



February 24, 2026

Senator Stephen West
702 Capital Avenue, Room 228
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Senator West,

On behalf of the members of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, I write to express our support for Senate Bill 4 (26 RS), legislation establishing a comprehensive principal leadership development practicum for new school leaders across Kentucky. This bill represents a meaningful investment in strengthening the Commonwealth's leadership pipeline and advancing student success statewide.

Senate Bill 4 makes an important advance by creating a structured, practice-based approach to preparing new principals for the complex demands of school leadership. Strong principals are essential to student success, healthy school culture, and community trust. Research consistently demonstrates that effective school leadership significantly influences student achievement, educator satisfaction and retention, and overall school climate. By grounding principal preparation in real-world application and mentorship, the bill helps ensure that new school leaders are equipped to support instructional quality and continuous improvement from the outset of their tenure.

We also respectfully recommend consideration of an amendment to Section 2(d)(3) to explicitly incorporate research-based family-school-community partnership practices within the practicum requirements. Decades of research demonstrate that effective family-school partnerships are associated with higher student achievement, improved attendance and behavior, stronger school climate, and greater educator satisfaction and retention. These outcomes align directly with Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) Standard 8, which calls on school leaders to engage families and communities as authentic partners in student learning.

Kentucky has a strong evidence base to draw from, including the Prichard Committee's long-standing work elevating effective family-school partnership practices statewide. Yet many educators report feeling underprepared to build meaningful, two-way partnerships with families and communities, and this responsibility often shifts to principals without intentional training or support. Grounding SB 4's implementation in research-based family-school-community partnership practices will help close this gap and better prepare new principals for the realities of school leadership while strengthening the broader reforms Kentucky has worked to advance.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing Senate Bill 4. Your work reflects a clear commitment to strengthening school leadership as a lever for improved student outcomes and meaningful family engagement. The Prichard Committee appreciates your consideration of this recommendation and stands ready to support successful implementation of this important legislation.

Respectfully,

Brigitte Blom
President and CEO
Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence