

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION authorizing and directing the Kentucky Department of
2 Education to facilitate collaboration between the University of Kentucky's Human
3 Development Institute and local school districts to implement the "Kentucky Peer
4 Support Network Project" in public schools across the Commonwealth.

5 WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes the need to expand and provide
6 meaningful services and supports to students with significant disabilities; and

7 WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky grants the
8 management and control of common schools, and all programs operated in common
9 schools, to the Kentucky Board of Education; and

10 WHEREAS, the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute, through
11 funding from the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities, in partnership
12 with Kentucky special educators and the Kentucky Department of Education, is training
13 schools and professionals throughout the state to establish Peer Supports and Peer
14 Network Programs; and

15 WHEREAS, Peer Supports and Peer Network Programs involve identifying and
16 equipping a group of peers to provide ongoing support to individual students with
17 significant disabilities in and outside of the classroom; and

18 WHEREAS, within inclusive classrooms, Peer Supports programs train peers to
19 provide academic and social support during ongoing learning activities; and

20 WHEREAS, beyond the classroom, a group of peers form a Peer Network around a
21 student with a significant disability to help foster social connections and friendships
22 between classes, at lunch, in extracurricular activities, or beyond the school day; and

23 WHEREAS, students participating in Peer Supports and Peer Network Programs
24 experience clear benefits and demonstrate more effective communication skills, increased
25 participation in the classroom, enhanced academic engagement, and increased self-
26 confidence and self-determination; and

27 WHEREAS, the General Assembly envisages all local school districts in the

1 Commonwealth implementing Peer Supports and Peer Networks to identify and equip
2 groups of peers to provide ongoing support to individual students with significant
3 disabilities in or outside of the classroom;

4 NOW, THEREFORE,

5 ***Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

6 ➔Section 1. The Kentucky Department of Education shall facilitate collaboration
7 between the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute and local school
8 districts to implement the "Kentucky Peer Support Network Project" in public schools
9 across the Commonwealth. Administrative costs of the initiative shall be borne by the
10 Kentucky Department of Education.