

**7.410 Office of Education Accountability -- Deputy director of LRC to administer -
- Duties of office -- Relations with other entities -- Annual research agenda --
Confidentiality of testimony, work products, and records.**

- (1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to provide an efficient system of common schools which shall be operated without waste, duplication, mismanagement, and political influence. The system of schools shall have the goal of providing all students with at least the seven (7) capacities referred to in KRS 158.645.
- (2)
 - (a) An Office of Education Accountability is hereby created and shall be under the direction of the Legislative Research Commission and shall be advised and monitored by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee.
 - (b) The Office of Education Accountability shall be administered by a deputy director appointed by the Legislative Research Commission upon recommendation of the director of the Legislative Research Commission. The deputy director shall have the qualifications set by the Commission. The salary of the deputy director shall be set by the Commission. The Commission shall have exclusive jurisdiction over the employment of personnel necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. The deputy director shall be subject to the direction of and report to the director of the Legislative Research Commission.
 - (c) The Office of Education Accountability shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
 1. Monitor the elementary and secondary public education system, including actions taken and reports issued by the Kentucky Board of Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, the commissioner of education, the Department of Education, and local school districts. Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, the monitoring of the elementary and secondary public education system shall also include periodic reviews of local district and school-based decision making policies relating to the recruitment, interviewing, selection, evaluation, termination, or promotion of personnel. The office shall report any district or school when evidence demonstrates a pattern of exclusionary personnel practices relating to race or sex to the Kentucky Department of Education, which shall then independently investigate facts raised in or associated with the report. The results of the investigation conducted by the department shall be forwarded to the Kentucky Board of Education which shall conduct an investigative hearing on the matter.
 2. Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, review the elementary and secondary public education finance system. The review shall include an analysis of the level of equity achieved by the funding system and whether adequate funds are available to all school districts and an

analysis of the weights of various education program components developed by the Department of Education. The review may also include recommendations for the base per pupil funding for the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky Program and a statewide salary schedule, and studies of other finance issues identified by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee.

3. Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, verify the accuracy of reports of school, district, and state performance by conducting, requesting, or upon approval of the Legislative Research Commission, contracting for periodic program and fiscal audits. Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, the Office of Education Accountability shall monitor and verify the accuracy of reports of the Department of Education and the Kentucky Board of Education, including but not limited to the annual fiscal conditions of grants, categorical programs, and other educational initiatives set forth by the General Assembly.
4. Investigate allegations of wrongdoing of any person or agency, including but not limited to waste, duplication, mismanagement, political influence, and illegal activity at the state, regional, or school district level; make appropriate referrals to other agencies with jurisdiction over those allegations; and make recommendations for legislative action to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. Upon acceptance by the subcommittee, recommendations for legislative action shall be forwarded to the Legislative Research Commission. The Office of Education Accountability shall submit to the subcommittee, for each of its regular meetings, a report that summarizes investigative activity initiated pursuant to this subparagraph. The subcommittee may consider each report as it determines and in its discretion. Each report, and the consideration thereof by the subcommittee, shall be exempt from the open records and open meetings requirements contained in KRS Chapter 61.
5. Upon and under the direction of the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, conduct studies, analyze, verify, and validate the state assessment program through other external indicators of academic progress including but not limited to American College Test scores, Scholastic Assessment Test scores, National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test scores, Advanced Placement Program participation, standardized test scores, college remediation rates, retention and attendance rates, dropout rates, and additional available data on the efficiency of the system of schools and whether progress is being made toward attaining the goal of providing students with the seven (7) capacities as required by KRS 158.645.

6. Make periodic reports to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee as directed by the subcommittee. Upon acceptance by the subcommittee, the reports shall be forwarded to the Legislative Research Commission.
 7. Make periodic reports to the Legislative Research Commission as may be directed by the Commission.
 8. Prepare an annual report, which shall consist of a summary of the status and results of the current year annual research agenda provided in paragraph (d) of this subsection, a summary of completed investigative activity conducted pursuant to subparagraph 4. of this paragraph, and other items of significance as determined by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. The annual report shall be submitted to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. Upon acceptance by the subcommittee, the annual report shall be submitted to the Governor, the Legislative Research Commission, and the Kentucky Board of Education.
- (d) On or before December 1 of each calendar year, the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee shall adopt the annual research agenda for the Office of Education Accountability. The annual research agenda may include studies, research, and investigations considered to be significant by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee. Staff of the Office of Education Accountability shall prepare a suggested list of study and research topics related to elementary and secondary public education for consideration by the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee in the development of the annual research agenda. An adopted annual research agenda shall be amended to include any studies mandated by the next succeeding General Assembly for completion by the Office of Education Accountability.
- (e) The Office of Education Accountability shall have access to all public records and information on oath as provided in KRS 7.110. The office shall also have access to otherwise confidential records, meetings, and hearings regarding local school district personnel matters. However, the office shall not disclose any information contained in or derived from the records, meetings, and hearings that would enable the discovery of the specific identification of any individual who is the focus or subject of the personnel matter.
- (f) In compliance with KRS 48.800, 48.950, and 48.955, the Finance and Administration Cabinet and the Governor's Office for Policy and Management shall provide to the Office of Education Accountability access to all information and records, other than preliminary work papers, relating to allotment of funds, whether by usual allotment or by other means, to the Department of Education, local school districts, and to other recipients of funds for educational purposes.

- (g) Any state agency receiving a complaint or information which, if accurate, may identify a violation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, shall notify the office of the complaint or information.
 - (h) The Office of Education Accountability may contract for services as approved by the Legislative Research Commission pursuant to KRS 7.090(7).
- (3) The provisions of KRS 61.878 or any other statute, including Acts of the 1992 Regular Session of the General Assembly to the contrary notwithstanding, the testimony of investigators, work products, and records of the Office of Education Accountability relating to duties and responsibilities under subsection (2) of this section shall be privileged and confidential during the course of an ongoing investigation or until authorized, released, or otherwise made public by the Office of Education Accountability and shall not be subject to discovery, disclosure, or production upon the order or subpoena of a court or other agency with subpoena power.

Effective: July 12, 2006

History: Amended 2006 Ky. Acts ch. 170, sec. 1, effective July 12, 2006. -- Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 143, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2002. -- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 437, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 362, sec. 6, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 296, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994 (amendment void, see 9/2/94 LRC Note). -- Amended 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 270, sec. 1, effective April 7, 1992. -- Created 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, Pt. II, sec. 92, effective July 13, 1990; and ch. 518, sec. 10, effective July 13, 1990.

Legislative Research Commission Note (9/2/94). By letter of September 2, 1994, the Secretary of the Finance and Administration Cabinet, acting under KRS 48.500, advised the Reviser of Statutes of his determination "that no funds appropriated by the Executive Branch Appropriations Act for the 1995-96 biennium can be identified as having been appropriated for the purpose of implementing Sections 1 to 7 of House Bill No. 616, Chapter (296), Acts of the 1994 Regular Session of the General Assembly." Accordingly, the amendment to this statute contained in 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 296 is void under sec. 3(8) of that Act and has not been codified into the statute.