*On Letterhead*

*Date*

*Your Director/President’s Name*
*Your Organization’s Name*
*Your Organization’s Address*

Dear:

As a supporter of Kentucky State University, Education First Foundation, Inc. would like to bring awareness of the validity and importance of the University in light of its financial difficulties. For 135 years, the University has worked to “live up” to its mission of “advancing the Commonwealth of Kentucky, enhancing society, and impacting individuals by providing quality teaching with a foundation in liberal studies, scholarly research, and public service.”

As an institution that continues to evolve with the needs of the Commonwealth, Kentucky State University has become the most diverse public institution, expanded its reach through its completely online Master’s of special education, developed the Center of Excellence for the Study of Kentucky African Americans, and contributed to the training of state workers through the governmental services center. Alumni of the University have contributed to the country and the world with leaders such as Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand (2011-2013), Harrison Wilson, PhD, President of Norfolk State University and Whitney Young, Jr., civil rights leader and Executive Director of the National Urban League (1961-1971). (Research Gerald Neal and Angela Birchett who played in the Color Purple on tour)

The University has increased in enrollment since 2016, from 1,736 to 2,279 in 2021. In the most recent fall term (2021), Kentucky State University increased transfer student enrollment by 20% and Doctorate of nursing practice enrollment by 26%. Additionally, the institution reached its highest fall-to-fall retention rate of 79% in 2020. Furthermore, the University has exhibited its commitment to the Commonwealth by:

* Offering the College of Agriculture, Communities and the Environment which is the only Aquaculture Research Center in the Commonwealth
* Receiving reaffirmation by SACSCOC for 10 years from 2019 to 2029
* Contributing a $130 million impact to the Bluegrass Higher Education Region and supporting more than 1,000 jobs at the college

Kentucky State University demonstrates the legacy of leadership ingrained in the culture of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Darren Bryant (class of 2014) serves as the Mayor of the city of Robbins, Illinois. Alumna Lauren Williams (class of 2006) works as the Vice President of Marketing Strategy at SiriusXM+Pandora while Kevin Cooke (class of 1994) is the Principal Deputy CIO in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Such accomplishments exemplify the HBCU experience:

* 21 of the top 50 institutions for educating African American graduates who go on to receive their doctorates in science, math and engineering, are HBCUs
* HBCUs produce 27% of African American students with bachelor’s degrees in STEM
* HBCUs account for just 3% of four-year nonprofit colleges, but their alumni account for roughly 80% of black judges and 50% of black lawyers and doctors
* Fifty percent of black faculty in traditionally white research universities receive their bachelor’s degrees at an HBCU

By keeping the doors of Kentucky State University open, such accomplishments raise the profile of the University, the surrounding community and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Through this letter, Education First Foundation, Inc. fully supports Kentucky State University. We look forward to extending our partnership with the University to expose and educate the students of Kentucky on the history, current offerings and possibilities available to them when pursuing a degree from KYSU.