

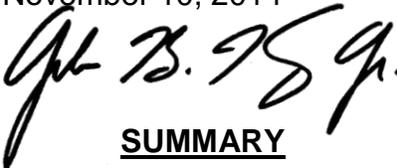


THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Douglas E. Lentivech 
SUBJECT: Regents Permission to Operate in New York State:
Western Kentucky University

DATE: November 10, 2014

AUTHORIZATION(S):


SUMMARY

Issue for Consent Agenda

Should the Regents approve the extension of permission to operate in New York State for Western Kentucky University (WKU)?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before full Board at its November 2014 meeting for final action.

Procedural History

Board of Regents permission to operate in New York State is required by Section 224 of the Education Law which prohibits out-of-state colleges and universities from transacting business in New York without Regents permission.

Background Information

In September 2010, WKU received Regents permission to operate in New York State in a limited capacity with an expiration date of June 30, 2014. That permission authorized WKU to offer a Master of Science (M.S.) online degree program in Speech-Language Pathology as part of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) efforts to address issues raised in litigation relating to the availability of sufficient related

services personnel in New York City. The extension of Regents permission to operate is needed because the contract with WKU, described in more detail below, has been extended from June 30, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

The Institution and the Program: WKU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The University's 60-credit Speech-Language Pathology program (both campus-based and distance education) is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The program is designed to prepare professional speech therapists to meet the needs of the communicatively impaired in hospitals, clinics, nursing facilities, schools, etc.

The Need of the Program in New York: ASHA-accredited programs satisfy New York State professional education requirements for licensure as a speech-language pathologist. The online Master of Science (M.S.) degree program in Speech-Language Pathology offered by WKU delivers courses to candidates in New York City pursuant to contract with NYSED. This contract, known as the Speech-Language Personnel Development Technical Assistance Center (SLPD-TAC), reflects a partnership among WKU, the United Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation (UFT), and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). SLPD-TAC was created to provide more licensed Speech-Language Pathologists and certified Teachers of Speech-Language Disabilities to meet the needs of students in New York City Public Schools. The special cohort program conducted as part of the SLPD-TAC consortium offers a fully accredited program in a distance education format which allows participants to earn a Master's Degree as part-time students while remaining in full-time service in the New York City schools. Students enrolled in the program are current or future teachers of the NYCDOE and are recruited through the NYCDOE's Office of Scholarship and Incentive Programs. Enrollment consists of two cohorts of 30 students each, entering the program in alternate years. Maximum enrollment is 60 students at any one time.

When NYSED issued a competitive RFP for the previous contract, WKU was the only institution of higher education (IHE) to submit a bid. On October 10, 2014 NYSED issued a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) for another five-year contract. Although an IHE in New York may submit the winning bid for the next five-year contract, the RFP contains a deliverable that requires the vendor to allow students who are enrolled in the current WKU program at the start of the contract to complete coursework leading to licensure in speech language pathology or certification in TSSLD. Bidders have the option of developing a proposal that includes funding for clinical supervisors to enable WKU to provide the courses its current enrollees need to complete WKU's master's degree program in communication disorders. It is expected that there will be 50 students enrolled in WKU's master's degree program in Speech-language Pathology as of January 1, 2015. Three of the 50 students are expected to graduate in May 2015, 27 are expected to graduate in December 2015, and 20 are expected to graduate in May 2017. Accordingly, it is recommended that WKU's permission to operate in New York State be extended through May 2017.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents extend the permission for WKU to operate in New York State in a limited capacity until May 31, 2017 to authorize WKU to have physical presence in New York City, which enables students in its online M.S. program in Speech-Language Pathology to meet with their respective WKU professors.

Timetable for Implementation

This approval will be effective immediately.