

FS P&BC Proposed FS Recommendation (01/05/2024) RESPONSE

on Proposed new Kentucky Reading Research Center in CEHD

P&BC Review Process

P&BC received the proposal on November 18, 2024. The P&BC Chair provided an initial screening review on December 10 with Committee review TBD in mid-January.

Overview (taken from formal Proposal and Budget spreadsheet):

The Kentucky Reading Research Center (KRRC) has been established by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and was solely funded initially for 2 years by a renewable competitive KDE state grant to UofL's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) to work symbiotically with the KDE to support the needs of Kentucky students, educators, and other stakeholders. The KRRC will deliver research and data on high-yield instructional practices and strategies. It will also partner with the Kentucky Department of Education to establish a research agenda evaluating early reading models, instructional resources and evidence-based practices needed to help students improve their reading ability. The center will conduct ongoing research on reading programs throughout the state, including their cost, effectiveness and how well they maintain student progress over time.

P&BC Comments on the KRRC Proposal and Budget:

The budget spreadsheet gives appropriate detail for the first 3 years (first 2 years were funded and started in July 2024) with arrangements for the proposed time commitments of existing faculty to the KRRC projected activities without hiring any additional faculty or staff at this time.

The Executive Director of the KRRC was selected by the KDE to be Professor Amy Lingo, who was at UofL and is the principal investigator on the KDE proposal but left in August 2024 to become Dean of the College of Education at the Georgia Southern University (GSU). Dr Lingo would continue as the Director of the KRRC but Professor Terry Scott in UofL CEHD is the official principal investigator for the KDE grant.

The KDE grant is for \$6 million over 2 years (July 2024 through June 2026) with the vast majority of the funding going for UofL salaries/fringe (\$1,378,656), personal services contracts (\$960,000), and subawards over \$25,000 (\$2,643,594 which includes \$674,461 to GSU, which includes Dr Lingo's salary commitment of 0.10 FTE to KRRC activities).

The "Deliverables" for the KDE grant are not well-defined but are to be determined jointly with KDE during the 2024-2025 grant year. The "Deliverables" for the subawards (~44% of the 2-year grant award) are not specified and probably can't be specified until the overall grant deliverables are defined. This is unusual but apparently acceptable to the grantor (KDE) for the first grant year.

The goals for the grant have now been clearly defined. The overall deliverables have been determined jointly with KDE for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Consequently, the deliverables for the subawards, are now specified in alignment with the overall grant objectives. This clarification ensures alignment with KDE's expectations and provides a structured framework for implementation moving forward.

A strength of this proposed Center is that the large personnel expense in the form of personal services contracts and subawards is not a long-term UofL commitment in the event that subsequent KDE 2-year renewals do not occur. Another strength of this proposed Center is that positive findings for Kentucky elementary and secondary education could form the basis for Center grants with education departments of other states and potentially the US Dept of Education.

A major weakness of this proposed Center is that research projects are not well-defined with clearly stated concepts, hypotheses, or directions for measurement of success. The Center proposes with KDE agreement to have a 3rd party source for determination of Center progress in these as-yet undefined research projects.

The Year 1 research plan for the Kentucky Reading Research Center is now comprehensively defined, with clearly articulated concepts, hypotheses, and measurable objectives. Specific metrics and processes have been established to track progress and evaluate outcomes effectively. As a result, the need for a third-party evaluator is not necessary, as the Center has implemented robust internal mechanisms to ensure continuous monitoring and alignment with the project's goals.

The P&BC finds that this proposed KRR KDE-supported Center proposal does not appear to present much financial risk to UofL with reasonably executed cost-reduction avenues if additional competitive 2-year KDE grants are not awarded.

The P&BC has reservations that the overall UofL reputation could be significantly harmed if the KRRC does not succeed in gaining at least one 2-year competitive renewal of KDE support.

The P&BC understands that this \$6 million KDE grant is already underway such that failure to create an official UofL KRR Center at this time would be detrimental to the existing KDE grant and to UofL reputation. Thus, the P&BC is considering a recommendation of approval by the Faculty Senate of this proposed KRRC to the Provost.

There are high expectations from the state for this program to achieve meaningful outcomes. To meet these expectations, the center requires the full endorsement and support of the Faculty Senate and university leadership to ensure access to necessary resources, infrastructure, and collaborative opportunities. In addition, the state-issued RFP mandated the creation of a stand-alone, independent statewide research center. The need to create the university-recognized center originated at the state level.

Pat

Patrick D. Harris, PhD

Chair of the FS Planning & Budget Committee

Faculty Senate Planning & Budget Committee

Fannie Cox, University Libraries, Reference Assistance & Instruction

Thomas Edison, College of Arts & Sciences, Modern Languages

Meg Hancock, College of Education & Human Development, Health & Sports Sci

Patrick Harris, School of Medicine, Physiology

James Harrison, School of Dentistry, Comprehensive Dentistry

Natalie Polzer, College of Arts & Sciences, Comparative Humanities

FS Chair Appointee TBD

Eugene Mueller, Faculty Senate Chair, Ex Officio

Sherri Wallace, Faculty Senate Vice Chair, Ex Officio

Cherie Dawson, Vice Provost, Office of Provost, Ex Officio

Jill Mullaney, Office of Vice President for Finance, Ex Officio

Adam Detherage, HSC Director of Finance, Staff Senate Rep, Ex Officio

Macy Waddle, SGA Academic Vice President, Ex Officio