



Auditor of Public Accounts
Adam H. Edelen

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephenie Steitzer
stephenie.steitzer@auditor.ky.gov
502.564.5841
513.289.7667

Edelen to Examine Jefferson County Public Schools, Accepts Request to Perform a Comprehensive Review of Management and Spending Practices

Audit of School District with \$1 Billion Budget, 100,000 Students Will be the Largest Examination Scope Ever by Auditor of Public Accounts

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (April 24, 2013) – Auditor Adam Edelen on Wednesday announced his office will perform a sweeping review of the Jefferson County Public Schools to identify ways to improve management and spending practices at the Commonwealth’s largest school district.

Auditor Edelen’s office will perform the audit at the call of the Jefferson County Board of Education. Auditor Edelen was joined by Superintendent Donna Hargens, Board Chairwoman Diane Porter, Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and other community leaders Wednesday at a press conference at JCPS.

“We have an obligation to ensure that every education dollar is spent in the pursuit of excellence in the classroom,” Auditor Edelen said. “A clear-eyed assessment of the operation of the JCPS central office is critical to meeting that obligation. This effort should unify the community in doing what is best for our children.”

The Auditor’s office will examine such issues as contracts and procurement, administration, expenses and travel and policies relating to internal auditing and ethics. It will attempt to determine how central office spending compares to similar school districts in the country. It also will identify best practices to control or reduce non-instructional costs.

“The scope of work is broad at this point and will serve as an initial guide for my staff,” Auditor Edelen said. “As we begin to delve in, we will let the facts dictate the scope of the report.”

The JCBE approved the request Monday based on the recommendation of Dr. Hargens.

“This review builds on the work that has taken place to reduce costs, streamline the organization and direct additional resources into the classroom,” Dr. Hargens said. “We will use the findings and recommendations from this review to continue this work and achieve our goal of having all students graduate prepared.”

Other prominent members of the Louisville community have signaled their support for the review, including Mayor Fischer.

“I’ve been in business a long time and been mayor for almost two and half years,” Mayor Fischer said. “I’ve seen audits of all types and for all kinds of reasons -- and I can say, without a doubt, that audits always lead to better organizations. We demand accountability from all government leaders -- and Dr. Hargens has been a very vocal advocate for saying that JCPS must be accountable and must become the best urban school district in the nation. This audit will bring a fresh set of eyes to our schools -- and that is a good thing. I also applaud Auditor Edelen for taking on this important task.”

Auditor Edelen said Wednesday that he hopes the audit will give JCPS the tools to become more efficient and effective.

“We cannot shy away from this because we are afraid of what an audit might uncover,” Auditor Edelen said. “Why wouldn’t supporters of our public education system want to know what we are doing right and how we can do better?”

Auditor Edelen began delving into education last fall. His office has performed four exams into Kentucky’s public school districts, some of which found rampant waste and abuse. Nine other public school districts are currently under review by the Auditor’s office.

“I believe all of our children have a right to a world-class education,” Auditor Edelen said. Ensuring the dollars our taxpayers invest are honestly, wisely and effectively spent is critical to that mission.”

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