

1 AN ACT relating to school leadership.

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

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 156 IS CREATED TO
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 (1) For the purposes of this section,

6 (a) "Department" means the Kentucky Department of Education; and

7 (b) "Principal" means a person who:

8 (a) Is the primary administrator and instructional leader of a public
9 school or program;

10 (b) Supervises students and school employees; and

11 (c) Is selected by the district's superintendent pursuant to KRS 160.345.

12 (2) There is hereby established the principal leadership development practicum to
13 provide all new principals within the first five (5) years of experience in the
14 position with leadership development training. It is the intent of the General
15 Assembly to ensure that a school district or principal incurs no cost for the
16 participation in the first, second, and fourth years of the practicum and the
17 principal receives a stipend toward the cost of the fifth year of the practicum. The
18 Kentucky Department of Education shall develop and operate the practicum,
19 subject to the following provisions:

20 (a) The practicum shall operate based on cohorts of new principals and offer
21 five (5) years of leadership development training with specific requirements
22 in each year. The department shall annually establish a calendar for the
23 operation of the practicum;

24 (b) Each year's cohort of new principals shall consist of those people who first
25 become a principal by September 1 of each year;

26 (c) The department shall establish the minimum requirements for successful
27 completion of each year, including hours of instruction or specific work

1 products;

2 (d) The first and second year of the practicum shall provide professional
3 learning and mentorship supports to each principal, subject to the
4 following:

5 1. The mentors shall have significant and successful experience as a
6 principal and may be currently employed in a school district or retired.

7 The mentors shall provide ongoing support to the new principals
8 through the first and second school year with regular personal
9 sessions to provide individualized support to the new principal;

10 2. The mentorship shall also provide the cohort of new principals an
11 opportunity to build a peer support network; and

12 3. The professional learning provided by the department shall be aligned
13 to the most recent professional standards adopted by the National
14 Policy Board of Educational Administration and include, at a
15 minimum, the following topics:

16 a. Personnel evaluation and feedback;

17 b. School-based decision making and school councils;

18 c. Implementation of instructional leadership, high-quality
19 instructional materials, and curriculum alignment;

20 d. Assessment and accountability;

21 e. Multitiered systems of support;

22 f. Services for exceptional children and youth; and

23 g. School safety;

24 (e) The third year of the practicum shall require that the new principal select a
25 personalized list of trainings under the effective instructional leadership
26 program established under Section 2 of this Act based on the leadership
27 needs of the new principal. However, a principal may elect to substitute this

1 requirement with an additional year of the high-level leadership training
2 provided during the fifth year of the practicum with the district's support.
3 Any high-level leadership trainings completed during the third year shall
4 not negate the fifth-year requirements under paragraph (g) of this
5 subsection;

6 (f) The fourth year of the practicum shall require the new principal participate
7 in an intensive leadership program during the summer with follow-up
8 sessions throughout the following year. The leadership program shall be
9 established by the department in partnership with the Kentucky Chamber of
10 Commerce;

11 (g) The fifth year of the practicum shall provide high-level leadership training
12 opportunities for new principals. The department shall establish the
13 standards for training providers and the trainings under this paragraph,
14 including the number of hours required. The department shall maintain a
15 list of training providers who are eligible to provide the high-level
16 leadership training and make it available to new principals; and

17 (h) After the fifth year, each principal shall continue leadership development
18 through the effective instructional leadership program established under
19 Section 2 of this Act.

20 (3) A principal may submit the participant hours of instruction that the principal
21 earns under this section during a year toward the twenty-one (21) participant
22 hours required by the effective instructional leadership program established
23 under Section 2 of this Act. The department shall grant program credit for the
24 verified hours the principal submits.

25 (4) If a person discontinues serving as a principal during the first five (5) years of
26 service and subsequently returns to a principal position, then that person shall
27 continue the new principal program for the year in which the person was

1 previously participating.

2 (5) The principal leadership development practicum required under this section shall
3 begin on July 1, 2027, for the 2027-2028 school year, and each principal with less
4 than five (5) complete school years of experience shall be placed in a cohort and
5 year of the practicum based on completed years of experience. Subsequent
6 cohorts shall be admitted as provided in subsection (2) of this section.

7 (6) The Kentucky Board of Education may promulgate administrative regulations in
8 accordance with KRS Chapter 13A for the operation of the section.

9 ➔Section 2. KRS 156.101 is amended to read as follows:

10 (1) The purpose of this section is to encourage and require the maintenance and
11 development of effective instructional leadership in the public schools of the
12 Commonwealth and to recognize that principals, with the assistance of assistant
13 principals, supervisors of instruction, guidance counselors, and directors of special
14 education, have the primary responsibility for instructional leadership in the schools
15 to which they are assigned.

16 (2) For the purpose of this section, "instructional leader" shall be defined as an
17 employee of the public schools of the Commonwealth employed as a principal,
18 assistant principal, supervisor of instruction, guidance counselor, director of special
19 education, or other administrative position deemed by the Education Professional
20 Standards Board to require an administrative certificate.

21 (3) In order to carry out the purpose of this section, the Kentucky Board of Education
22 shall establish a statewide program to improve and maintain the quality ~~and~~
23 ~~effectiveness~~ of effective instructional leadership in the public schools of the
24 Commonwealth.

25 (4) The effective instructional leadership~~instructional leader improvement~~ program
26 shall contain the following provisions:

27 (a) Each instructional leader employed by the public schools of the

1 Commonwealth shall participate in a continuing intensive training program
2 designed especially for instructional leaders;

3 (b) Each instructional leader shall annually complete an intensive training
4 program approved by the Kentucky Board of Education to include no fewer
5 than twenty-one (21) participant hours of instruction. Hours completed by
6 participants in the principal leadership development practicum under
7 Section 1 of this Act may be substituted to satisfy this requirement;

8 (c) The Kentucky Board of Education shall prescribe specific criteria for the
9 training program. The Kentucky Department of Education may contract for
10 specific training with qualified agencies or institutions or approve programs
11 offered by training providers, including local district training programs,
12 except that the department shall ensure the requirements of paragraph (d) of
13 this subsection are met; and

14 (d) Annually, each local district superintendent shall report to the Kentucky
15 Department of Education any instructional leader who fails to complete the
16 training requirements of paragraph (b) of this subsection and shall place the
17 leader on probation for one (1) year. The Department of Education shall
18 verify completion of the required training. If the required training for the prior
19 year and the current year is not completed during the probationary period, the
20 Department of Education shall forward the information to the Education
21 Professional Standards Board, which shall revoke the instructional leader's
22 certificate.

23 (5) The Kentucky Department of Education shall ensure that training options in human
24 resource management and conflict resolution techniques are available to education
25 leaders throughout the state.

26 (6) This section shall be known as the ~~{"}Effective Instructional Leadership Act.{"~~

27 ➔Section 3. KRS 161.027 is amended to read as follows:

- 1 (1) The Education Professional Standards Board, pursuant to KRS 161.028, shall by
2 administrative regulation establish requirements for a preparation program in
3 institutions of higher education for all new applicants for principal certification and
4 establish criteria for admission to the program.
- 5 (2) The Education Professional Standards Board and the Council on Postsecondary
6 Education shall evaluate the preparation programs for principals and maintain only
7 those institutional programs that can demonstrate both the quality and the capability
8 to enroll adequate numbers of students to justify the resources necessary for
9 maintenance of a quality program.
- 10 (3) The Education Professional Standards Board shall develop or select appropriate
11 assessments for applicants seeking certification as principals, including an
12 assessment of the ability to apply knowledge, instructional leadership, management,
13 and supervision skills.
- 14 (4) The Education Professional Standards Board shall establish the minimum score for
15 successful completion of assessments and shall establish a reasonable fee to be
16 charged applicants for the actual cost of administration of the assessments. The
17 Education Professional Standards Board shall provide for confidentiality of
18 assessment scores.
- 19 ~~(5) [The Education Professional Standards Board shall develop an internship program~~
20 ~~which shall provide for the supervision, assistance, and assessment of beginning~~
21 ~~principals and assistant principals. The internship shall not be required of applicants~~
22 ~~who have completed, within a ten (10) year period prior to making application, at~~
23 ~~least two (2) years of successful experience as a principal in a school situation. The~~
24 ~~Education Professional Standards Board, by administrative regulation, shall~~
25 ~~establish the internship program.~~
- 26 ~~(6)~~ The certification of principals shall require the successful completion of the
27 examinations required by subsection (3) of this section. A one (1) year certificate

1 may be given to a person who has:

2 (a) A comparable certificate from another state; or

3 (b) All other qualifications except the assessments and is selected as a principal or
4 assistant principal in a district where the superintendent certifies to the
5 Education Professional Standards Board that there is a limited number of
6 applicants to meet the requirements.

7 Upon successful completion of the assessments, a certificate shall be issued for an
8 additional four (4) years. A person employed in Kentucky as a principal or assistant
9 principal who was certified in another state and practiced in that state for two (2) or
10 more years is exempt from taking the assessment described in subsection (3)(a) of
11 this section.

12 ~~(6)~~~~(7)~~ Upon successful completion of the approved preparation program and the
13 assessments, the Education Professional Standards Board shall issue to the
14 applicant a statement of eligibility for internship valid for five (5) years. If the
15 applicant does not gain employment as a principal~~participate in an internship~~
16 ~~program~~ within the five (5) year period, the applicant shall reestablish eligibility by
17 repeating and passing the assessments in effect at that time or by completing a
18 minimum of six (6) graduate hours, directly related to instructional leadership,
19 management, or supervision, at a regionally or nationally accredited institution. The
20 option for renewal through completion of graduate hours shall be available only for
21 the first reestablishment of eligibility. Upon obtaining employment for an internship
22 position as principal or assistant principal within the period of eligibility, the
23 applicant shall be issued the appropriate one (1) year certificate for the position.

24 ~~(7)~~~~(8)~~ ~~[All applicants for principal certification, after successfully completing the~~
25 ~~assessments, shall successfully complete the internship program described in~~
26 ~~subsection (5) of this section for principal certification. If the principal's or assistant~~
27 ~~principal's internship performance is judged to be less than satisfactory pursuant to~~

1 ~~administrative regulations developed by the Education Professional Standards~~
2 ~~Board, the applicant for principal certification shall be provided with an opportunity~~
3 ~~to repeat the internship one (1) time if the applicant is employed by a school district~~
4 ~~as a principal or assistant principal.~~

5 (9) — Following successful completion of the first year of principalship ~~internship~~
6 ~~program~~, the principal certificate shall be extended for four (4) years. Renewal of
7 the certificate shall require the completion of a continuing education requirement as
8 prescribed by the Education Professional Standards Board.

9 ➔ Section 4. KRS 156.492 is amended to read as follows:

10 (1) The Kentucky Department of Education may enter into an agreement with any
11 building and construction trade organization to develop a training program for
12 school counselors providing services to students in the Commonwealth. The
13 purpose of the training program shall be to promote building and construction
14 trades and training facilities available to students by making school counselors
15 aware of what is available to students participating in the building and construction
16 trade. The training program shall include information relating to:

17 (a) The pay and benefits available to people who work in the building and
18 construction trades; and

19 (b) Job opportunities, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and pathways within
20 the building and construction trade industry.

21 (2) The participating trade organization shall ensure ample opportunities for school
22 counselors that serve grades seven (7) through twelve (12) to complete the training
23 created under subsection (1) of this section annually and shall bear all costs
24 associated with the training. The participating trade organization may choose to
25 offer professional development opportunities to teachers who serve students in
26 grades seven (7) through twelve (12), if resources are available for this purpose.

27 (3) The department shall include the training program created in this section on the

1 electronic consumer bulletin board created pursuant to KRS 156.095(8) if requested
2 by the training program.

3 (4) A school counselor serving students in grades seven (7) through twelve (12) may
4 complete four (4) hours of training developed under this section which shall count
5 towards the twenty-one (21) hours required annually pursuant to KRS
6 156.101(4)(b){2}.

7 (5) Local boards of education or school-based decision making councils may
8 incorporate this training as part of the four (4) days of professional development
9 required pursuant to KRS 158.070(3)(a) for teachers who serve students in grades
10 seven (7) through twelve (12) if offered by the participating trade organization.

11 ➔Section 5. By November 1, 2026, the Kentucky Department of Education shall
12 submit to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the appropriate interim
13 joint committees a plan for the implementation of each year of the practicum described in
14 Section 1 of this Act that includes any minimum requirements for successful completion
15 that the department will require and any statutory amendments the department needs for
16 implementation of the practicum.