

1 AN ACT relating to innovation academies.

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

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 160 IS CREATED TO
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 (1) As used in this section, "innovation academy" means a school that has developed
6 a plan of innovation in compliance with this section and has been approved by
7 the Kentucky Board of Education to be exempted from certain administrative
8 regulations and statutory provisions to improve the educational performance of
9 students within the district.

10 (2) The Kentucky Board of Education is hereby authorized to approve innovation
11 academies for the purpose of improving students' educational performance,
12 especially the performance of traditionally underperforming groups of students.
13 Innovation academies shall be exempt from all state statutes and administrative
14 regulations applicable to a local school board, school district, or school, except
15 that innovation academies shall adhere to the same health, safety, civil rights,
16 and disability rights requirements as are applicable to all public schools. The
17 initial approval of an innovation academy shall be for a five (5) year period. Each
18 renewal of an innovation academy shall not exceed five (5) years and shall
19 comply with administrative regulations promulgated by the board pursuant to
20 subsection (4) of this section.

21 (3) The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations to
22 prescribe the conditions and procedures to be used by a school to be approved as
23 an innovation academy.

24 (4) Administrative regulations promulgated by the board under subsection (3) of this
25 section shall specify:

26 (a) The application, plan review, approval, and amendment process for a
27 school;

- 1 (b) Timelines for initial approval as an innovation academy, the renewal
2 process, and ongoing evaluative procedures required of the district;
- 3 (c) Acceptable documentation of parental and business support and capacity to
4 effect a change;
- 5 (d) The approvals required of the plan by certain employees of a school;
- 6 (e) The process of revocation of the designation of an innovation academy;
- 7 (f) Reporting and oversight responsibilities of the school and the Kentucky
8 Department of Education;
- 9 (g) The financial detail relating to budgets of schools and evidence of sound
10 fiscal management practices;
- 11 (h) Acceptable areas of emphasis for innovation;
- 12 (i) A streamlined process through which a public school that is part of a
13 District of Innovation may apply to become an innovation academy; and
- 14 (j) Other components deemed necessary to implement this section.
- 15 (5) A school which is an applicant to be designated as an innovation academy shall:
- 16 (a) Establish performance targets for the innovation academy proposal, which
17 shall include one (1) or more of the following:
- 18 1. Significantly reducing achievement gaps among groups of public
19 school students by expanding learning experiences for students;
- 20 2. Increasing student learning for all students as evidenced by
21 performance on state assessments or college entrance examinations;
- 22 3. Significantly increasing the number and percentage of students
23 scoring at a proficient level for reading on the third grade state
24 student assessment;
- 25 4. Increasing the school's overall performance rating by two (2) or more
26 levels in the state's assessment and accountability system;
- 27 5. Significantly increasing the number and percentage of students

- 1 graduating from high school with industry-recognized credentials,
2 advanced placement credit, articulated credit, or dual credit;
- 3 6. Significantly increasing the number and percentage of students per
4 year who earn dual credit or earn a passing score on Advanced
5 Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge International
6 exams;
- 7 7. Significantly increasing the number and percentage of high school
8 graduates who, upon graduation, enroll in a postsecondary education
9 institution or training program in the next occurring:
- 10 a. Summer or fall academic term for students who graduate in the
11 spring; or
- 12 b. Spring academic term for students who graduate in the fall; or
- 13 8. Significantly increasing the number and percentage of high school
14 graduates that successfully complete thirty (30) or more postsecondary
15 credit hours within one (1) year after graduation from high school;
- 16 (b) Have an innovation academy plan that describes and provides rationale for
17 the innovative practices to be employed;
- 18 (c) Provide documentation of parental and local board support of the proposed
19 innovations; and
- 20 (d) Document the fiscal and human resources the board will provide
21 throughout the term of the implementation of the innovations within its
22 plan.
- 23 (6) The innovation academy shall:
- 24 (a) Ensure the same health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights
25 requirements as are applied to all public schools;
- 26 (b) Ensure students meet compulsory attendance requirements under KRS
27 158.030;

- 1 (c) Ensure that high school course offerings meet or exceed the minimum
2 required under KRS 156.160 for high school graduation or meet early
3 graduation requirements that may be enacted by the General Assembly;
- 4 (d) Ensure the student performance standards meet or exceed those adopted by
5 the Kentucky Board of Education, including compliance with the statewide
6 assessment system specified in KRS 158.6453;
- 7 (e) Adhere to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit
8 requirements as are applied under KRS 156.265;
- 9 (f) Adhere to the same teacher certification requirements as public charter
10 schools;
- 11 (g) Require state and criminal background checks for staff and volunteers as
12 required of all public school employees and volunteers within the public
13 schools and specified in KRS 160.380 and 161.148;
- 14 (h) Comply with open records and open meeting requirements under KRS
15 Chapter 61;
- 16 (i) Comply with purchasing requirements and limitations under KRS Chapter
17 45A and KRS 156.074 and 156.480;
- 18 (j) Provide overall instructional time that is equivalent to or greater than that
19 required under KRS 158.070, but which may include on-site instruction,
20 distance or virtual learning, and work-based learning on nontraditional
21 school days or hours; and
- 22 (k) Provide data to the Kentucky Department of Education as deemed necessary
23 to generate school and district reports.