

TITLE: Kentucky State University Management Improvement Plan Revision

RECOMMENDATION: The Executive Committee will provide a recommendation to the Council on the request to allow \$100,000 in incentive funding for completed mental health related deliverable completed in FY 2023 to be used for interim assistance in financial aid processing.

STAFF CONTACT: Travis Powell, Vice President and General Counsel

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Committee will consider the proposed recommendation during its November 17 morning meeting. If approved by the Committee, they will request the Council take final approval action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On March 31, 2023, the Council approved several modifications to the Kentucky State University (KSU) Management Improvement Plan (MIP), including the following objective:

Objective: Improve support for student mental health

Deliverable: Participate in the Jed Foundation Program and provide Mental Health First Aid training.

The **rationale** upon which this was approved was as follows: CPE's Kentucky Student Success Collaborative is facilitating a partnership between Kentucky public college and university campuses and the JED Foundation. JED Campus is a nationwide initiative of The Jed Foundation (JED) designed to guide schools through a collaborative process of comprehensive systems, program, and policy development with customized support to build upon existing student mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention efforts. JED Campus schools embark on a strategic partnership with JED that assesses and enhances existing work and helps to create positive, lasting, systemic change in the campus community. In light of recent events, it is timely and necessary. Moreover, the remaining funding will be used to provide Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for campus staff, faculty, administrators, and student leaders.

REASON FOR REQUESTED REVISION

KSU completed this approved Deliverable and the funds were transferred to be used to supplement the remaining costs of the JED campus project and the institution-wide

implementation of Timely MD. However, the Kentucky Student Success Collaborative covered the remaining cost of the JED campus project. As for the Mental Health First Aid training, Timely MD provides 24/7 access to physical and behavioral health practitioners for KSU students. KSU is currently participating in this program and plans to continue with the Timely MD contract for the foreseeable future. Considering the continuing nature of this engagement, KSU determined it was best to use federal Title III grant funds, which are allocated on a recurring basis, to cover the cost of the Timely MD contract. As such, the \$100,000 in incentive funding awarded is no longer needed for this purpose.

RATIONALE FOR REVISION

KSU has indicated that it plans to use the funds to provide interim support for financial aid services. Within six weeks of the start of the semester, the financial aid office went from four full-time staff members to zero. With medical leaves and unexpected separations, the University was left with no choice but to explore hiring interim staff as several student aid packages remained to be processed and disbursed. Financial aid is a very niche function requiring special skill to comprehend and adhere to federal and state guidelines. Compliance is critical. As such, KSU engaged with Blue Icon advisors to provide necessary staffing until the office can be fully staffed. Permanent hires in the financial aid office have now been made and individuals will begin working soon. Other hires are in process.