open-response, and writing-on-demand formats;
  - (d) "Criterion-referenced test" means a test that is aligned with defined academic content standards and measures an individual student's level of performance against the standards;
  - (e) "Formative assessment" means a process used by teachers and students during instruction to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. Formative assessments may include the use of commercial assessments, **curriculum-embedded assessments**, classroom observations, teacher-designed ~~classroom tests and~~ assessments, and other processes and assignments to gain information about individual student learning **that reflects developmentally appropriate grade-level performance**;
  - (f) "Interim assessments" means assessments that are given periodically throughout the year to provide diagnostic information and to show individual student performance against content standards;
  - (g) "Summative assessment" means an assessment given at the end of the school year, semester, or other period of time to evaluate students' performance against **academic**~~content~~ standards within a unit of instruction or a course; and
  - (h) "Writing" means a purposeful act of thinking and expression that uses language to explore ideas and communicate meaning to others. Writing is a complex, multifaceted act of communication and is distinct from basic handwriting or penmanship.
- (2) (a) Every six (6) years, the Kentucky Department of Education shall implement a process for reviewing Kentucky's academic standards and the alignment of corresponding assessments for possible revision or replacement to ensure alignment with transition readiness standards necessary for global competitiveness, state career and technical education standards, and KRS 158.196.
- (b) The revisions to the **academic**~~content~~ standards shall:
1. Focus on critical knowledge, skills, and capacities needed for success in the global economy;
  2. Result in fewer but more in-depth standards to facilitate mastery learning;
  3. Communicate expectations more clearly and concisely to teachers, parents, students, and citizens;
  4. Be based on evidence-based research;
  5. Consider international benchmarks; and
  6. Ensure that the standards are aligned from elementary to high school to postsecondary education so that students can be successful at each education level.
- (c) 1. The department shall establish four (4) standards and assessments review committees, with each committee composed of a minimum of six (6) Kentucky public school teachers and a minimum of two (2) representatives from Kentucky institutions of higher education, including at least one (1) representative from a public institution of higher education. Each committee member shall teach in the subject area that his or her committee is assigned to review and have no prior or current affiliation with a curriculum or assessment resources vendor.
2. One (1) of the four (4) committees shall be assigned to focus on the review of **reading**~~language arts~~ and writing academic standards and **corresponding** assessments **in reading**, one (1) on the review of mathematics academic standards and assessments, one (1) on the review of science academic standards and assessments, and one (1) on the review of social studies academic standards and assessments.

- (d)
  1. The department shall establish twelve (12) advisory panels to advise and assist each of the four (4) standards and assessments review committees.
  2. Three (3) advisory panels shall be assigned to each standards and assessments review committee. One (1) panel shall review the standards and assessments for kindergarten through grade five (5), one (1) shall review the standards and assessments for grades six (6) through eight (8), and one (1) shall review the standards and assessments for grades nine (9) through twelve (12).
  3. Each advisory panel shall be composed of at least one (1) representative from a Kentucky institution of higher education and a minimum of six (6) Kentucky public school teachers who teach in the grade level and subject reviewed by the advisory panel to which they are assigned and have no prior or current affiliation with a curriculum or assessment resources vendor.
- (e) The commissioner of education and the president of the Council on Postsecondary Education shall also provide consultants for the standards and assessments review committees and the advisory panels who are business and industry professionals actively engaged in career fields that depend on the various content areas.
- (f)
  1. The standards and assessments process review committee is hereby established and shall be composed of the commissioner of education or designee as a nonvoting member and nine (9) voting representatives of public schools, of whom at least two (2) shall be parents of public school students, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate in accordance with KRS 11.160 as follows:
    - a. One (1) language arts teacher;
    - b. One (1) math teacher;
    - c. One (1) science teacher;
    - d. One (1) social studies teacher;
    - e. Two (2) school principals;
    - f. Two (2) school superintendents; and
    - g. One (1) school board member.
  2. On making appointments to the committee, the Governor shall ensure broad geographical urban and rural representation and representation of elementary, middle, and high school levels; ensure equal representation of the two (2) sexes, inasmuch as possible; and ensure that appointments reflect the minority racial composition of the Commonwealth.
  3. The review of the committee shall be limited to the procedural aspects of the review process undertaken prior to its consideration.
  4. Notwithstanding KRS 12.028, the committee shall not be subject to reorganization by the Governor.
- (g)
  1. The review process implemented under this subsection shall be an open, transparent process that allows all Kentuckians an opportunity to participate. The department shall ensure the public's assistance in reviewing and suggesting changes to the standards and alignment adjustments to corresponding state assessments by establishing a website dedicated to collecting comments by the public and educators. An independent third party, which has no prior or current affiliation with a curriculum or assessment resources vendor, shall be selected by the department to collect and transmit the comments to the department for dissemination to the appropriate advisory panel for review and consideration.
  2. Each advisory panel shall review the standards and assessments for its assigned subject matter and grade level and the suggestions made by the public and educators. After completing its review, each advisory panel shall make recommendations for changes to the standards and alignment adjustments for assessments to the appropriate standards and assessments review committee.
  3. Each standards and assessments review committee shall review the findings and make recommendations to revise or replace existing standards and to adjust alignment of assessments.

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4. The recommendations shall be published on the website established in this subsection for the purpose of gathering additional feedback from the public. The commissioner shall subsequently present the recommendations and the public feedback to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.
  5. The commissioner shall subsequently provide a report to the standards and assessments process review committee summarizing the process conducted under this subsection and the resulting recommendations. The report shall include but not be limited to the timeline of the review process, public feedback, and responses from the Interim Joint Committee on Education.
  6. After receiving the commissioner's report, the standards and assessments process review committee shall either concur that stakeholders have had adequate opportunity to provide input on standards and the corresponding alignment of state assessments or find the input process deficient. If the process is found deficient, the recommendations may be returned to the appropriate standards and assessments review committee for review as described in subparagraph 3. of this paragraph. If the process is found sufficient, the recommendations shall be forwarded without amendment to the Kentucky Board of Education.
- (h) The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A as may be needed for the administration of the review process, including staggering the timing and sequence of the review process by subject area and remuneration of the review committees and advisory panels described in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this subsection.
- (i) 1. The Kentucky Board of Education shall consider for approval the revisions to academic standards for a content area and the alignment of the corresponding state assessment once recommendations are received from the standards and assessments process review committee. Existing state academic standards shall remain in place until the board approves new standards.
2. Any revision to, or replacement of, the academic standards and assessments as a result of the review process conducted under this subsection shall be implemented in Kentucky public schools no later than the second academic year following the review process. Existing academic standards shall be used until new standards are implemented.
3. The Department of Education shall disseminate the academic ~~content~~ standards to the schools and teacher preparation programs.
- (j) The Department of Education shall provide or facilitate statewide training sessions for existing teachers and administrators on how to:
1. Integrate the revised **academic** ~~content~~ standards into classroom instruction;
  2. Better integrate performance assessment of students within their instructional practices; and
  3. Help all students use higher-order thinking and communication skills.
- (k) The Education Professional Standards Board in cooperation with the Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education shall coordinate information and training sessions for faculty and staff in all of the teacher preparation programs in the use of the revised academic ~~content~~ standards. The Education Professional Standards Board shall ensure that each teacher preparation program includes use of the academic standards in the pre-service education programs and that all teacher interns will have experience planning classroom instruction based on the revised standards.
- (l) The Council on Postsecondary Education in cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Education and the postsecondary education institutions in the state shall coordinate information sessions regarding the academic ~~content~~ standards for faculty who teach in the various content areas.
- (m) The Education Professional Standards Board shall, as a condition of program approval, require teacher preparation programs to align curriculum with the expectations set forth in the state's academic ~~content~~ standards.
- (3) (a) The Kentucky Board of Education shall be responsible for creating and implementing a balanced statewide assessment program that measures the students', schools', and districts' achievement of the goals set forth in KRS 158.645 and 158.6451, to ensure compliance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor, and to ensure school accountability.

- (b) The board shall revise the annual statewide assessment program as needed in accordance with revised academic standards and corresponding assessment alignment adjustments approved by the board under subsection (2) of this section.
  - (c) The statewide assessments shall not include any academic standards not approved by the board under subsection (2) of this section.
  - (d) The board shall seek the advice of the Office of Education Accountability; the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, and the department's technical advisory committee in the development of the assessment program. The statewide assessment program shall not include measurement of a student's ability to become a self-sufficient individual or to become a responsible member of a family, work group, or community.
- (4) (a) The academic components of the statewide assessment program shall be composed of annual student summative tests, which may include a combination of multiple competency-based assessment and performance measures approved by the Kentucky Board of Education.
- (b) The annual student summative tests shall:
1. Measure individual student achievement in ~~language,~~ reading, ~~English,~~ mathematics, science, and social studies at designated grades;
  2. Provide teachers and parents a valid and reliable comprehensive analysis of skills mastered by individual students;
  3. Provide diagnostic information that identifies strengths and academic deficiencies of individual students in the content areas;
  4. Provide information to teachers that can enable them to improve instruction for current and future students;
  5. Provide longitudinal profiles for students; and
  6. Ensure school and district accountability for student achievement of the goals set forth in KRS 158.645 and 158.6451, except the statewide assessment program shall not include measurement of a student's ability to become a self-sufficient individual or to become a responsible member of a family, work group, or community.
- (5) The state student assessments shall include the following components:
- (a) Elementary and middle grades requirements are:
1. A criterion-referenced test each in mathematics and reading in grades three (3) through eight (8) that is valid and reliable for an individual student and that measures the depth and breadth of ~~the~~**the**~~Kentucky's~~ academic ~~content~~ standards; **and**
  2. A criterion-referenced test each in science and social studies that is valid and reliable for an individual student as necessary to measure the depth and breadth of ~~the~~**the**~~Kentucky's~~ academic ~~content~~ standards to be administered one (1) time within the elementary and middle grades, respectively;{
  - ~~3. An on-demand assessment of student writing to be administered one (1) time within the elementary grades and one (1) time within the middle grades; and~~
  - ~~4. An editing and mechanics test relating to writing, using multiple choice and constructed response items, to be administered one (1) time within the elementary and the middle grades, respectively;}~~
- (b) High school requirements are:
1. A criterion-referenced test in mathematics, reading, and science that is valid and reliable for an individual student and that measures the depth and breadth of Kentucky's academic content standards to be administered one (1) time within the high school grades;

2. A criterion-referenced test in social studies that is valid and reliable for an individual student as necessary to measure the depth and breadth of ~~the Kentucky's~~ academic ~~content~~ standards to be administered one (1) time within the high school grades; *and*
  3. ~~[An on-demand assessment of student writing to be administered one (1) time within the high school grades;~~
  4. ~~An editing and mechanics test relating to writing, using multiple choice and constructed response items, to be administered one (1) time within the high school grades; and~~
  5. ~~A college admissions examination to assess English, reading, mathematics, and science in the spring of grade eleven (11);~~
- (c) The Kentucky Board of Education shall add any other component necessary to comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor, as determined by the United States Department of Education;
  - (d) The criterion-referenced components required in this subsection shall be composed of constructed response items and multiple choice items; and
  - (e) The results of the assessment program developed under this subsection shall be used by schools and districts to determine appropriate instructional modifications for all students in order for students to make continuous progress, including that needed by advanced learners.
- (6) Each school district shall administer the statewide student assessment during the last fourteen (14) days of school in the district's instructional calendar. The Kentucky Board of Education may change the testing window to allow for innovative assessment systems or other online test administration and shall promulgate administrative regulations that minimize the number of days of testing and outline the procedures to be used during the testing process to ensure test security, including procedures for testing makeup days, and to comply with federal assessment requirements.
  - (7) A student enrolled in a district-operated or district-contracted alternative program shall participate in the appropriate assessments required by this section.
  - (8) A local school district may select and use commercial interim or formative assessments or develop and use its own formative assessments to provide data on how well its students are growing toward mastery of Kentucky academic standards, so long as the district's local school board develops a policy minimizing the reduction in instructional time related to the administration of the interim assessments. Nothing in this section precludes teachers from using ongoing teacher-developed formative processes.
  - (9) Each school that enrolls primary students shall use diagnostic assessments and prompts that measure readiness in reading and mathematics for its primary students as determined by the school to be developmentally appropriate. The schools may use commercial products, use products and procedures developed by the district, or develop their own diagnostic procedures. The results shall be used to inform the teachers and parents or guardians of each student's skill level.
  - (10) The state board shall ensure that a technically sound longitudinal comparison of the assessment results for the same students shall be made available.
  - (11) The following provisions shall apply to the college admissions examination described in subsection (5)(b)3.~~(5)~~ of this section:
    - (a) The cost of the college admissions examination administered to students in high school shall be paid for by the Kentucky Department of Education. The costs of additional college admissions examinations shall be the responsibility of the student;
    - (b) If funds are available, the Kentucky Department of Education shall provide a college admissions examination preparation program to all public high school juniors. The department may contract for necessary services; and
    - (c) Accommodations provided to a student with a disability taking the college admissions assessment under this subsection shall consist of:
      1. Accommodations provided in a manner allowed by the college admissions assessment provider when results in test scores are reportable to a postsecondary institution for admissions and placement purposes, except as provided in subparagraph 2. of this paragraph; or

2. Accommodations provided in a manner allowed by a student's individualized education program as defined in KRS 158.281 for a student whose disability precludes valid assessment of his or her academic abilities using the accommodations provided under subparagraph 1. of this paragraph when the student's scores are not reportable to a postsecondary institution for admissions and placement purposes.
- (12) Kentucky teachers shall have a significant role in providing feedback about the design of the assessments, except for the college admissions exam described in subsection (5)(b)~~3,4,5~~ of this section. The assessments shall be designed to:
- (a) Measure *developmentally appropriate grade-level performance aligned to the academic standards*~~[grade appropriate core academic content, basic skills, and higher order thinking skills and their application];~~
  - (b) Provide valid and reliable scores for schools. If scores are reported for students individually, they shall be valid and reliable; *and*
  - (c) Minimize the time spent by teachers and students on assessment~~;~~ *and*
  - ~~(d) Assess Kentucky academic standards only.~~
- (13) The results from assessment under subsections (3) and (5) of this section shall be reported to the school districts and schools no later than seventy-five (75) days following the last day the assessment can be administered. Assessment reports provided to the school districts and schools shall include an electronic copy of an operational subset of test items from each assessment administered to their students and the results for each of those test items by student and by school.
- (14) The Department of Education shall gather information to establish the validity of the assessment and accountability program. It shall develop a biennial plan for validation studies that shall include but not be limited to the consistency of student results across multiple measures, the congruence of school scores with documented improvements in instructional practice and the school learning environment, and the potential for all scores to yield fair, consistent, and accurate student performance level and school accountability decisions. Validation activities shall take place in a timely manner and shall include a review of the accuracy of scores assigned to students and schools, as well as of the testing materials. The plan shall be submitted to the Commission by July 1 of the first year of each biennium. A summary of the findings shall be submitted to the Legislative Research Commission by September 1 of the second year of the biennium.
- (15) The Department of Education and the state board shall offer optional assistance to local school districts and schools in developing and using continuous assessment strategies needed to ensure student progress. The continuous assessment shall provide diagnostic information to improve instruction to meet the needs of individual students.
- (16) The Administration Code for Kentucky's Assessment Program shall include prohibitions of inappropriate test preparation activities by school district employees charged with test administration and oversight, including but not limited to the issue of teachers being required to do test practice in lieu of regular classroom instruction and test practice outside the normal work day. The code shall include disciplinary sanctions that may be taken toward a school or individuals.
- (17) The Kentucky Board of Education, after the Department of Education has received advice from the Office of Education Accountability; the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; and the department's technical advisory committee, shall promulgate an administrative regulation under KRS Chapter 13A to establish the components of a reporting structure for assessments administered under this section. The reporting structure shall include the following components:
- (a) A school report card that clearly communicates with parents and the public about school performance. The school report card shall be sent to the parents of the students of the districts, and information on electronic access to a summary of the results for the district shall be published in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county. It shall include but not be limited to the following components reported by race, gender, and disability when appropriate:
    - 1. Student academic achievement, including the results from each of the assessments administered under this section;

2. For Advanced Placement, Cambridge Advanced International, and International Baccalaureate, the courses offered, the number of students enrolled, completing, and taking the examination for each course, and the percentage of examinees receiving a score of three (3) or better on AP examinations, a score of "e" or better on Cambridge Advanced International examinations, or a score of four (4) or better on IB examinations. The data shall be disaggregated by gender, race, students with disabilities, and economic status;
3. Nonacademic achievement, including the school's attendance, retention, graduation rates, and student transition to postsecondary;
4. School learning environment, including measures of parental involvement;~~and~~
5. *Until June 30, 2030, targeted quality measures, which shall include a measure of the change from the prior school year on the following factors:*
  - a. *The percentage of certified teachers within the school and district who have attained:*
    - i. *Rank II status or higher as determined by the Education Professional Standards Board; or*
    - ii. *Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards;*
  - b. *For schools and districts containing students in grade eight (8), the percentage of students earning at least one (1) high school credit upon the completion of the student's grade eight (8) school year; and*
  - c. *For schools and districts containing students in grade twelve (12), the percentage of graduating students who have:*
    - i. *Completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by the student's graduation date; or*
    - ii. *A parent or legal guardian that has submitted an appropriate form to the school or district to opt out of completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid after completing a district-approved presentation regarding the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and*
- 6.~~5.~~ Any other school performance data required by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor;
- (b) An individual student report to parents for each student in grades three (3) through eight (8) summarizing the student's skills in reading, science, social studies, and mathematics. The school's staff shall develop a plan for accelerated learning for any student with identified deficiencies or strengths; and
- (c) A student's score on the college admissions assessment administered under subsection (5)(b)~~3.5.~~ of this section.
- (18) (a) Every six (6) years, the Kentucky Department of Education shall implement a comprehensive process for reviewing and revising the academic standards in visual and performing arts and practical living skills and career studies for all levels and in ~~world~~~~foreign~~ language for middle and high schools. The department shall develop review committees for the standards for each of the content areas that include representation from certified specialist public school teachers and postsecondary teachers in those subject areas.
- (b) The academic standards in practical living skills for elementary, middle, and high school levels shall include a focus on drug abuse prevention, with an emphasis on the prescription drug epidemic and the connection between prescription opioid abuse and addiction to other drugs, such as heroin and synthetic drugs.
- (c) The department shall provide to all schools guidelines for programs that incorporate the adopted academic standards in visual and performing arts and practical living and career studies. The department shall provide to middle and high schools guidelines for including a foreign language program. The guidelines shall address program length and time, courses offered, staffing, resources, and facilities.

- (d) The Kentucky Department of Education, in consultation with certified public school teachers of visual and performing arts, may develop program standards for the visual and performing arts.
- (19) (a) The Kentucky Department of Education shall ***develop and distribute***~~provide~~ to all school districts guidelines for including an effective writing program ***across the content areas aligned to the academic standards. The department shall provide professional learning opportunities to support authentic and disciplinary-specific writing across the curriculum for superintendents, school-based decision making councils, principals, teachers, and teacher preparation programs***~~within the curriculum~~.
- (b) ***Each superintendent of a local school district shall adopt policies that determine the writing program for the local school district and ensure the writing program policy is published on the district's website. The writing program shall include disciplinary-specific writing across the curriculum and incorporate a variety of language resources, technological tools, and multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes.***
- (20) (a) The Kentucky Department of Education, in consultation with the review committees described in subsection (18) of this section, shall develop a school profile report to be used by all schools to document how they will address the adopted academic standards in their implementation of the programs as described in subsection (18) of this section, which may include student opportunities and experiences in extracurricular activities. The department shall include the essential workplace ethics program on the school profile report.
- (b) By October 1 of each year, each school principal shall complete the school profile report, which shall be signed by the members of the school council, or the principal if no school council exists, and the superintendent. The report shall be electronically transmitted to the Kentucky Department of Education, and the original shall be maintained on file at the local board office and made available to the public upon request. The department shall include a link to each school's profile report on its website.
- (c) If a school staff member, student, or a student's parent has concerns regarding deficiencies in a school's implementation of the programs described in subsection (18) of this section, he or she may submit a written inquiry to the school council.
- (21) (a) No later than December 1, 2025, each local board of education shall adopt a district plan establishing clear policies on the promotion of advanced coursework or accelerated learning in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science by grade level for students in grades four (4) to twelve (12).
- (b) The district plan required by paragraph (a) of this subsection shall:
1. Be published on a publicly accessible location on the district website;
  2. Describe the strategies and approach to advanced coursework or accelerated learning options by grade level for language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science; and
  3. Require that the service delivery options for students identified as gifted and talented in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science include the following for each grade level and subject area:
    - a.
      - i. Accelerated learning; or
      - ii. Advanced coursework; and
    - b. At least one (1) of the following service delivery options:
      - i. Collaborative teaching and consultation services;
      - ii. Special counseling services;
      - iii. Differentiated study experiences for individuals and cluster groups in the regular classroom;
      - iv. Distance learning;
      - v. Enrichment services that are not extracurricular during the school day;
      - vi. Independent study;
      - vii. Mentorships;

- viii. Resource services delivered in a pull-out classroom or other appropriate instructional setting;
  - ix. Seminars;
  - x. Travel study options; or
  - xi. Special schools or self-contained classrooms for students in grades four (4) through twelve (12) only.
- (c) The district plan required by paragraph (a) of this subsection may:
- 1. Automatically enroll a student who scores distinguished in any subject area on the most recent statewide assessment for which scores are available in available advanced coursework for that subject area and any corresponding subject area designated by the local board of education;
  - 2. Include eligibility criteria for qualification for available advanced coursework for all other students;
  - 3. Require written consent from a parent or guardian of a student to withdraw or exclude a student that is eligible for advanced coursework according to the district plan from that advanced coursework. If a student requests to withdraw from advanced coursework to pursue another educational opportunity, a principal may withdraw the student without written consent from a parent or guardian only after a good-faith attempt to contact the parent or guardian is unsuccessful; and
  - 4. Permit a principal to withdraw a student from advanced coursework without written consent from his or her parent or guardian if the student's participation in advanced coursework would have an adverse educational impact on a student, including interference with his or her career pathway, access to career and technical education coursework, or another educational opportunity.
- (22) ~~{(a) }~~The Kentucky Board of Education may promulgate administrative regulations in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A to administer the provisions of subsection (21) of this section.~~}~~
- ~~{(b) } By December 1, 2025, the Kentucky Department of Education, in collaboration with local school districts, shall establish school district recommendations for the consistent use of preliminary assessment data and other criteria to identify students prepared for advanced coursework. }~~

➔Section 3. KRS 158.6455 is amended to read as follows:

It is the intent of the General Assembly that schools succeed with all students and receive the appropriate consequences in proportion to that success.

- (1) (a) The Kentucky Board of Education shall create an accountability system to classify districts and schools in accordance with the academic standards and student assessment program developed pursuant to KRS 158.6453.
- (b) The *state* accountability system shall include an annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the state using multiple measures that describe the overall performance of each district, school, and student subgroup. ***Beginning with data from the 2026-2027 school year***, performance shall be based on a combination of academic and school quality indicators and measures, hereinafter called "state indicators." The state indicators shall exclusively include:
- 1. Student assessment results;
  - 2. ***Measures of individual student growth in reading and mathematics;***
  - 3. Progress toward achieving English proficiency by limited English proficiency students;
  - 4.~~{3}~~ ***Student engagement as measured by chronic absenteeism, which shall be defined as a student missing ten percent (10%) or more of yearly school time for excused or unexcused reasons throughout the school year***~~{Quality of school climate and safety}~~;
  - 5.~~{4}~~ High school graduation rates;
  - 6. ***Beginning July 1, 2030, targeted quality measures, which shall include a measure of the change from the prior school year on the following factors:***

- a. *The percentage of certified teachers within the school and district who have attained:*
  - i. *Rank II status or higher as determined by the Education Professional Standards Board; or*
  - ii. *Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards;*
- b. *For schools and districts containing students in grade eight (8), the percentage of students earning at least one (1) high school credit upon the completion of the student's grade eight (8) school year; and*
- c. *For schools and districts containing students in grade twelve (12), the percentage of graduating students who have:*
  - i. *Completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by the student's graduation date; or*
  - ii. *A parent or legal guardian that has submitted an appropriate form to the school or district to opt out of completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid after completing a district-approved presentation regarding the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.*

*The targeted quality measures shall have a cumulative weight in accountability of no less than five percent (5%);*

- 7.~~5~~ Postsecondary readiness for each high school student, which shall be included as an academic indicator, and shall be measured by one (1) of the following:
    - a. Meeting or exceeding a college readiness benchmark score on the college admissions examination used as the statewide assessment in KRS 158.6453(5)(b)~~3.5~~ or a college placement examination approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education. The college readiness benchmark score shall be established by the Council on Postsecondary Education;
    - b. Achieving a minimum of three (3) hours of dual credit by completing a course approved by the Kentucky Board of Education or qualifying for a minimum of three (3) hours of postsecondary articulated credit associated with a statewide articulation agreement;
    - c. Achieving a benchmark score on an Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge Advanced International, or other nationally recognized exam approved by the Kentucky Board of Education that generally qualifies the student for three (3) or more hours of college credit;
    - d. Completing a required number of hours or achieving a benchmark within an apprenticeship, cooperative, or internship that is:
      - i. Not required to be offered as a high school course or during the regular school day, week, or year;
      - ii. Aligned with a credential or associate degree; and
      - iii. Approved by the Kentucky Board of Education after receiving input from the Local Superintendents Advisory Council; or
    - e. Achieving any industry-recognized certifications, licensures, or credentials, with more weight in accountability for industry-recognized certifications, licensures, or credentials identified as high demand in accordance with the process described in paragraph (e) of this subsection. Eligible industry-recognized certifications, licensures, or credentials shall not be limited to those earned in conjunction with a minimum sequence of courses. Each high school shall publicly report the credits, hours, and credentials on an annual basis; and
  - 8.~~6~~ Any other factor mandated by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor.
- (c) 1. ~~Beginning with data from the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, the accountability system performance for each district, school, and student subgroup determined by the state indicators~~

~~shall be based on a combination of annual performance, hereinafter called "status," and improvement over time, hereinafter called "change."~~

- ~~2. Status and change shall receive equal weight in determining overall performance. For all students as a group and separately for individual subgroups, status shall be determined, beginning with the data from the 2020-2021 academic year, by using the current year performance and change shall be determined, beginning with the data from the 2021-2022 academic year, by using the difference in performance from the prior to current year, except change shall be based on the difference in performance for the prior three (3) years for the purpose of determining the lowest-performing five percent (5%) of schools under KRS 160.346(2) and (3).~~
  - ~~3. For each state indicator, there shall be five (5) status levels ranging from very high to very low and five (5) change levels ranging from increased significantly to declined significantly.~~
  - ~~4. The percentile cut scores for status and change levels shall be based on distribution and shall be approved by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Local Superintendents Advisory Council. The cut scores shall remain in place for at least six (6) years unless existing cut scores no longer support meaningful differentiation of schools as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor.~~
- ~~(d) Beginning in the fall of 2022, }The Kentucky Department of Education shall develop an online display of the *state* accountability system results hereinafter called a "dashboard." A color-coded performance level for each state indicator *and overall performance* shall be displayed in a straightforward manner on the dashboard {for overall performance, status, and change }by district, school, and individual subgroups. Overall performance shall aggregate all available data for the state indicators.~~
- ~~2. *The percentile cut scores for the color-coded performance level for each state indicator and overall performance shall be based on distribution and shall be approved by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Local Superintendents Advisory Council. The cut scores shall remain in place for at least six (6) years unless existing cut scores no longer support a meaningful differentiation of schools as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor.*~~
- ~~(d){(e)}~~ Based on data from the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics, each local workforce investment board, in conjunction with local economic development organizations from its state regional sector, shall annually compile a list of industry-recognized certifications, licensures, and credentials specific to the state and regional workforce area, rank them by demand for the state and regional area, and provide the list to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. The Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, in conjunction with the Kentucky Department of Education, may revise the lists before the Kentucky Department of Education disseminates the lists to all school districts to be used as postsecondary readiness indicators.
- ~~(e){(f)}~~
1. The Kentucky Department of Education shall pay for the cost of an assessment taken by a high school student for attaining an industry-recognized certification, credential, or licensure if the student consecutively completes at least two (2) related career pathway courses approved by the department prior to taking the assessment.
  2. If a high school student has not completed the two (2) course requirement described in subparagraph 1. of this paragraph but meets performance-based experience eligibility and passes an assessment, the department shall provide a weighted reimbursement amount to the school district for the cost of the assessment based on the level of demand of the certificate, credential, or license earned. The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate regulations establishing the performance-based experience eligibility requirements and weighted reimbursement amounts.
- ~~(f){(g)}~~ Prior to promulgating administrative regulations to revise the accountability system, the board shall seek advice from the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; the Office of Education Accountability; the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee; and the department's technical advisory committee.
- (2) A student's test scores shall be counted in the accountability measure of:

- (a)
    - 1. The school in which the student is currently enrolled if the student has been enrolled in that school for at least a full academic year as defined by the Kentucky Board of Education; or
    - 2. The school in which the student was previously enrolled if the student was enrolled in that school for at least a full academic year as defined by the Kentucky Board of Education; and
  - (b) The school district if the student is enrolled in the district for at least a full academic year as defined by the Kentucky Board of Education; and
  - (c) The state if the student is enrolled in a Kentucky public school prior to the beginning of the statewide testing period.
- (3) After receiving the advice of the Office of Education Accountability; the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; and the department's technical advisory committee, the Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate an administrative regulation in conformity with KRS 158.6471 and 158.6472 and KRS Chapter 13A to establish more rigorous action, intervention, and appropriate consequences for schools that fail to exit comprehensive support and improvement status described in KRS 160.346. The consequences shall be designed to improve the academic performance and learning environment of identified schools and may include but not be limited to:
- (a) A review and audit process to determine the appropriateness of a school's or district's classification and to recommend needed assistance;
  - (b) School and district improvement plans;
  - (c) Eligibility to receive Commonwealth school improvement funds under KRS 158.805;
  - (d) Education assistance from highly skilled certified staff; and
  - (e) Observation of school personnel.
- (4) All students who drop out of school during a school year shall be included in a school's annual average school graduation rate calculation.
- (5) After receiving the advice of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, the Office of Education Accountability; the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; and the department's technical advisory committee, the Kentucky Board of Education may promulgate by administrative regulation, in conformity with KRS 158.6471 and 158.6472 and KRS Chapter 13A, a system of district accountability that includes establishing a formula for accountability, goals for improvement over a three (3) year period, rewards for leadership in improving teaching and learning in the district, and consequences that address the problems and provide assistance when one (1) or more schools in the district fail to exit comprehensive support and improvement status after three (3) consecutive years of implementing the turnaround intervention process described in KRS 160.346.
- (6) After receiving the advice of the Office of Education Accountability; the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council; and the department's technical advisory committee, the Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations in conformity with KRS 158.6471 and 158.6472 and KRS Chapter 13A to establish a process whereby a school or school district shall be allowed to appeal any performance judgment made by the department under this section or KRS 160.346 of a principal, superintendent, school, or school district which it considers grossly unfair. Upon appeal, an administrative hearing shall be conducted in accordance with KRS Chapter 13B. The state board may adjust a performance judgment on appeal when evidence of unusual circumstances warrants the conclusion that the performance judgment is based on fraud or a mistake in computations, is arbitrary, is lacking any reasonable basis, or when there are significant new circumstances occurring during the three (3) year assessment period which are beyond the control of the appellant school or school district.
- (7) Advice and recommendations provided by the department's technical advisory committee shall be summarized and reported by the department by July 1 and December 1 of each year to the Office of Education Accountability. The report shall include:
- (a) Advice and recommendations provided by panel members relating to:
    - 1. Development and modification to the assessment and accountability system;
    - 2. The development of administrative regulations governing the assessment and accountability system;

3. The setting of standards used in the assessment and accountability system; and
  4. KRS 158.6453, 158.6455, 158.782, or 158.860; and
- (b) Any documentation used by the panel in support of the panel's advice and recommendations.

Upon receipt of the report, the Office of Education Accountability shall forward the report to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee and the co-chairs of the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

➔Section 4. KRS 158.6459 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) A high school student whose highest score on the college admissions examination under KRS 158.6453(5)(b)3,~~4~~ in English, reading, or mathematics is below the systemwide standard established by the Council on Postsecondary Education for entry into a credit-bearing course at a public postsecondary institution without placement in a remedial course or an entry-level course with supplementary academic support shall be provided the opportunity to participate in accelerated learning designed to address his or her identified academic deficiencies prior to high school graduation.
- (2) A high school, in collaboration with its school district, shall develop and implement accelerated learning that:
  - (a) Allows a student's learning plan to be individualized to meet the student's academic needs based on an assessment of test results and consultation among parents, teachers, and the student; and
  - (b) May include changes in a student's class schedule.
- (3) The Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and public postsecondary institutions shall offer support and technical assistance to schools and school districts in the development of accelerated learning.

➔Section 5. KRS 164.7874 is amended to read as follows:

As used in KRS 164.7871 to 164.7885:

- (1) "Academic term" means a semester or other time period specified in an administrative regulation promulgated by the authority;
- (2) "Academic year" means a period consisting of at least the minimum school term, as defined in KRS 158.070;
- (3) "ACT score" means the composite score achieved on the American College Test at a national test site on a national test date or the college admissions examination administered statewide under KRS 158.6453(5)(b)3,~~4~~ if the exam is the ACT, or an equivalent score, as determined by the authority, on the SAT administered by the College Board, Inc.;
- (4) "Authority" means the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority;
- (5) "Award period" means the fall and spring consecutive academic terms within one (1) academic year;
- (6) "Council" means the Council on Postsecondary Education created under KRS 164.011;
- (7) "Eligible high school student" means any person who:
  - (a) Is a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States and Kentucky resident;
  - (b) Was enrolled after July 1, 1998:
    1. In a Kentucky high school for at least one hundred forty (140) days of the minimum school term unless exempted by the authority's executive director upon documentation of extreme hardship, while meeting the KEES curriculum requirements, and was enrolled in a Kentucky high school at the end of the academic year;
    2. In a Kentucky high school for the fall academic term of the senior year and who:
      - a. Was enrolled during the entire academic term;
      - b. Completed the high school's graduation requirements during the fall academic term; and
      - c. Was not enrolled in a secondary school during any other academic term of that academic year; or
    3. In the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, the Craft Academy for Excellence in Science and Mathematics, or in high school at a model and practice school under

KRS 164.380 while meeting the Kentucky educational excellence scholarship curriculum requirements;

- (c) Has a grade point average of 2.5 or above at the end of any academic year beginning after July 1, 1998, or at the end of the fall academic term for a student eligible under paragraph (b)1. of this subsection; and
  - (d) Is not a convicted felon;
- (8) "Eligible postsecondary student" means a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States and Kentucky resident, as determined by the participating institution in accordance with criteria established by the council for the purposes of admission and tuition assessment, who:
- (a) Earned a KEES award;
  - (b) Has the required postsecondary GPA and credit hours required under KRS 164.7881;
  - (c) Has remaining semesters of eligibility under KRS 164.7881;
  - (d) Is enrolled in a participating institution as a part-time or full-time student; and
  - (e) Is not a convicted felon;
- (9) "Full-time student" means a student enrolled in a postsecondary program of study that meets the full-time student requirements of the participating institution in which the student is enrolled;
- (10) "Grade point average" or "GPA" means the grade point average earned by an eligible student and reported by the high school or participating institution in which the student was enrolled based on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent if the high school or participating institution that the student attends does not use the 4.0 grade scale;
- (11) "High school" means any Kentucky public high school, the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, the Craft Academy for Excellence in Science and Mathematics, a high school of a model and practice school under KRS 164.380, and any private, parochial, or church school located in Kentucky that has been certified by the Kentucky Board of Education as voluntarily complying with curriculum, certification, and textbook standards established by the Kentucky Board of Education under KRS 156.160;
- (12) "KEES" or "Kentucky educational excellence scholarship" means a scholarship provided under KRS 164.7871 to 164.7885;
- (13) "KEES award" means:
- (a) For an eligible high school student, the sum of the KEES base amount for each academic year of high school plus any KEES supplemental amount, as adjusted pursuant to KRS 164.7881; and
  - (b) For a student eligible under KRS 164.7879(3)(e), the KEES supplemental amount as adjusted pursuant to KRS 164.7881;
- (14) "KEES award maximum" means the sum of the KEES base amount earned in each academic year of high school plus any KEES supplemental amount earned;
- (15) "KEES base amount" or "base amount" means the amount earned by an eligible high school student based on the student's GPA pursuant to KRS 164.7879;
- (16) "KEES curriculum" means five (5) courses of study, except for students who meet the criteria of subsection (7)(b)2. of this section, in an academic year as determined in accordance with an administrative regulation promulgated by the authority;
- (17) "KEES supplemental amount" means the amount earned by an eligible student based on the student's ACT score pursuant to KRS 164.7879;
- (18) "KEES trust fund" means the Wallace G. Wilkinson Kentucky educational excellence scholarship trust fund;
- (19) "On track to graduate" means the number of cumulative credit hours earned as compared to the number of hours determined by the postsecondary education institution as necessary to complete a bachelor's degree by the end of eight (8) academic terms or ten (10) academic terms if a student is enrolled in an undergraduate program that requires five (5) years of study;

- (20) "Participating institution" means an "institution" as defined in KRS 164.001 that is eligible to participate in the federal Pell Grant program, executes a contract with the authority on terms the authority deems necessary or appropriate for the administration of its programs, and:
- (a) 1. Is publicly operated;
  2. Is licensed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and has operated for at least ten (10) years, offers an associate or baccalaureate degree program of study not comprised solely of sectarian instruction, and admits as regular students only high school graduates, recipients of a High School Equivalency Diploma, or students transferring from another accredited degree granting institution; or
  3. Is designated by the authority as an approved out-of-state institution that offers a degree program in a field of study that is not offered at any institution in the Commonwealth; and
- (b) Continues to commit financial resources to student financial assistance programs; and
- (21) "Part-time student" means a student enrolled in a postsecondary program of study who does not meet the full-time student requirements of the participating institution in which the student is enrolled and who is enrolled for at least six (6) credit hours, or the equivalent for an institution that does not use credit hours.

➔Section 6. KRS 157.069 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) As used in this section:
- (a) "Administrative operations costs" means costs associated with the operations and staffing of a state-operated area technology center, including but not limited to personnel, facility costs, building utilities and maintenance, and custodial and office supplies;
  - (b) "Approved career and technical education dual credit" means earning a grade of "C" or higher for a Kentucky Department of Education-approved career and technical education dual credit course equivalent to three (3) hours of college credit;
  - (c) "Approved career and technical education pathway" means a four (4) course career and technical education pathway approved by the Kentucky Department of Education that provides a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career-related courses within a career and technical education program area, and leads to an associate degree, an industry-recognized certificate or license, or a baccalaureate or higher degree;
  - (d) "Concentrator" means a student who has earned at least two (2) credits for no less than two (2) courses in a single career and technical education pathway;
  - (e) "Converted career and technical education center" means a center providing locally operated career and technical education for which a local district assumed authority from the state for the management and control of the center during the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, or 2022-2023 academic years;
  - (f) "General-cost career and technical education program" means a career and technical education program or pathway in which high-cost technical equipment, materials, or facilities are not required;
  - (g) "General-cost full-time equivalents" means the total number of secondary students enrolled in general-cost career and technical education programs, multiplied by the number of hours those students are enrolled, and divided by six (6) hours;
  - (h) "High-cost career and technical education program" means a career and technical education program or pathway in which high-cost equipment, materials, or facilities are required;
  - (i) "Locally operated career and technical education" means a district program that provides secondary students with one (1) or more approved career and technical education pathways;
  - (j) "State-operated area technology center" means a state-operated secondary school facility with the primary purpose of offering approved career and technical education pathways;
  - (k) "Supplemental funding" or "supplemental funds" means moneys appropriated by the General Assembly to support qualifying locally operated career and technical education centers and programs and state-operated area technology centers and programs based on enrollment and incentive criteria;
  - (l) "Technical skill attainment" means earning an industry-recognized certification, licensure, or credential as identified by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board pursuant to KRS 158.6455(1)(~~d~~)(~~e~~) or

passing an end-of-program assessment for articulated postsecondary credit as designated by the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Career and Technical Education;

- (m) "Weighted high-cost full-time equivalents" means the total number of secondary students enrolled in high-cost career and technical education programs, multiplied by the number of credit hours in which those students are enrolled, divided by six (6) hours, and multiplied by one and one-half (1.5); and
  - (n) "Work-based learning program" means a cooperative education program, internship, or registered apprenticeship within the student's chosen approved career and technical education pathway.
- (2) The Kentucky Department of Education shall provide funds from the department's annual general fund appropriation to support the administrative operations costs of state-operated area technology centers and converted career and technical education centers.
- (3) For converted career and technical education centers, beginning with fiscal year 2024-2025, the Kentucky Department of Education shall deduct from funds designated for the state-operated area technology centers an amount equal to the administrative operations costs of each converted career and technical education center in the amount received by the center in the most recent fiscal year that the center was under state management and control. The funds for each converted career and technical education center shall be divided as follows:
- (a) Seventy-five percent (75%) of the funds shall be sent to the local district that has assumed management and control of the center; and
  - (b) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the funds shall be sent to the career and technical education innovation and support fund established in subsection (4) of this section.
- (4) (a) There is hereby established in the State Treasury a restricted fund to be known as the career and technical education innovation and support fund to receive the funds allocated under subsection (3)(b) of this section. The fund shall consist of moneys received from state appropriations, gifts, grants, and federal funds. The fund shall be administered by the Office of Career and Technical Education. Amounts deposited in the fund shall be used for:
- 1. Supporting innovation in new or emerging career fields;
  - 2. Supporting state-operated area technology centers that may experience hardship or natural disasters;
  - 3. Personnel costs to provide technical assistance to local districts providing locally operated career and technical education, including technical assistance relating to the monitoring and oversight on the use of supplemental career and technical education funding; and
  - 4. Any other purposes reasonably related to improving student outcomes in career and technical education.
- (b) Notwithstanding KRS 45.229, fund amounts not expended at the close of a fiscal year shall not lapse but shall be carried forward into the next fiscal year.
- (5) Beginning with the 2024-2025 fiscal year and for each fiscal year thereafter, the Kentucky Department of Education shall distribute to local districts providing locally operated career and technical education and to state-operated area technology centers all general funds designated as supplemental funds to career and technical education programs, subject to the following:
- (a) A local district providing locally operated career and technical education or a state-operated area technology center shall maintain eligibility for receipt of federal funding pursuant to the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, Pub. L. No. 115-224, to be eligible to receive supplemental funding pursuant to this subsection;
  - (b) All supplemental funds distributed pursuant to this subsection shall be used to improve student outcomes in career and technical education pathways for students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12), including but not limited to student supplies, resources, materials, and equipment that is designed for enhanced quality of instruction in a career and technical education pathway, the purchase and maintenance of industry standard equipment, assisting students with achieving technical skill attainment, and supporting career and technical student organization participation;
  - (c) 1. Supplemental funds for career and technical education shall be divided and allocated to each local district providing locally operated career and technical education and to each state-operated

area technology center, with sixty percent (60%) dedicated for enrollment-based funding and forty percent (40%) for incentive-based funding.

2. The sixty percent (60%) enrollment-based funding shall be based on a statewide full-time equivalent calculation of the total weighted high-cost full-time equivalents and general-cost full-time equivalents during the prior school year, subject to the following:
  - a. The department shall then distribute the enrollment-based funds for each state-operated area technology center or local district providing locally operated career and technical education based on the center's or district's proportional share of the combined weighted high-cost full-time equivalents and general-cost full-time equivalents of the prior year;
  - b. The department shall distribute the state-operated area technology center fund portion to the respective state-operated area technology centers and the local district fund portion to the respective local districts; and
  - c. The department shall classify qualifying programs as either a high-cost career and technical education program or a general-cost career and technical education program.
3. The forty percent (40%) incentives-based funding shall be based on an annual statewide calculation of the total number of qualifying student incentives. The calculation shall only use students that are in grade twelve (12) and use the total incentives earned by those students during secondary education at a state-operated area technology center or within a local district. Once a student has been included in a year's calculation, that student shall not be included in any subsequent year's calculation, subject to the following:
  - a. Qualifying student incentives for students in their grade twelve (12) year shall include:
    - i. Reaching the designation of a concentrator;
    - ii. Technical skill attainment;
    - iii. Completing a required number of hours or achieving a benchmark within a work-based learning program; and
    - iv. Earning an approved career and technical education dual credit;
  - b. The incentives in subdivision a. of this subparagraph shall be allotted to the state-operated area technology center or local district in which it was earned. Each type of incentive shall only be counted once per student at state-operated area technology centers and once per student at local districts for a maximum of four (4) incentives per student at state-operated area technology centers and four (4) incentives at local districts throughout their secondary career and technical education. For incentive criteria that is achieved more than once at state-operated area technology centers, the incentive shall be counted for the state-operated area technology center where it was first achieved. For incentive criteria that is achieved more than once at local districts, the incentive shall be counted for the local district where it was first achieved;
  - c. The department shall distribute incentives-based funds for each state-operated area technology center or local district based on the center's or district's proportional share of the combined number of qualifying student incentives achieved by students in grade twelve (12) at a state-operated area technology center or within a local district throughout their secondary career and technical education. The incentives-based funds shall be distributed to the state-operated area technology center or local district in which the incentive was achieved; and
  - d. The department shall distribute the state-operated area technology center fund portion to the respective state-operated area technology centers and the local district fund portion to the respective local districts;
- (d) There shall be no mid-year adjustment to the allocation of career and technical education supplemental funding for a center or local district; and
- (e) Notwithstanding the restriction in paragraph (b) of this subsection, a district may submit a waiver request to the Office of Career and Technical Education to use a portion of its allocation of supplemental funds for career and technical education programming for students in grades (5) through

eight (8). The district shall submit a request which details the district's plan for career and technical education programming for students in grades five (5) through eight (8). In reviewing the request, the Office of Career and Technical Education shall consider whether:

1. The district details a plan for orientation and exploration of broad-based industries by giving students knowledge and experience regarding careers within these industries and exploratory or hands-on skills used in the industry;
  2. There is direct alignment between middle and secondary career and technical education pathways within the requesting district; and
  3. Such designation of supplemental funding for programming for students in grades five (5) through eight (8) does not have a significant detrimental impact on the programming available for students in secondary grades.
- (6) The Office of Career and Technical Education shall monitor and provide oversight of state funds distributed pursuant to this section to ensure that the use of funding by eligible recipients meets the approved criteria as described in this section.
- (7) The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A as may be needed in the administration of this section and for disbursement of moneys.
- (8) The Kentucky Department of Education shall publish on the department's website:
- (a) The list of all career and technical education programs available to students and the program's designation as a high-cost career and technical education program or as a general-cost career and technical education program;
  - (b) A report of the supplemental funding amounts provided to each local district and to each state-operated area technology center, including an explanation of the amount designated as enrollment-based funding and as incentives-based funding; and
  - (c) A report of the administrative operations costs provided to each state-operated area technology center and to each converted career and technical education center, as well as the amount contributed toward the career and technical education innovation and support fund.

➔Section 7. No later than November 1, 2026, the Kentucky Department of Education shall submit a study report to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the Interim Joint Committee on Education on middle school mathematics and advanced mathematics coursework opportunities. At a minimum, the report shall address:

- (1) Existing local policies and procedures governing student assignment to advanced mathematics coursework in general and advanced middle school mathematics coursework specifically;
- (2) The current availability of advanced mathematics coursework in Kentucky public middle schools, identifying the following for public middle schools that offer advanced mathematics coursework:
  - (a) Eligibility criteria for students to be identified for participation in the advanced mathematics coursework;
  - (b) Methods for how students are being identified for participation in the advanced mathematics coursework;
  - (c) For each school district, the number and percentage of students participating in advanced mathematics coursework opportunities by grade level;
  - (d) For each school district, the number and percentage of students who complete advanced middle school mathematics coursework and enroll in Algebra I by grade 8;
  - (e) The defined sequence of advanced mathematics coursework offered in grades 6 to 8 and the means of delivering those offerings to students, including whether the course is:
    1. Offered virtually, in person, or both;
    2. Offered exclusively to middle school students or in a combined setting with middle and high school students; and
    3. Taught by a teacher whose primary course load is middle school students or taught by a teacher whose primary course load is high school students;

(f) Whether any advanced mathematics coursework previously offered is no longer available to students and the reason for no longer offering that coursework;

(g) How the school districts are providing appropriate staffing to support offering access to advanced mathematics coursework; and

(h) Barriers the school districts encountered in providing advanced mathematics coursework opportunities, and strategies for overcoming these barriers;

(3) A list of each middle school that does not offer advanced mathematics coursework to students that identifies:

(a) The accelerated learning opportunities to which middle school students in each identified school are offered access;

(b) The specific staffing and facility needs for each identified school to transition to offering access to advanced mathematics coursework;

(c) Any scheduling constraints reported by each identified school as a barrier to offering access to advanced mathematics coursework;

(d) Other barriers identified by school districts to offering middle school students enrolled in each identified school access to advanced mathematics coursework; and

(e) If the middle school historically offered advanced mathematics coursework, the specific reasons the school no longer offers that coursework;

(4) The recent rates of participation in advanced mathematics courses of middle school students, identifying the number and percentage of students in each school district's current grade 9, grade 10, grade 11, and grade 12 cohorts that successfully completed designated advanced coursework in middle school;

(5) Best-practice strategies for ensuring that students are academically prepared for advanced middle school mathematics coursework, including identification of advanced coursework opportunities or other academic enrichment opportunities that best prepare students for Algebra I coursework by grade 8;

(6) Analysis of school district capacity and needs to implement a policy providing all public school students in Kentucky with access to Algebra I coursework by grade 8, including but not limited to:

(a) The availability of qualified teachers and staff to support implementation of the policy across each region of the Commonwealth;

(b) The scheduling constraints reported by each district;

(c) Course selection availability in each district and projected enrollment caps; and

(d) Facility, technology, and distance-learning capacity of each district;

(7) An analysis of any curriculum gaps between advanced mathematics coursework and grade-level mathematics standards for the courses in which the student would otherwise be enrolled and strategies to ensure that advanced mathematics students master those grade-level standards; and

(8) Legislative recommendations to promote and encourage advanced mathematics coursework for middle school students, including but not limited to recommended strategies for:

(a) Automatic enrollment in advanced middle school mathematics coursework;

(b) Identifying middle school students to participate in advance mathematics coursework; and

(c) Small, medium, and large school districts to implement advanced mathematics coursework.

➔Section 8. Notwithstanding KRS 156.070(6), the Kentucky Department of Education is hereby authorized to collect data and reports from Kentucky public schools and school districts relevant to inform the study report required by Section 7 of this Act.

**Signed by Governor April 13, 2026.**