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Edelen Releases Examination of the Breathitt County Board of Education

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 10, 2012) – State Auditor Adam Edelen today released a review of the Breathitt County Board of Education, which found the former superintendent exerted an excessive amount of control without proper board oversight.

The audit found the former superintendent modified the school calendar last year and omitted 10 instructional days. As a result, the district paid teachers \$526,350 for days not actually worked and the Kentucky Department of Education has reduced the district's state funding allotment by \$191,000.

“The loss of state funding in a district in which 80 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunches is a travesty,” Auditor Edelen said. “Even worse, those students were deprived of important instructional time in the classroom.”

The former superintendent last summer pleaded guilty in federal court to leading a vote-buying conspiracy in Breathitt County. He resigned as superintendent last May and is expected to be sentenced later this month.

The examination was conducted after the auditor's office received concerns related to activities that could indicate mismanagement leading to noncompliance with board policy or state law.

The exam report contains 11 findings and recommendations for strengthened controls by the board.

The audit found that between fiscal years 2010 and 2012, employees were paid for more days than authorized by their contract. The former superintendent authorized almost \$195,000 in extra pay to select employees without board approval.

The audit also found that during a three-year period, the district spent \$35,744 out of the boy's basketball fund on hotel rooms and basketball tickets for the former superintendent, certain

school board members, other school employees and members of the general public to attend the Boy's Sweet Sixteen basketball tournament. Money from high school activity funds should be used to benefit students.

In addition, the audit found that the board did not approve a written contract for the former superintendent for three years. The contract was executed and signed the day he resigned. Auditors concluded that board meetings were not effective for proper oversight.

This is the second school district examination conducted by Auditor Edelen this year. An examination of the Kenton County School District last month found excessive travel by school nutrition personnel and lax financial controls by the board.

Edelen plans to continue making sure education dollars are spent wisely in Kentucky. Investigations at Mason County School District and Dayton Independent Schools are underway.

The full Breathitt County School District review can be found on the [auditor's website](#).

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