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## An Adkins & Company series:

### Kentucky charter schools 101 — It's 2018...What do we do now?

**Kentucky's legislature is now in session and we can expect our final charter school regulations to be approved.**

Reported in this series last year, the Kentucky State Board of Education, assisted by Gov. Matt Bevin's appointed charter school advisory council, developed regulations to ensure compliance with the charter school laws passed in May 2017. The draft regulations were presented, public comments were made in November, and modifications were approved by the Kentucky Board of Education in December. Lawmakers have a lot of decisions to make, and we expect good things for charter schools prior to the end of this session.

During this session, legislators are expected to approve final charter school regulations and the much needed permanent funding mechanism. According to news reports, it may be possible for Kentucky charters to open in 2018, but with so many moving pieces to the regulations and the approval process, it is expected that the first charters in Kentucky are more likely to open their doors in 2019. **This falls directly in line with a well thought out development timeline of 18 months.**

For those interested in opening a charter school in 2019, there is a great deal to do while legislators are finalizing the legal groundwork. I have worked on applications in many different states and there are three critical components to each and every charter school application:

- 1. Establish the Board / Leadership Team**
- 2. Develop the Educational Model**
- 3. Create the School Fiscal Plan**

Anyone interested in opening a school in Kentucky in 2019 should be addressing these tasks now to be ready for the final release of Kentucky's application. Let me highlight a few things that you will need to do in each of these critical areas:

#### **1. Establish the Board / Leadership Team**

- a. Develop a board that believes in the mission, vision and philosophy of the school
- b. File your articles of incorporation and apply for federal nonprofit status
- c. Ensure diversity of experience on the board and build community relationships
- d. Secure expertise to educate the board / leadership team, and develop a successful application

#### **2. Develop the Educational Model**

- a. Create a core educational focus for the school's program
  - b. Research educational models and their historical performance and/or determine if you want to develop an independent model
  - c. Determine what unique characteristics and extra-curricular programs the school will offer to ensure focus on academic performance
  - d. Find the right partners, volunteers and service providers to assist in planning
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### 3. Create the School Fiscal Plan

- a. Once the board determines the type of school and educational model to be provided, plan for expenses
- b. Develop a year one budget and five-year forecast
- c. Secure educational service providers to provide the necessary services
- d. Develop a fundraising strategy including local, state and federal grant opportunities

**Strategic growth plans and developing new schools is our specialty.** We have helped dozens of charter schools start just like this! To learn more about how Adkins & Company can help you, contact us today.

*This article is the sixth in a series published by Adkins & Company, a Kentucky-based consulting group whose mission is to position charter schools for success by providing boards, operators and authorizers with access to high quality services and expertise.*

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