

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

**ACTION ITEM**  
April 14, 2025

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**TITLE:** Revisions to 2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines

**DESCRIPTION:** Staff recommends the Finance Committee endorse for full Council approval revisions to the *2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines* as shown in the attachment.

**STAFF CONTACTS:** Adam Blevins, Associate Director of Finance Policy and Programs  
Bill Payne, Vice President of Finance Policy and Programs

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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

The Bucks for Brains program, also referred to as the Endowment Match Program (EMP), matches public dollars with private donations on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis to encourage research at the University of Kentucky (UK) and the University of Louisville (UofL) and to strengthen key programs at Kentucky's comprehensive universities. All funds, both public and private, must be endowed, with investment proceeds used to provide a perpetual source of funding for research-related activities.

In the 2022-2024 Budget of the Commonwealth (22 RS, HB 1), the General Assembly authorized \$40.0 million in state bond funds for Bucks for Brains, with \$30.0 million of that amount appropriated to the Research Challenge Trust Fund (RCTF) to support UK and UofL and \$10.0 million allocated to the Comprehensive University Excellence Trust Fund (CUETF) to support the comprehensive universities.

The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) has statutory authority to determine the criteria and process by which public universities apply for access to appropriations to the RCTF (KRS 164.7917) and CUETF (KRS 164.7919). At its June 14, 2022, meeting, the Finance Committee approved the 2022-24 Endowment Match Program (EMP) Guidelines. In March 2024, staff brought proposed revisions to the Council to clarify language and reduce confusion for the institutions. The proposed revisions also included updated language permitting Kentucky State University to use up to 20 percent of funds awarded under Title III of the Higher Education Act to be endowed so long as the dollar-for-dollar matching requirement is maintained. The Council approved both the proposed revisions and the updated language at the March 2024 meeting.

During the 2025 Regular Session, the General Assembly passed legislation that prohibits initiatives related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for postsecondary institutions and agencies across the Commonwealth (HB 4). The bill specifies that neither the Council on Postsecondary Education nor any public postsecondary institution shall "expend any resources to establish or maintain a diversity, equity and inclusion initiative." A "diversity, equity and inclusion initiative" is defined as a policy, practice or procedure designed or implemented to

promote or provide differential treatment or benefits to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color or national origin in such practices including, but not limited to, employee recruitment and hiring and student financial assistance and scholarship awards.

To comply with the legislative requirements of HB 4, CPE staff is proposing revisions to the Endowment Match Program Guidelines to remove DEI-related planning and reporting requirements from the program. On page five (5) of Attachment A, staff has identified the section that needs to be removed using red font and strikethrough.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Finance Committee endorse for full Council approval the proposed revisions to the *2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines* as shown in Attachment A.