



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

No. 17-108

August 23, 2017

MEDIA CONTACT: Nancy Rodriguez

Office: (502) 564-2000, ext. 4610 | **Cell:** (502) 330-5063 | **E-mail:** nancy.rodriquez@education.ky.gov

KENTUCKY BOARD OF EDUCATION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM; DISCUSSES CHARTERS

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – At a special meeting in Frankfort today, the Kentucky Board of Education unanimously approved the regulation that will govern Kentucky’s new accountability system under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Senate Bill 1 (2017).

The accountability system, as outlined in [703 KAR 5:270](#), is designed to promote and hold schools and districts accountable for student achievement and significantly reduce achievement gaps.

“I am pleased that we have developed an accountability system that goes beyond test scores and moves away from a compliance mentality to encourage continuous improvement for all our students,” Commissioner of Education Stephen Pruitt said. “The new system is about promoting proficiency and the closure of achievement gaps for every child. It reflects the values – such as the importance of educating the whole child – that so many Kentuckians told us were important.”

The system has been under development for the past year and a half through a collaborative and inclusive process involving thousands of Kentucky educators, education partners, parents, and business and community representatives.

“One of the things that gives me confidence that this has a chance to work is that there is a lot of buy in up front because people felt like they had the chance to provide meaningful input,” board member Roger Marcum said. “Nobody probably got everything they wanted, but for something this comprehensive, that’s not going to happen. But I am extremely pleased with the process.”

Under the regulation, schools and districts would receive an overall rating of one to five stars as determined by school performance (very low to very high) on multiple indicators – proficiency, a separate academic indicator for science and social studies, growth (elementary and middle school), achievement gap closure, transition readiness, graduation rate (high school) and opportunity and access. Those performance levels combine to produce the overall star rating. The standard of performance required and the weighting of the indicators will be determined as part of a standards setting process.

(more)

Visit our website at <http://www.education.ky.gov>

Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/kydeptofed and Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kydeptofed

The board also supported revised, ambitious [long-term goals](#) for improving student proficiency and closing gaps for all students over the next generation. But board members cautioned that success would be based on providing our schools and students with adequate resources and supports.

“We can espouse to do as many great things as we want,” board member Ben Cundiff said, “but until we change the mindset of the average taxpayer that it’s worth paying more taxes to support education, we’re never going to get where we want to with all of our students.”

The accountability regulation must move through the remainder of the regulatory process before it would take effect.

Also during today’s meeting, the board reviewed four proposed regulations that would guide the implementation of the first charter schools in the state.

- [701 KAR 8:010, Student application, lottery and enrollment](#)
- [701 KAR 8:020, Evaluation of authorized performance](#)
- [701 KAR 8:030, Revocation and nonrenewal process for authorizers](#)
- [701 KAR 8:040, Conversion charter school creation and operation](#)

The legislature approved House Bill 520 during the 2017 regular session of the General Assembly paving the way for charter schools in Kentucky.

Under the proposed regulations, charter operators must apply and demonstrate a strong capacity to establish and operate a charter school, addressing issues such as funding, administration and oversight, outcomes and measures for evaluating success or failure, among other things.

A local board of education, a group of local boards or the mayors of Lexington or Louisville, may authorize a charter school. Approved charters would be open to any child in the authorizer’s area. If the charter application is denied, the applicant could appeal to the Kentucky Board of Education.

“The authorizers are the key to competent, responsible, good educational options for Kentucky students via charter schools,” Deputy General Counsel Amy Peabody told the board.

Under the regulations, authorizers must undergo training and create policies and procedures on the review of charter applications, including a strategic vision for chartering, and transparency in the criteria and evaluation of charter applications, charter performance, renewal, non-renewal, and revocation.

Students would apply to attend a charter through a single, uniform online or paper application. If a charter receives more applications from students than it has room for, it will hold a lottery that is randomized, transparent, open, equitable, impartial and competently conducted.

(more)

Visit our website at <http://www.education.ky.gov>

Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/kydeptofed and Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kydeptofed

“The statute and regulations strictly prohibit the cherry-picking of students for a charter school,” Peabody said. “It is critical that the application and enrollment process is open and transparent to preserve the integrity of the law and the operation of Kentucky’s charter schools.”

The regulations prohibit discrimination in enrollment and cannot limit the number of applications that it accepts from students based on ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language, or academic or athletic ability. Tuition may not be charged by public charter schools.

Feedback from the first reading will be used to draft final versions of the regulations that will be presented to the board in October for approval. Once approved, the regulations will move through the regulatory process with completion anticipated in early 2018. Charter operators may then apply to open a charter school. It is projected that the earliest a charter could open is fall 2018.

Visit the board portal at <http://portal.ksba.org/public/Agency.aspx?PublicAgencyID=4388&AgencyTypeID=1> to access the regulations and supporting materials online.

The next regularly scheduled Kentucky Board of Education meeting is set for October 3-4 in Frankfort.

###