



Auditor of Public Accounts
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**Auditor Edelen Releases Recommendations to Improve Efficiency and
Accountability in Kentucky's Public School Districts**
*KDE Commissioner Holliday Encourages School Boards, Administrators
to Review Auditor's Report*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (August 8, 2015) – Auditor Adam Edelen today released 75 recommendations to help school districts become more efficient and effective in their use of taxpayer dollars.

The recommendations are contained in a report that was developed based on findings during the Auditor's office examinations of 21 school districts since 2012. Districts are not required to adopt all recommendations in the report; however, they are encouraged to review and identify recommendations that could be implemented in their districts to improve fiscal oversight, Auditor Edelen said.

"We identified several significant issues in recent school district examinations across the Commonwealth," Auditor Edelen said. "Many of the lessons learned in those exams are contained in this report and should aid school boards, superintendents and district management in providing significant financial oversight and strong internal controls to maximize the fiscal operations of their districts."

The report recommends ways to provide adequate financial oversight, prevent potential conflicts of interest, prevent wasteful spending and improve the protection of confidential student data. Further, the report recommends school boards establish budget and audit subcommittees to strengthen internal oversight.

Education Commissioner Terry Holliday welcomed the Auditor's recommendations.

"I hope this will result in a greater level of fiscal oversight and responsibility in our school districts," Holliday said. "It is the duty of us all to be accountable and good stewards of taxpayers' money, and to ensure our resources are focused on the needs of Kentucky students."

The report also calls for boards to establish processes for district employees to submit concerns to the board about questionable activities, including the actions of the superintendent.

“No person should be at risk of losing his or her job for reporting a supervisors’ indiscretion. In each district there needs to be a clear policy in place that allows staff members to report their concerns,” Edelen said.

The need to protect students’ personally identifiable information (PII) also is highlighted in the report, which recommends districts have acceptable computer, Internet, email, encryption and password policies in place and establish incident handling and data back-up procedures.

“As you can imagine, schools collect a substantial amount of data about our kids – from names to social security numbers, allergies and the people who are authorized to pick them up at the end of the day. This data needs to be protected, and our schools must take the necessary action to keep our kids’ information safe,” Auditor Edelen said.

The Auditor’s office has conducted several major school district examinations since 2012. The former superintendent of the Dayton Independent Schools is currently in federal prison after an Auditor’s exam found he received more than \$200,000 in unauthorized payments and benefits. The former superintendent of Mason County Schools was indicted on charges related to findings of a special examination the Auditor’s office conducted there in 2012. He is expected to stand trial this fall.

Last year, the Auditor’s office released a special examination of the Jefferson County Public Schools. It was the largest review ever conducted by the Auditor’s office and contained more than 200 recommendations for improvements at the district.

“The recommendations in today’s report are a culmination of the lessons we’ve learned over the last three and a half years,” Auditor Edelen said. “I hope all our public school districts use this tool to identify ways to become more efficient and ultimately, deliver our kids the 21st century education they deserve.”

The report can be found on the [auditor’s website](#).

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