

March 12, 2018

Beechwood  
Independent

Bellevue  
Independent

Boone County

Bracken County

Campbell County

Covington  
Independent

Dayton  
Independent

Erlanger-Elsmere  
Independent

Fort Thomas  
Independent

Kenton County

Ludlow  
Independent

Newport  
Independent

Pendleton County

Silver Grove  
Independent

Southgate  
Independent

Walton-Verona  
Independent

Williamstown  
Independent

To the citizens of Northern Kentucky,

On behalf of 68,000 children, we are 17 women and men who have pledged to provide the highest quality education that resources will allow. In addition to our students, we also represent 8500 employees in our public schools, employees who are frightened for their careers, the profession, and most importantly, what lies ahead for our students. Over the last ten years, we have asked more of ourselves and our communities as resources dwindled and mandates were amplified. This devolvement through legislative decision-making has intensified over the last year and a half to a point where intense, collaborative intervention is the only remaining course of action. We do not believe the term “Commonwealth Crisis” is hyperbole as we interpret the consequences of proposed legislation.

Senate Bill 1, commonly referred to as the pension bill, has the potential to cripple public education in Kentucky for years to come. Not only does this bill eliminate some of the retirement benefits of current employees guaranteed as part of the inviolable contract, it also completely eradicates any contract security for future teachers. Lack of security will render school districts incapable of recruiting and retaining the best teachers for our students. What were once important positions in our communities could become fallback plans for those who are unable to secure employment in Ohio or other states. I know we represent our families in saying we only want the best and most competent for our children.

Not long ago, the governor delivered a budget that would have had devastating consequences for the instructional and extra-curricular programming that builds strong children. On the heels of that budget, we analyzed the effects on each of our school districts and calculated a \$30,000,000 LOSS for the students of Northern Kentucky alone. Since then, House Bill 200 has been introduced and, thankfully, restores some of that insurmountable loss. We are appreciative of our legislators’ emphasis on adequately funding our schools. This funding contributes to student achievement. Per pupil funding has been increased in this bill, adding approximately \$75 for each student in our schools. In addition, and of critical importance to rural and suburban districts, is the reinstatement of some transportation funding.

Instead of transferring financial burden from the state to local communities, we staunchly advocate for an innovative look at generating revenue. If we are to continue improving the quality of education across Northern Kentucky, Senate Bill 1, and some of the lesser discussed legislation, will greatly hinder those efforts. School boards will be required to increase tax rates in order to make up for the losses. Not only will this slow progress, it will exacerbate the financial inequities in schools that have not been seen for almost 30 years.

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We are in a situation where political party is irrelevant. Votes for the passage of Senate Bill 1 could harm students from all schools, public or private. House Bill 200, while making education a priority in the latest version, still needs revenue generating measures including strategies to restore health care for our outstanding teachers. We seek the highest quality of life for all Northern Kentucky residents. The youngest among us are depending on our actions; their futures are dictated by the votes cast this spring. Please join us in advocating for children. Call your legislators today at 1-800-372-7181. Revenue must be found.

### Northern Kentucky Superintendents

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Superintendent Alvin Garrison, Incoming President

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Superintendent Jay Brewer, President Emeritus

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Mrs. Amy Razor, Executive Director

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Dr. Mike Stacy, Beechwood Independent

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Dr. Randy Poe, Boone County

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Superintendent Jeff Aulick, Bracken County

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Dr. David Rust, Campbell County

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Dr. Kathy Burkhardt, Erlanger-Elsmere Independent

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Dr. Karen Cheser, Fort Thomas Independent

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Dr. Henry Webb, Kenton County

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Superintendent Mike Borchers, Ludlow Independent

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Superintendent Kelly Middleton, Newport Independent

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Dr. Anthony Strong, Pendleton County

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Superintendent Dennis Maines, Silver Grove Independent

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Superintendent Greg Duty, Southgate Independent

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Superintendent Bob Storer, Walton Verona Independent

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Superintendent Misty Middleton, Williamstown Independent