



ALLISON BALL  
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Preliminary Report of the Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts'  
Performance Review of the Kentucky Department of Education**

The Kentucky Department of Education recently released an alarming assessment of education in Kentucky. Less than half of all of Kentucky's elementary, middle, and high school students are proficient in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

We must do better. It is clear the General Assembly understands this because it has asked our office to conduct the most comprehensive examination of the Kentucky Department of Education's performance in Kentucky's history. We take this mission seriously and plan on delivering a plan to help ensure that all of Kentucky's children are given the best education possible.

**House Bill 825 Background**

This past session, the General Assembly unanimously passed, without Governor Andrew Graham Beshear's signature, House Bill 825. House Bill 825 asks our office to "conduct a special examination of the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky School for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Deaf, and the department operated area technology centers." With this examination, the General Assembly has tasked our office with conducting a wholesale review of those educational entities' ability to set Kentucky's students up for success.

More specifically, House Bill 825 asks us to "assess the extent to which the [Kentucky Department of Education] complies with statutory mandates and requirements." We are also to "assess the Kentucky Department of Education's operational effectiveness relating to the efficient management, control, and operation of the schools, departments, projects, and initiatives under its jurisdiction." This includes identifying "those departments, projects, and initiatives that do not serve to improve the educational outcomes of the Commonwealth's students." Our examination is to



“identify any area of operation demonstrating a significant lack of efficiency and effectiveness,” including but not limited to:

- Academic standards
- Statewide accountability and assessments
- Monitoring and consolidated monitoring of districts and programs
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives
- Exceptional children
- Preschool
- Model curriculum
- State board oversight of the Commissioner of education
- Area technology centers
- Interscholastic athletics
- Staffing and support of the Education Professional Standards Board
- Community education programs and services
- The performance of the Commissioner of education as it relates to managing the Kentucky Department of Education

Finally, our assessment will “include recommendations on how the fiscal controls and operations of the Kentucky Department of Education may be improved.”

## **Where We Are**

The importance of this examination cannot be understated. This office expects this examination to set education in Kentucky on the right course for years to come. That is why our office has been diligently working on this examination since day one.

A more straightforward part of the examination is improving the fiscal operation practices of the Kentucky Department of Education. This is really the bread and butter of our office. We have already been able to identify improvements for the Kentucky Department of Education to make to ensure that its fiscal operations are more transparent and understandable.

The heart of the examination, however, is assessing how well the Kentucky Department of Education is doing in ensuring that Kentucky’s children are getting the best education possible. And, as can be seen by the multitude of components making up that assessment, that is a task that will require a vast amount of expertise and resources. That is why our office, in accordance with House Bill 825, has solicited the help of a



national auditing firm that specializes in performance reviews of state departments of education.

That firm, Public Consulting Group LLC, will soon begin working side-by-side with our office to continue exploring the operations, practices, and inner workings of the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky School for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Deaf, and all department operated area technology centers. With the help of Public Consulting Group LLC, we will deliver a report to the General Assembly on July 1, 2025, that will help set Kentucky on a path toward becoming a national leader in education.

We must do everything in our power to ensure that our children are given the tools they need to achieve their dreams. There is no better tool than a quality education. My office is committed to sharpening that tool. The future of our children and of Kentucky depend on it.

Sincerely,



Allison Ball  
Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts

