

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS & REVENUE

Budget Review Subcommittee on Education

Minutes of the Second Meeting of the 2021 Interim

July 7, 2021

Call to Order and Roll Call

The second meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations & Revenue was held on Wednesday, July 7, 2021, at 11:00 AM, in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Steve Riley, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representatives James Tipton, Co-Chair, and Steve Riley, Co-Chair; Senator Dennis Parrett; Representatives Kim Banta, Tina Bojanowski, Randy Bridges, Ken Fleming, Kelly Flood, Regina Huff, Bobby McCool, and Ruth Ann Palumbo.

Guests: Robin Kinney, Associate Commissioner, Office of Finance and Operations, Kentucky Department of Education; Carrie Ballinger, Superintendent, Rockcastle County Schools; Dr. Houston Barber, Superintendent, Frankfort Independent Schools, President, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents; Matt Robbins, Superintendent, Daviess County Schools, Board Member, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents; Amy Shutt, Assistant Superintendent, Daviess County Schools; Thom Cochran, Superintendent, Johnson County Schools, Vice President, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents.

LRC Staff: Liz Columbia, Jennifer Krieger, Nick Peak, and Amie Elam

Approval of Minutes

Representative Fleming made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2021 meeting. Representative Tipton seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved without objection.

Kentucky Department of Education

Robin Kinney, Associate Commissioner, Office of Finance and Operations, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), spoke to the committee regarding federal pandemic relief funding and full-day kindergarten.

In response to a question from Representative Tipton, Ms. Kinney said that the federal government maintenance of effort provision requires that the state maintain appropriate levels of funding to ensure federal funds are not used to pay General Fund expenses. Ms. Kinney said that the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Funds (GEERs), which are used to supplement Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs), go directly to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services via the Governor's office.

In response to a question from Representative Bridges, Ms. Kinney said that bonuses and salary adjustments are permissible expenditures as long as they are forward looking. However, one-time non-recurring thank you bonuses for past performance are not allowed.

In response to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Ms. Kinney said that federal relief funds may be used for preschool and early childhood education efforts.

In response to a question from Representative Fleming, Ms. Kinney said that KDE is still learning what will be audited by the federal government. She added that there is already a process in place to look at the use of funds across the Department. Each district must submit an assurance document, a spending plan, and a quarterly expenditure report. She added that each district has an independent financial audit performed yearly. Ms. Kinney said that all expenditure monitoring is available through KDE's website and that she would be happy to share any use of funds information with the General Assembly.

In response to a question from Senator Parrett, Ms. Kinney said that KDE would provide the committee with the funding amounts going to the Kentucky School for the Deaf and the Kentucky School for the Blind.

Superintendents Dr. Houston Barber, Carrie Ballinger, Matt Robbins, Amy Shutt, and Thom Cochran presented to the committee. Presentations focused on summer programs, instructional technology, access to opportunity, mental health, and social-emotional learning.

In response to a question from Representative Fleming, Ms. Ballinger said that prior to the pandemic, school counselors were in each school building. She stated that the pandemic made it clear that there were insufficient mental health resources available to target the needs of students. Ms. Ballinger said that before Rockcastle County received any federal pandemic funds, the district had committed to hiring a mental health coordinator. She added that with the federal money, the district was able to hire two additional staff members to assist with the mental health needs of students.

In response to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Ms. Ballinger said that the pandemic forced schools to think differently and implement necessary programs that may not have been implemented otherwise.

In response to a question from Representative Tipton, Ms. Ballinger stated that to close learning and achievement gaps districts must focus on Tier I instruction. She added that Rockcastle County has an initiative that will have teachers revisiting standards and focusing on curriculum mapping.

In response to a question from Representative Fleming, Ms. Shutt said that all student assistance coordinators are trained in mental health testing and developing treatment plans. She added that the district has a team of psychologists to serve students and families.

There being no further business to come before the subcommittee, the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.