

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE

84.282A - Charter Schools Program Grants for State Educational Agencies

CFDA # 84.282A

PR/Award # U282A160021

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT12177361

OMB No. 1894-006, Expiration Date: 11/30/2017

Closing Date: Jun 01, 2016

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This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
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* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="06/01/2016"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	---

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
---	---

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Tennessee Department of Education"/>	
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="62-6001445"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="8790162510000"/>

d. Address:

* Street1:	<input type="text" value="9th floor, Andrew Johnson Tower"/>
Street2:	<input type="text" value="710 James Robertson Parkway"/>
* City:	<input type="text" value="Nashville"/>
County/Parish:	<input type="text"/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="TN: Tennessee"/>
Province:	<input type="text"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code:	<input type="text" value="37243-1219"/>

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
--	--

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Marcy"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Tidwell"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
Title: <input type="text" value="Director of School Choice"/>	

Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text"/>

* Telephone Number: <input type="text"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="615-532-4791"/>
--	---

* Email: <input type="text"/>

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

*** 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.282

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-042116-001

* Title:

Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII): Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants for State Educational Agencies (SEAs) CFDA Number 84.282A

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-282A2016-1

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Tennessee Charter School Program Project

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant

* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

* b. End Date:

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="6,575,456.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="6,575,456.00"/>

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on

b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

* Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.
19. Will comply with the requirements of Section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104) which prohibits grant award recipients or a sub-recipient from (1) Engaging in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect (2) Procuring a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect or (3) Using forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL Marcy Tidwell	TITLE Commissioner
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION Tennessee Department of Education	DATE SUBMITTED 06/01/2016

Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

Approved by OMB
0348-0046

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
--	--	--

4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:
 Prime SubAwardee

* Name: Tennessee Department of Education

* Street 1: 9th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower * Street 2: 710 James Robertson Parkway

* City: Nashville * State: TN: Tennessee * Zip: 37243

Congressional District, if known: _____

5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:

6. * Federal Department/Agency: US Department of Education	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Charter Schools
	CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.282

8. Federal Action Number, if known: _____	9. Award Amount, if known: \$ _____
---	---

10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:

Prefix _____ * First Name NA Middle Name _____

* Last Name NA Suffix _____

* Street 1 _____ * Street 2 _____

* City _____ * State _____ * Zip _____

b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a)

Prefix _____ * First Name NA Middle Name _____

* Last Name NA Suffix _____

* Street 1 _____ * Street 2 _____

* City _____ * State _____ * Zip _____

11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* Signature: Marcy Tidwell

* Name: Prefix Dr. * First Name Candice Middle Name _____
* Last Name McQueen Suffix _____

Title: Commissioner Telephone No.: 615-253-2300 Date: 06/01/2016

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PR/Award # U282A160021

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

OMB Number: 1894-0005
Expiration Date: 03/31/2017

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may

be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

GEPA Statement - TN.pdf

Add Attachment

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GEPA Section 427 Requirements

The Tennessee Department of Education is committed to ensuring equal access to and participation in the CSP grant project to all eligible applicants. The following steps will be implemented with the intent to reduce access barriers based on race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age to maximize participation:

1. Post all grant related materials and information on the department's website which will enable assistive computer devices to interpret the materials for users.
2. Determine the primary language of all eligible charter school applicants and offer interpretation services or assistive technology devices to translate materials for applicants and others as needed and appropriate.
3. Provide any grant related meetings, information sessions, or training opportunities in facilities which are ADA accessible.
4. Develop training/workshop registration materials to identify special access needs such as wheel chair access and need for interpreter.
5. Refrain from imposing additional rules on applicants with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, or bilingual individuals which would have the effect of limiting participation.
6. Require all sub-grantee application raters to sign a non-discrimination statement to ensure no intentional rankings on the basis of the applicant's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION		
<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Tennessee Department of Education"/>		
* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE		
Prefix: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text" value="Dr."/>	* First Name: <input style="width: 200px;" type="text" value="Candice"/>	Middle Name: <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>
* Last Name: <input style="width: 300px;" type="text" value="McQueen"/>	Suffix: <input style="width: 80px;" type="text"/>	
* Title: <input style="width: 300px;" type="text" value="Commissioner"/>		
* SIGNATURE: <input style="width: 300px;" type="text" value="Marcy Tidwell"/>		
* DATE: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text" value="06/01/2016"/>		

Abstract

The abstract narrative must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals, expected outcomes and contributions for research, policy, practice, etc. Include population to be served, as appropriate. For research applications, also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study)
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

You may now Close the Form

You have attached 1 file to this page, no more files may be added. To add a different file, you must first delete the existing file.

* Attachment:

TN CSP grant abstract FINAL.pdf

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

Tennessee Department of Education, Office of School Choice
9th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower, 710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243
Project Director: Marcy Tidwell, Phone: [REDACTED], Email: [REDACTED]

Since Tennessee’s first charter schools opened in 2003, more and more families have pursued charter schools as the best public school option to provide a high-quality education for their children. Over the past decade, Tennessee has seen public charter schools become one of the most powerful and successful approaches to transforming educational opportunities and outcomes. In the last five years, the number of students enrolled in Tennessee charter schools has increased by more than 300 percent.

Today, Tennessee’s charter schools continue to grow -- in number, quality, diversity of academic offerings, and in student enrollment and impact. More and more communities and parents across Tennessee are seeing the positive impact that public charter schools are having on student achievement and growth. Currently, 98 charter schools serve more than 29,000 students, or about 2.9 percent of all public school students in the state. The charter student population is over 80 percent economically disadvantaged and over 90 percent minority. And because charter schools are open-enrollment schools, Tennessee’s charter schools are providing learning opportunities for students of all backgrounds and abilities and are achieving strong results with their full student populations. Since Tennessee charter schools serve a high percentage of educationally disadvantaged students, additional funding is critical to ensure access to necessary resources to implement high-quality schools.

Tennessee’s education landscape meets the absolute priorities of the CSP and addresses the competitive priorities in ways that will lead to the expansion of high-quality charter schools and the evaluation of the impact charter schools have for students and families, educators and communities. The purpose of the Tennessee Charter School Program is to continue the progress of high-quality charter school growth in Tennessee with a particular focus on meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Tennessee proposes to provide up to 36 subgrants over the course of the grant period for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools and for the dissemination of information about successful charter schools, including practices that existing charter schools have demonstrated are successful.

Specifically, Tennessee will use CSP funds to:

1. Increase the number of high-quality charter schools through new start-up, expansion, and replication of successful models.
2. Decrease the number of academically poor-performing charter schools by strengthening charter school accountability and oversight of authorizers.
3. Support improvement in all schools with emphasis on closing achievement gaps for educationally disadvantaged students.

Project Narrative File(s)

* **Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[View Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

[Add Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[View Optional Project Narrative File](#)

**Tennessee Department of Education
Application for Charter Schools Program (CSP): Grants for State Educational Agencies
CFDA Number: 84.282A**

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Project Narrative

Absolute Priority 1--Periodic Review and Evaluation

Reviews occur annually to evaluate status of charter schools

Periodic review of charter schools takes place annually through progress reports submitted to the authorized public chartering agency (the “authorizer”) each year of the charter term. Annual progress reports ensure a regular reporting flow of information to the authorizers and makes certain that charter operators and authorizers are aware of progress toward goals. Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 49-13-120(a) specifies these annual reports must include: “(1) The progress of the school towards achieving the goals outlined in its charter; (2) The same information required in the reports prepared by local boards of education pursuant to state laws, rules and regulations; and (3) Financial records of the school, including revenues and expenditures” (see Appendix E-1 for annual report guidance). The authorizer and the Tennessee Department of Education (the “department”) receive and analyze each charter school’s annual report. The authorizer uses annual reports to identify areas of concern with individual schools, understand the quality of the schools in its portfolio, and gauge the likelihood of renewal of charters in the years leading up to the interim and final year reviews. The department uses the reports to create a statewide annual report on Tennessee charter schools (see Appendix E-2 for TN charter school annual report).

Tennessee requires an interim evaluation every five years to review adherence to the charter status of academic achievement as compared to requirements

Tennessee has set statutory requirements that require an evaluation by the authorizer of each charter school at least once every five years (halfway through the charter term). TCA § 49-13-121(d) requires “an interim review of a charter school shall be conducted by the chartering authority under guidelines developed by the department of education in the fifth year of a charter

school's initial period of operation and also in the fifth year following any renewal of a charter agreement.” During this required interim five-year review, charter schools must “submit to the chartering authority a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards and other terms of the approved charter agreement.” Authorizers evaluate the soundness of these reports by conducting site visits during which school leader, teacher, parent, and student interviews take place as well as reviews of school financial documents, board minutes, discipline data, etc. Authorizers conduct a thorough evaluation of the school’s assessment results by reviewing the past five years of achievement and growth data (including value-added composite scores, gap closure measures, percent proficient/advanced compared to state and local district, gains with educationally disadvantaged subgroups, attendance, and graduation rates). The interim five year reviews differ from annual reviews in terms of the responsibility for action in statute is placed on the authorizer to report to the school whether or not they are on track for renewal.

That same law also requires the department to provide guidelines to facilitate the interim review. The department’s guidance addresses requirements for submission to include: 1) Cumulative progress toward the charter school’s goals (including academic achievement and growth measures for the past five years, subgroup achievement and gap closure, student enrollment, attendance, and graduation rates); 2) Operations and finance (including accounting for increased costs, network and financial projections, financial efficiency and return on investment, facility plans, structural changes, and functioning community partnerships); and 3) Leadership succession (including organizational changes, board adaptation from startup to maintaining, and any succession plans).

Charter school operators use interim reviews to measure progress toward the goals outlined in their charter and adjust operations based on this information. Authorizers use interim

reviews to provide effective oversight of charter schools, share best practices across all schools in their jurisdiction, and to make renewal, nonrenewal or revocation decisions. Operators, authorizers, and policymakers use interim reviews to measure the return on investment and to support existing high-quality schools and programs, foster more innovative school models, and decrease the number of academically poor-performing schools.

Authorizers may impose meaningful consequences, if necessary

Tennessee’s charter school law is consistent with a key tenet of the charter school framework: accountability. During the interim five-year review, charter school authorizers have the authority to take appropriate action or impose meaningful consequences on the charter school including non-renewal of the charter or revocation of the charter prior to the expiration of the charter term. TCA § 49-13- 122(a)(3) allows the authorizer to revoke or deny “renewal of a charter agreement of a charter school that fails to meet the minimum performance requirements set forth in the charter agreement.” At any point during the 10-year charter term, if a charter school violates the law, fails to maintain the performance goals outlined in the charter, or exhibits fiscal mismanagement, the authorizer may revoke a charter and close the school.

Absolute Priority 2--Charter School Oversight

Schools operate under legally binding charter contracts

Each charter school in Tennessee is required to operate under a legally binding performance contract. Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-110(a), “the approval by the chartering authority of a public charter school application shall be in the form of a written agreement signed by the applicant and the chartering authority, which shall be binding upon the governing body of the public charter school. The charter agreement for a public charter school shall be in writing and contain all components of the application.” The charter application and supporting materials

developed and provided by the state clearly delineate the rights and responsibilities of each party (see Appendix E-3 and E-4 for charter school application materials).

Schools conduct independent financial audits annually and audits are filed with state Comptroller, the department, and the authorizer

All charter schools must conduct an annual, independent audit of the school’s financial statements. TCA § 49-13-127(b)(1) requires, “The governing body of the charter school shall cause an annual audit to be made of the accounts and records, including internal school activity and cafeteria funds, of their school. The audits may be prepared by certified public accountants or by the department of audit.” Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-107(b)(5), every charter application/agreement must include “the method for conducting annual audits of the financial, administrative and program operations of the school.” By law, annual charter school audits must be submitted after the close of each fiscal year to the LEA authorizer, the commissioner of education, and the comptroller of the treasury. All charter school audits are posted to the Comptroller’s website, available to the general public. This audit requirement and monitoring system is important to ensure multiple levels of financial transparency and oversight.

Schools must demonstrate improved student academic achievement for renewal

While sound operational and financial performance are critical factors for charter renewal, increases in student achievement is a leading indicator in determining whether to renew or revoke a school’s charter. Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-102(a)(1,4), charter schools established in Tennessee must “improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students” and “measure performance of pupils and faculty, and ensure that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments.” Charter schools must prove their capacity to improve academic achievement beginning with the application process. By law, the charter agreement must include academic plans as well as academic performance goals.

TCA § 49-13-107(3) specifies the charter must provide “a plan for evaluating student academic achievement at the proposed public charter school and the procedures for remedial action that will be used by the school when the academic achievement of a student falls below acceptable standards.” The charter application requires a description of the school’s instructional strategies and how they are suited to the target population, the school’s proposal to align with state academic standards and Tennessee State Performance Indicators, and how the school will meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

The charter application also requires a description of the school’s annual and long-term achievement goals stated in measurable terms. While charter school students must take state mandated tests, the charter school must also describe interim assessments that will be administered to monitor student progress and how the interim assessments align with the curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

In Tennessee, charter school data is included in each authorizer’s system-wide assessment results under the state’s accountability framework, so authorizers have a vested interest in ensuring charter schools achieve academic success. According to Tennessee’s automatic closure law, TCA § 49-13-122, a public charter school contract *shall* be revoked if the school is identified as “priority school” for poor academic performance. Priority schools in Tennessee are identified as the state’s lowest performing five percent of schools according to the state’s accountability framework. A public charter school contract may also be revoked for violation of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter, fiscal mismanagement, and fraud. A charter school may appeal the revocation to the State Board of Education (SBE) for reasons of fiscal mismanagement or fraud. Schools identified as priority schools may not appeal the decision. The revocation shall take effect immediately following the close of the school year after the school is identified as a priority school.

Authorizers use sub-group student achievement increases to determine renewal status

As stated in TCA § 49-13-102(a), one purpose of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act is to “close the achievement gap between high and low students.” A charter school governing body seeking renewal must demonstrate that it has helped and can continue to help its educationally disadvantaged students meet the performance goals outlined in the existing charter agreement. Tennessee charter school renewal applications must provide an overview of students’ academic performance (including subgroup achievement: economically disadvantaged, all major racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English language learners) and an overview of the school’s operations and finances. Within the renewal application, schools must describe the academic achievement of the charter school’s students over the course of the current charter term, address progress toward decreasing achievement gaps, share how leader and teacher professional development has affected student achievement, and discuss areas of student achievement that are of the most concern, and plans to address those deficiencies (see Appendix E-5 for renewal application).

Competitive Preference 1 – High-Quality Authorizing and Monitoring Processes

(1)(a) Multi-tiered clearance or review of a charter school

TN charter applicants undergo a multi-tiered review process with clear evaluation criteria

The charter petition process begins with a comprehensive and rigorous application that covers multiple dimensions of operating a successful charter school – academics, finance, and operations. By law, all charter school applicants must submit an application to the authorizer and the department by April 1 of the calendar year preceding the proposed opening date. A letter of intent is due to the local board of education and the department 60 days prior to April 1. Annually, the charter school application and accompanying scoring rubric are published by the

department to encourage the opening of high-quality schools through a high-quality application review process (see Appendix E-3 and E-4 for charter school application and scoring rubric).

In the application, applicants must present a clear and compelling mission statement, a sound academic plan, a quality plan for evaluating student academic achievement, a solid business plan that includes an anticipated operating budget, effective governance and leadership structures, and evidence that the school has the capacity to execute its proposal successfully. The Tennessee charter school application provides applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to design and implement academic and business plans, and to do so as good stewards of public funds. It requires applicants to outline their plan for helping all students at the school prepare for post-secondary success in education, work, and citizenship.

The department has also created a comprehensive scoring rubric modeled after the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) best practices on rubrics to align precisely with the application requirements (See Appendix E-4 – Scoring Rubric). An application that merits a recommendation for approval must present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how the school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant’s capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans. Each section of the proposal must align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application.

Academic program capacity and any past performance are the most critical factors in evaluating applications. However, operational and financial components directly affect a school’s ability to help students succeed in the academic program. Thus, the applicant must demonstrate alignment across each section and address the best interests of the pupils, school district and community.

In addition to the required state application materials, authorizers may create supplemental elements of an application, which require proposed charters to clarify critical information specific to the LEA. For example, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) requires charter applicants to provide information regarding how the proposed school will fit within the parameters of the district’s diversity management plan, an initiative of the district to monitor the concentration of certain subgroups within specific schools and to the extent possible, avoid segregating these subgroups within schools.

Local Education Agencies (LEA) also have developed request for proposals (RFP) that act as a targeted call for specific types of operators. The LEA may indicate a priority for specific grade configurations of proposed charters or to locate in specific geographies in the county. The purpose of these RFPs is to develop a clear and concise call for the needs of districts and encourage charter operators to respond and align their school models to the needs of the LEA. The Achievement School District (ASD) for example provides detailed RFPs based on specific community and neighborhood needs and an experienced understanding of what school operators need to do to succeed in school turnaround. This does not change the objective scoring criteria in the rubric and only enhances the quality of applications in meeting the community’s needs.

The Tennessee Charter School Center (TCSC) has conducted an in-depth seat analysis for the past three years in partnership with the MNPS Charter School Authorizer. The purpose of the seat analysis is essentially to look at the geographic distribution of quality seats (by cluster or region) within a school district and couple this information with school by school enrollment data to get an advanced analysis of the landscape in terms of the need for school quality improvement and/or student enrollment growth (or under-enrollment) pressures. MNPS has taken this analysis and folded it into its RFP document that it makes available to charter school operators at the beginning of each charter school authorization cycle. This has led to more

purposeful thinking about the needs of neighborhoods across a city and added more strategic thinking in terms of where to place charter schools within a district.

Recommendations for approval or denial are based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence including review by experts both internal and external to the LEA, and applicant interviews. Applications that do not meet or exceed the standard in all sections are deemed not ready for approval. Tennessee law states, “The approval by the chartering authority of a public charter school application shall be in the form of a written agreement signed by the sponsor and the chartering authority, which shall be binding upon the governing body of the public charter school. The charter agreement . . . shall be in writing and contain all components of the application” TCA § 49-13-110(a).

Authorizers must approve or deny all charter applications within 90 days of receipt of a completed application. Any denial of a charter school application must be stated in writing and must specify the objective reasons for denial. Upon receipt of a denial, the charter applicant has 30 days to submit an amended application for reconsideration. If the amended application is denied by a local board of education, the charter applicant has the ability to appeal. In Tennessee, the SBE hears appeals from charter school applicants who have been denied by local boards of education. The SBE may uphold the district decision, remand the denial back to the district, or become the authorizing entity for the school. Should the board overturn the district denial, they may direct the school district to approve the application, in which case the school district must act as authorizer to the charter school applicant. If the SBE overturns the denial in a district with a priority school, then the SBE may become the authorizer of the school. The SBE is considered a high-quality authorizer. Each member has been trained by NACSA and statute requires the board to follow NACSA standards in authorizing. The state board’s decision on appeals is final.

Authorizers conduct a final review immediately before the charter school first opens

Authorizers provide ongoing monitoring and support of new charter applicants post-approval through a multi-tiered approach. Immediately following approval, initial meetings are held with school leaders to deliver and discuss the pre-opening checklist which includes guidance on matters such as building transitions and maintenance, student enrollment and file transfers, and accountability requirements. Ongoing formal reviews are held monthly over the course of the planning year to ensure that all regulations are followed. Authorizers conduct onsite visits as a final review immediately before the school opens for its first operational year to make certain that critical elements are in place. Should a charter school or authorizer determine the school is not ready to open on schedule, TCA § 49-13-137 allows “the sponsor of an approved charter application may delay, for a period not to exceed one (1) academic year, the initial opening of the public charter school.”

(1)(b) Differentiated review of charter petitions

The authorizing process is differentiated to assess effectiveness of existing operators

To supplement the application review process for new-start charter schools, the department has worked diligently to allow authorizers to conduct differentiated reviews of charter petitions if the applicant is an existing Tennessee operator proposing to replicate or an existing charter school operator that is not yet established in Tennessee. In lieu of a full application, an existing operator may complete a replication application through a streamlined process. It must demonstrate that it is in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and its charter contract. The existing operator must also be in at least Year 2 of operation in Tennessee and provide student performance data analysis from state assessments. This process allows for authorizers to review the quality of existing schools and gauge the applicants’ ability to operate additional schools—while not requiring operators to repeat an application process that they have already successfully completed.

All existing operators from outside Tennessee must provide, in addition to other components of the application, existing academic plans, performance management, CMO contracts (if applicable), network-wide staffing projections, existing budget and other financial documents, and past student performance data. This allows authorizers to review the past performance of the operator and understand its success in establishing and operating one or more high-quality charter schools while also ensuring the operator understands the Tennessee context and meets the requirements for operating in Tennessee.

The flow chart below is provided in the application to determine which sections of the application are required. See Appendix E-3 for charter school application.

APPLICANT TYPE	REQUIRED SECTIONS
New-Start Applicant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.1 through 1.12 Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.1 through 2.10 Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.1 and 3.2
Existing TN Operator Proposing New Focus/Grade Structure <i>OR</i> Existing non-TN operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.1 through 1.14 Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.1 through 2.16 Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.1 through 3.3 Portfolio Review and Performance Record: 4.1
Existing TN Operator Proposing Exact Focus/Grade Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit original application Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.2, 1.13, and 1.14 Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.11. through 2.16 Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.4 Portfolio Review and Performance Record: 4.1

(1)(c) Measure and benchmark performance of authorizers

Tennessee uses clear processes to measure authorizer performance and will require annual dissemination of annual reports

In addition to the statutory requirements around yearly charter school progress reporting (outlined in Absolute Priority 1), each authorizer in Tennessee has established a set of processes for measuring and reporting the performance of its portfolio of charter schools, including the performance frameworks it uses to evaluate school performance, detailed charter school report

cards which include school performance summaries, and published annual reports. As one example, see MNPS 2015 Annual Report in Appendix E-6.

In an effort to increase transparency in this area, the department will support legislation that would require all authorizers in the state to report on charter school accountability annually. Legislation was filed during the 2016 Legislative Session that would require authorizers to report on a number of school accountability measures (student discipline, attrition rates, academic achievement scores) and made it through a number of committees and passed the Senate and House but ultimately did not become law (slightly different versions passed and the conference committee was not able to approve the bill at the end of Session). This effort will be renewed for the 2017 Legislative Session and odds are very high that the legislation will pass. If passed, all charter authorizers would be required to publish an annual charter school authorizer performance report. This report would include data on the academic performance of the schools the chartering authority oversees including data from the state accountability system on each school's academic performance and how well each performed against the goals set forth in its performance framework and charter agreement.

Additionally, TCSC has begun conversations with policy partners to draft language and propose legislation that would require all authorizers to have a performance framework in place. The department supports this move to strengthen the quality of charter school authorizing practices throughout Tennessee. In an effort to support this legislative proposal, the department plans to contract with NACSA to develop a state-wide charter school performance framework. This performance framework will act as an accountability mechanism by establishing performance criteria for charter schools and ensuring that authorizers are accountable to charter schools and to the state overall. Additional information about performance frameworks is included in selection criteria (f) Oversight of Authorized Public Chartering Agencies.

Competitive Preference Priority 2 – One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency, or an Appeals Process

Tennessee provides two authorizers that are not local LEAs and an appeals process

Tennessee has two additional authorized public chartering agencies other than the LEA in addition to an appeals process. Authorizers in Tennessee include: local boards of education, the ASD, and the SBE. Currently, there are six (6) active authorizers in the state: Metro-Nashville Public Schools, Shelby County Schools, Hamilton County Schools, Knox County Schools, the ASD, and the SBE. All LEAs are potential authorizers of charter schools. Two other entities were granted chartering authority more recently.

- 1) In 2012, the ASD was created specifically to significantly improve student achievement in schools in the bottom five percent in overall performance. Charter operators may apply to the ASD to help turnaround one or more of the state's lowest performing schools. This may be done through conversion of a school to a charter school or by the formation of a new charter school serving students zoned to attend ASD eligible schools.
- 2) In 2014, the role of the SBE was expanded to allow it to serve as an authorizer in cases where the board rules in favor of a charter school applicant's appeal. The SBE hears appeals from charter school applicants who have been denied by local boards of education. TCA § 49-13-108 provides "If the application is for a charter school in an LEA that contains at least one (1) priority school... and if the state board finds that the local board's decision was contrary to the best interests of the pupils, school district or community, the state board may approve the application... [and] shall be the chartering authority." Just this year, the SBE ruled in favor of two charter school applicants seeking to open a school in a district with at least one priority school. The SBE is now the authorizer of these two schools.

Invitational Priority: Public Reporting of Charter School Demographics

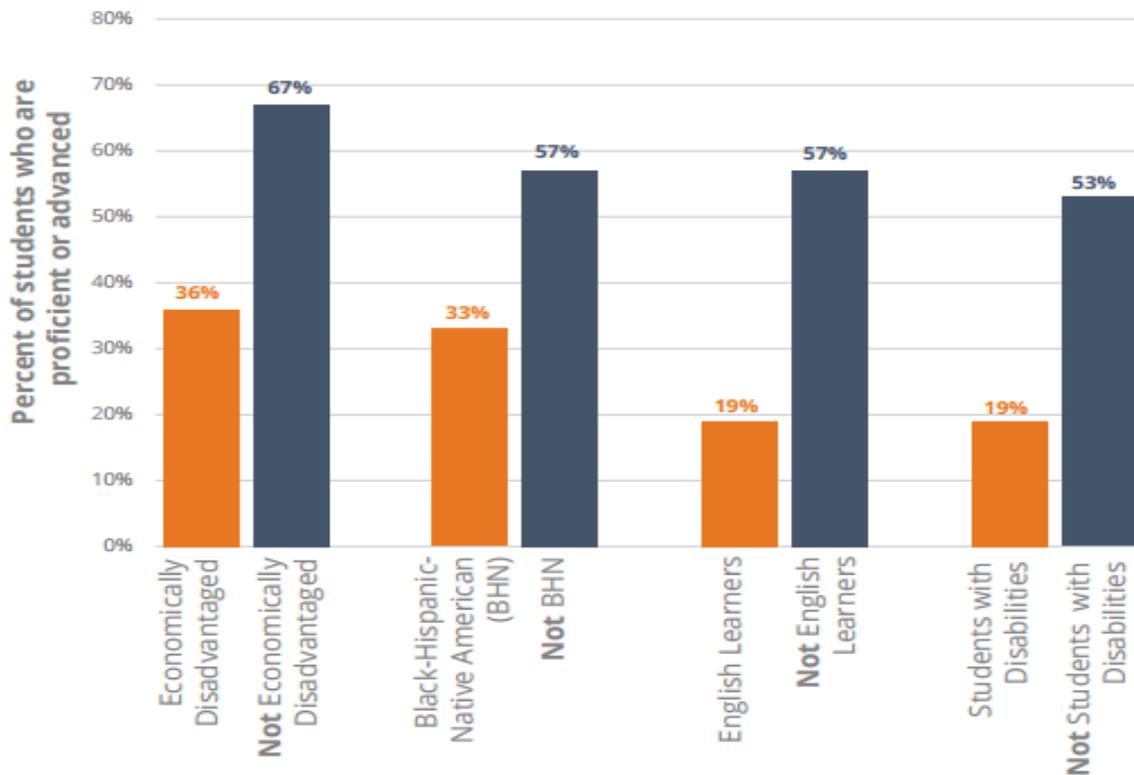
Included within Tennessee’s statutory reporting requirements is the requirement that the department will publicly report each year on charter school demographics for each individual charter school and comparable data for school districts and public schools in surrounding areas. TCA § 49-13-120(b) iterates “the commissioner shall prepare and submit an annual report on charter schools to the education committee of the senate and the education administration and planning committee of the house of representatives”. This report is public and made available each year on the department’s webpage (see Appendix E-2 for charter school annual report).

Selection Criteria:

(a) Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Charter schools are focused on serving educationally disadvantaged students

The Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Education has put in motion a new state-wide strategic plan which outlines five education priority areas. One of those priorities, *All Means All*, calls for a focus on providing individualized support and opportunities for all students with a focus on those who are furthest behind. There are troubling clusters of underperformance across the state today. The patterns point to an urgent need to address systemic inequities among groups of students that prevent all students from reaching their full potential. While average student performance has risen in past years, Tennessee continues to see substantial achievement gaps between students in historically underserved subgroups and their peers. The table below shows one example of achievement gaps in Tennessee in Grades 3-8 English Language Arts 2014-15.



We cannot improve overall outcomes in our state without improving outcomes for our historically underserved subgroups. Over two-thirds of the state’s nearly 1 million students identify with one or more of the following subgroup classifications: economically disadvantaged (57.9%), English Learners (4.6%), or students with disabilities (14%). The department recognizes and values the important role that high-quality charter schools play in helping Tennessee achieve this strategic priority.

Authorizers must give preference to applications serving educationally disadvantaged students

Historically, charter schools in Tennessee were restricted to *only* serving educationally disadvantaged students. Tennessee’s original charter school law limited student eligibility to attend charter schools based on the students’ academic performance or the academic standing of their schools. In 2009, the law was amended to allow students in the largest districts to qualify to attend charter schools based on the low income status of the students’ families. In 2011, the

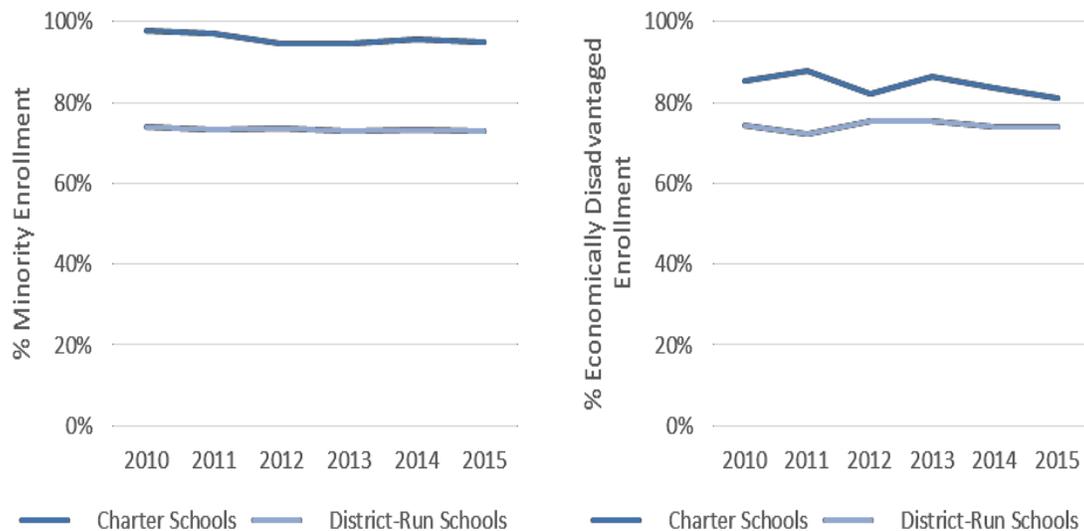
General Assembly removed these student eligibility limitations. Even though these restrictions have been lifted, Tennessee's charter school laws incentivize charter applicants that have a mission focused on educationally disadvantaged students by requiring authorizers to give preference to applications that seek to serve these students. TCA § 49-13-106 (C) identifies “applications that demonstrate the capability to meet the needs of... students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch” as one area an LEA must give preference in reviewing applications for newly created charter schools.

Tennessee’s statute clearly prioritizes charter schools that serve educationally disadvantaged students and the rigorous process for reviewing applications ensure those options are high quality. Combined with grant funds that help support the launch of these schools, Tennessee’s charter schools are well positioned to help educationally disadvantaged students meet content and achievement standards.

Charter schools serve more educationally disadvantaged students than district schools

Tennessee charter schools continue to serve a disproportionately higher number of educationally disadvantaged students compared to their district counterparts. Over the past five years, charter schools have served an average of 10 percent more economically disadvantaged students than district schools in the state. Charter schools also serve a very similar number of students with disabilities as district-run schools and are serving an ever-increasing English language learner population.

The following figure depicts the percentages of economically disadvantaged and minority student enrollment in charter schools compared to district-run schools since 2010.



Charters have demonstrated academic success with educationally disadvantaged students

The state’s current charter schools serve a population that is overwhelmingly disadvantaged, which places them in a unique position to have a significant impact on this student population. Charter schools have been able to leverage their flexibility to implement innovative strategies and develop curricula and learning environments that allow educationally disadvantaged students to demonstrate success. Despite serving student bodies that are composed of more than 81 percent economically-disadvantaged students, many of Tennessee’s charters are “beating the odds” by showing significant student gains in TCAP achievement scores for students. For example, the following table lists the 2015 State Reward Charter Schools. Reward schools are identified as the top 5 percent of schools in the state for performance and the top 5 percent for year-over-year progress. All charter reward schools in 2015 serve a student body that is 70 percent or more economically disadvantaged.

2015 Charter Reward Schools	% Economically disadvantaged
Power Center Academy Middle	70.0%
Power Center Academy High School	70.0%
STAR Academy	81.9%
LEAD Prep Southeast	82.1%
Intrepid College Prep	82.7%
Liberty Collegiate Academy	85.1%
LEAD Academy	85.5%
KIPP Academy Nashville	88.3%
New Vision Academy	89.3%
KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	91.3%
Memphis Business Academy Elementary	95.1%
Memphis Business Academy High	98.2%
Memphis Business Academy Middle	98.7%

The ASD has increased charters’ contribution to serving educationally disadvantaged students

The ASD is also helping in this area. The ASD was created to turnaround the state’s priority schools, those schools performing in the bottom 5 percent statewide. The ASD aspires to move these schools from the state’s bottom 5 percent in achievement to the top 25 percent. To help achieve this mission, the ASD recruits high-performing charter management organizations (CMOs) to Tennessee to operate within a portfolio model run by the district. The portfolio model draws upon the skills, experience, and resources of successful charter operators from around the country to infuse the ASD schools with the tailored turnaround efforts they require. Of the ASD’s current 29 schools, 21 are charters serving 97 percent economically disadvantaged students and 13 percent students with disabilities.

The ASD has changed the practices and expectations inside LEAs with priority schools. The pressure created by the possibility of the ASD taking priority schools out of a local district combined with the competitive options the ASD brings, means LEAs can no longer ignore the lowest-performing schools. Charter school operators desire to serve educationally disadvantaged students and the availability of CSP funds will make this an even more attractive option.

Conversion charter schools are also helping to serve educationally disadvantaged students. State law provides districts with the authority to initiate the conversion of a traditional public school to a public charter school. This is an extremely powerful tool for districts seeking to transform failing schools. In one example, MNPS utilized this option with the conversion of Cameron Middle School in 2010 which had over 95% economically disadvantaged students. Cameron Middle School was one of the lowest performing schools in MNPS and was located in an area where families zoned to the school could not easily access a higher performing school. The district partnered with LEAD Public Schools using a phase-in model and their efforts have benefited all students zoned to Cameron Middle School. In 2014, Cameron Middle School was identified as a Reward School. The success of this conversion prompted the department to commission a study of lessons learned and best practices to share with all districts in the state to encourage similar district-led conversions with high populations of educationally disadvantaged students. In order to incentivize and support districts with charter school conversions, the department plans to award preference points in the subgrant competition to conversion charter schools who serve educationally disadvantaged students.

The subgrant competition will preference applicants likely to assist educationally disadvantaged and other students in meeting academic standards

Tennessee's charter school grant program design will ensure a focus on serving educationally disadvantaged students. The subgrant competition will be structured to provide awards based on preference points, awarded to applicants that will serve educationally disadvantaged students and those focused on converting schools that are currently failing their students. The department also plans to award dissemination grants to impact educationally disadvantaged and other students in meeting state academic content and achievement standards. More details about these grant competitions can be found in selection criteria (d) Project Design.

(b) Vision for Growth and Accountability

Charter schools are integral to the statewide vision for student achievement

Education in Tennessee is on the rise. With the close of the Race to the Top era, we celebrate a period of groundbreaking change. Tennessee has seen striking successes in student achievement but recognizes the continued need to ensure students’ long-term success. We now have a strong foundation from which to realize our goals for Tennessee students. If successful, all districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity, and all students will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark upon their chosen path in life. This is our unifying vision: success for all students upon graduation from high school.

High-quality charter schools play an integral role in realizing this vision. The department has identified three objectives in order to support the overall goals of the charter school program. During the project grant period, Tennessee will: 1) Increase the number of high-quality charter schools; 2) Decrease the number of academically poor-performing charter schools; and 3) Support improvement in all schools with emphasis on educationally disadvantaged students.

The logic model provides a clear strategy for the SEA to increase charter quality

Tennessee proposes the following logic model as the statewide vision for charter school growth and accountability.

Tennessee CSP Logic Model							
Inputs	Activities	Output	Short Term Outcomes (Immediate)	Medium Term Outcomes (after 1 yr.)	Long Term Outcomes (by project end date)	Performance Measures	End Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDOE Office of School Choice • TN Autho- 	Strategy 1. Increase the number of high-quality charter schools						<p>More children have access to high-quality schools --></p>
	1.1 Administer CSP subgrants	Schools receive funding to support start-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update grant management software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve grant award process • Improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student access to high-quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TN will increase by 8 new charter schools annually 	

rizers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs, ASD, SBE • Charter school support entities: TCSC, NACSA, TACSA • CSP Grant Funds • Time • Technology 	1.2 Recruit high-quality CMOs	8 new charter schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase TDOE office staff • Improve charter school outreach and training 	grantee monitoring process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with high-quality charter schools 	schools	(GPRA i) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TN will increase by 5 high-quality charter schools annually 	Improved academic achievement, graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment rates; decreased achievement gap for educationally disadvantaged students.
Inputs	Activities	Output	Short Term Outcomes (Immediate)	Medium Term Outcomes (after 1 yr.)	Long Term Outcomes (by project end date)	Performance Measures	End Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDOE Office of School Choice • TN Authorizers: • LEAs, ASD, SBE • Charter school support entities: TCSC, NACSA, TACSA • CSP Grant Funds • Time • Technology 	Strategy 2. Decrease the number of academically poor-performing charter schools						More children have access to high-quality schools --> Improved academic achievement, graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment rates; decreased achievement gap for educationally disadvantaged students.
	2.1 Provide NACSA training to all active authorizers	All active authorizers implement quality authorizing practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase training opportunities for authorizers • Improve TN authorizer modules in collaboration with NACSA • Increase number of opportunities for collaboration between authorizers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve collaboration efforts and activities between TDOE, TCSC, authorizers, and charters • Increased transparency in authorizer practices state-wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased number of academically poor performing charter schools • Improve authorizer accountability practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the number of academically poor-performing charter schools by 2 annually • By May 2019, all TN authorizers utilize modules to ensure best practices and accountability 	
	2.2 Develop and distribute authorizer training modules	All active authorizers use modules to inform authorizing functions					
	2.3 Analyze authorizer practices	Increased accountability for HQ practices					
	2.4 Develop trainings for new authorizers	New authorizers gain knowledge to execute responsibilities					
	2.5 Identify and support appropriate authorizer accountability legislation	Increased accountability for authorizing practices					

Inputs	Activities	Output	Short Term Outcomes (Immediate)	Medium Term Outcomes (after 1 yr.)	Long Term Outcomes (by project end date)	Performance Measures	End Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDOE Office of School Choice • TN Authorizers: • LEAs, ASD, SBE • Charter school support entities: TCSC, NACSA, TACSA • CSP Grant Funds • Time • Technology 	Strategy 3. Support improvement in all schools with emphasis on educationally disadvantaged students.						
	3.1 Encourage authorizers to collaborate with their charter schools	Districts and charters exchange local examples of successful practices and help each other replicate them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve charter authorizer accountability and transparency through new report card • Better dissemination practices • Increase collaboration opportunities for charter and district schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve charter school data analysis • Improve monitoring and support • Improve facilitation of practice sharing state-wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter and district schools show improved student results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th & 8th grade student percent proficient in math & reading will increase by 5% during each year of the grant period (GPRA ii). • Graduation rate will increase by 1% during each year of the grant period. • Increase number of charter schools designated as reward schools by 2 annually. • Award at least 2 dissemination grants annually 	<p>More children have access to high-quality schools --> Improved academic achievement, graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment rates; decreased achievement gap for educationally disadvantaged students</p>
	3.2 Contract to author report on effective charter school practices	Report provides all schools with access to a bank of effective practices					
	3.3 Create state-wide task force of charter and district leaders to identify/share best practices	Open dialogue results in ongoing best practice sharing					

(b)(1) Support the Creation of High-Quality Charter Schools

TN supports the creation of fifteen more high-quality charter schools through the grant period

As discussed in the following selection criteria (c) Past Performance, Tennessee identifies 26 charter schools currently in operation as high-quality. With this baseline and a performance measure of increasing by at least five (5) high-quality schools annually, the department expects the number of high-quality charter schools will be at least 41 by the end of the grant period.

The department and key partners will recruit and develop high-quality charter applicants

Tennessee plans to support the creation of high-quality charter schools through new-start, conversion, and replication of successful school models. During the project period, the department will only award CSP funds to those that demonstrate the ability to operate a high-quality charter school. This will begin with charter school outreach and training. In partnership with the TCSC, the department will improve recruitment efforts to attract high-quality CMOs and charter operators with a track record of success to encourage replication through the use of CSP funds. The TCSC provides a vital partnership with the department and LEAs to support charter schools through this rigorous application process and through pre-launch incubation. To support the submission of high-quality applications, TCSC offers training, resources, and fee-based consulting services. Once a school has been approved, TCSC's *Launch School* program supports approved schools through a year-long pre-opening incubation program designed to reinforce the knowledge and skills of schools that have received charter school authorization and the experience of replicating charter school leaders. Through its innovative learning model, leaders are prepared to open new charter schools across the state. Learning modules consist of operational, financial and governance training to help new school leaders and governing boards more fully understand the specific details that go into running a high performing charter school. By design, TCSC's *Launch School* is cohort based to help new charter leaders develop resource contacts (each other) as well as network with existing school leaders that are running high-quality charter schools in Tennessee.

An enhanced sub-grant process will ensure awards to high-quality applicants

Tennessee was previously awarded a CSP grant in 2010. During the previous grant award period, the process for determining awards lacked rigorous requirements for applicants. To ensure subgrants are only awarded to applicants who demonstrate the capacity to create high-quality charter schools, the department will initiate a new grant award process, with key

improvements over the previous process. An enhanced grant application and scoring rubric will be created to evaluate planning and implementation grant applications. The new application and aligned rubric will include specific information regarding the assignment of preference points for high-quality replicators and varied award amounts based on the strengths of the applicant. In order to encourage the expansion of charter schools that have demonstrated success and the capacity for growth, the department also plans to award replication grants to applicants that have demonstrated academic, operational, and financial success and viability.

Post-award monitoring and support will lead to increased charter quality

Post-award monitoring practices will be improved by redesigning the monitoring instrument to include a performance framework with stated objectives for all schools in addition to school specific objectives. Regular desk monitoring will be conducted with at least one on-site visit conducted by department staff during each year of the grant award. Increased opportunities for monitoring and support will be required by the department when any school shows indicators of poor performance, mismanagement, or falls short of their objectives. More on these and other activities are in selection criteria (d) Project Design.

(b)(2) Support the Closure of Academically Poor-Performing Charter Schools

The TDOE will support the closure of academically poor-performing charter schools by strengthening charter school accountability, improving oversight of authorizers and authorization processes, and facilitating high-quality processes for executing a school closure.

The department supports the closure of priority schools and others identified by authorizers as academically poor-performing

Tennessee will strengthen charter school accountability. As discussed in previous sections, Tennessee has an automatic closure law in place (TCA § 49-13-122) which requires the closure of charter schools identified as priority schools according to the state's accountability

system. The closure shall be effective immediately following the end of the school year. This automatic closure law removes the politics that often go into school closure decisions and ensures academically poor-performing schools are closed. Additionally, authorizers may close schools through regular oversight, renewal, and revocation procedures, and the department will support authorizers' decisions to close academically poor-performing charter schools. And as mentioned in previous sections, the department will support legislation for authorizer accountability and required performance frameworks.

Performance frameworks will promote authorizer accountability for performance

Tennessee will improve oversight of authorizers and authorization processes. In partnership with NACSA, Tennessee will develop a specific performance framework for authorizers. The authorizer performance framework will help authorizers plan and develop stronger practices, including how they identify areas in which poor-performing charter schools need deeper guidance or additional assistance. The performance framework will also serve as a resource for the department to identify areas where authorizers can improve or refine their practices to achieve ever-stronger outcomes.

Tennessee oversees a clear process in the case of charter closure

Finally, the department will support the closure of all academically poor-performing charter schools in the state by overseeing the closure process to ensure authorizers and schools follow all statutory requirements. TCA § 49-13-122 requires specific procedures in place for charter school closure. Once a charter school is slated for closure, the authorizer and the charter school must assemble a team to oversee and execute the closure process, including notifying current students of the impending closure and identifying other schools they may attend.

The department will require authorizers to report the names and positions of the assembled transition team composed of staff from the charter school, staff from the authorizer,

and anyone else the authorizer deems necessary. The department will review and oversee the transition team’s plans for the transfer of students; the release and transfer of student records and personnel records; the submission of financial statements; the disposition of school funds and school assets. The department will ensure the transfer of funds and assets follow all federal guidelines and requirements and will work with the transition team to ensure the authorizer and school inform all families, school staff, and other stakeholders of key information regarding the school's closing and the other public school options for which students are eligible to enroll.

(c) Past Performance

(c)(1) Increase—High-Quality Charter Schools

TN has demonstrated an increase in each of the past five years in high-quality charter schools

For the purposes of the CSP grant, Tennessee uses the definition of high-quality charter school as defined in the federal register. Tennessee has had a demonstrated increase in the number and percentage of high-quality charter schools in the state over the past five years. As illustrated in the chart below, there are 19 more high-quality schools in the state than five years ago, and 43 percent of charter schools are currently high-quality.

School Year	Total # of CS w/ data	# High-Quality CS	% High-Quality CS
2010-11	27	7	26%
2011-12	33	13	40%
2012-13	44	15	34%
2013-14	57	24	42%
2014-15	60	26	43%

The high-quality schools included in the counts above were identified by reviewing the past three years of data. These reviewed data points included: 1) the extent to which educationally disadvantaged students’ scores were above the state average in specified subgroups in reading and math; 2) the extent to which “all students” proficient/advanced percentages were

higher than the local district; 3) school TVAAS (value-added) composite score of 4 or 5¹; 4) gap size and the extent to which the school demonstrated gap closure; 5) AYP status or reward/priority status; and 6) other areas of increased achievement and attainment including graduation and dropout rates, ACT composites, attendance rates, and college-going rates.

Converting priority schools to charter schools impacted 2012-13 data

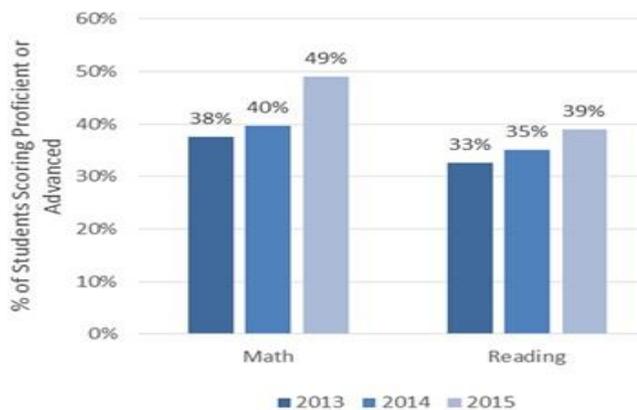
Tennessee saw a steady increase in the number of high-quality charter schools during each of the last five years. The percentage of high-quality charter schools also increased with the exception of a slight drop in 2012-13 which was the first school year with student performance data for the first cohort of charter schools authorized by the ASD. Due to the nature of the ASD's mission as a specialty state turnaround district with authority to turn around the state's lowest performing schools, charter operators that took on the difficult task of improving these schools were operating poor-performing schools at the beginning of their work. As such, the drop in the number of high-quality charter schools in the state in 2012-13 is related to this situation, and the increase in subsequent years is related to the turnaround of those schools.

The Tennessee charter sector vastly outperforms district schools

Twenty-six charter schools were determined to be of high-quality based on the definition in the federal register. This definition establishes a high bar for student academic achievement comparisons. Accordingly, these numbers may not necessarily reflect the overall sense of quality in the Tennessee charter school sector. With that in mind, the department wants to emphasize that numerous other charter schools in the state show strong student academic achievement and growth.

¹ TVAAS Composites are a measure of student growth and reported on a 1-5 scale. Levels 4 and 5 indicate that a district or school is exceeding the expected growth.

Tennessee charter schools are among the highest performing public schools in the state. In both academic achievement and growth measures, Tennessee’s public charter schools represent some of the state’s highest performing public schools. The following chart illustrates the increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in Math and Reading for charter schools that have been open for at least three years.



Not only are public charter schools some of the highest performing public schools in the state, but Tennessee is also home to one of highest performing public charter school sectors in the nation. In a 2013 national Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) study at Stanford University², Tennessee was found to be one of the top states in the nation for charter school reading and math gains. Only Rhode Island and the District of Columbia showed similar or greater gains in this national comparison of charter school student growth among the states.

The study showed over the course of a year, Tennessee charter school students, in comparison to traditional public school peers, gain the equivalent of 86 additional days of learning in reading and 72 additional days of learning in mathematics. Learning gains in a given year for Tennessee charter school students are among the highest of all states studied.

Furthermore, Tennessee continues to see an increase in the number of charter schools identified as Reward Schools in the state. Reward Schools are the top 5 percent of schools in the

² <http://credo.stanford.edu/documents/NCSS%202013%20Final%20Draft.pdf>

state for performance—as measured by overall student achievement levels—and the top 5 percent for year-over-year progress—as measured by school-wide value-added data. These 10 percent of schools receive recognition for their success under the accountability system. In 2015, thirteen (13) charter schools received recognition as Reward Schools. This is an increase of six (6) additional charter schools since this list was last published in 2012. While Tennessee’s public charter schools accounted for just 5.4 percent of all public schools in the state during the 2014-15 school year – they account for 7.6 percent of all Reward Schools.

(c)(2) Decrease—Academically Poor-Performing Charter Schools

Over the past 5 years, the number and percentage of poor- performing charters has gone down

For the purposes of the CSP grant, Tennessee uses the definition of academically poor-performing charter school as defined in the federal register. Tennessee has had a demonstrated decrease in the number and percentage of academically poor-performing charter schools. As illustrated below, over the past five years, Tennessee has decreased the number of poor- performing charter schools from seven to four. In 20-14-15, only seven percent of charters were poor-performing.

School Year	Total # of CS w/ data	# Poor-Performing CS	% Poor-Performing CS
2010-11	27	7	26%
2011-12	33	5	15%
2012-13	44	8	18%
2013-14	57	8	14%
2014-15	60	4	7%

The academically poor-performing charter schools included in the counts above were identified by reviewing the past three years of data for each school. This was accomplished by reviewing: 1) identification of lowest performing 5 percent of all schools in the state, and 2) the extent to which charter schools failed to demonstrate student academic growth of at least an average of one grade level for each cohort of students in each of the past three years.

Tennessee’s accountability system recognizes schools based on proficiency, student growth and closure of achievement gaps. Priority schools are the lowest-performing five percent (5%) of schools in Tennessee, in terms of academic achievement. This means that the composite proficiency rate (the rate of students achieving proficient or advanced scores on either the TCAP or end of course examinations), over three years, for all students in the school, placed the school in the bottom five percent of all schools in the state. According to Tennessee’s accountability system, priority schools are publicly identified every three years. For public reporting purposes, the priority school list was published for 2012 and 2015. However, the department requested this data for additional years for the purposes of reporting here and the results are indicated in the chart above. With the exception of a slight increase in 2012-13, the percentage of academically poor-performing charter schools decreased over the last five years. As mentioned in the previous section, the slight increase seen in 2012-13 occurred due to the inclusion of the ASD created specifically to turnaround schools in the lowest performing five percent.

There are currently no poor-performing charter schools operating in Tennessee

The most recent priority school list was approved by the SBE on August 26, 2014. This was considered the 2015 priority school list. Four charter schools were designated priority schools: City University Boys Preparatory, Omni Prep Academy - North Point Lower School, Omni Prep Academy - North Pointe Middle School, and Southern Avenue Middle. City University Boys Preparatory demonstrated significant progress in the 2014-15 school year, such that it exceeded the 15th percentile of one-year success rates when ranked against other eligible schools in the state. This school has exited the priority school list and is no longer considered a priority school. All three other charter schools identified as priority schools on the 2015 list were recommended for closure by the authorizer. Just recently each school appealed to the SBE, and the SBE upheld the authorizers’ decision to close these schools. Tennessee authorizers are

clearly moving toward closure of academically poor-performing schools and the SBE is upholding those decisions. Of the four charter schools named as priority schools on the last published 2015 list, three are closed and one is no longer on the priority list. This means that Tennessee currently does not have any academically poor-performing charter schools according to the definition in the federal register.

(d) Project Design

(d)(1) Process for Awarding Subgrants

The subgrant award process will ensure grants are awarded to only strong applicants

Tennessee’s CSP subgrant competition will support the overall strategy to increase the number of high-quality charter schools in the state. CSP grant funds will provide newly authorized Tennessee charter school operators funds for the design, planning, and initial implementation of their schools. The department will begin by providing public notice of the subgrant competition through the department and TACSA websites, email to new and existing charter school operators, and notices sent to the TCSC, district charter offices, and CMOs. Eligible applicants will be charter schools that have not previously received CSP grants as required in the CSP regulatory guidance.

The subgrant application will contain three major components: application narrative, budget, and timeline. The application narrative will require the applicant to provide a school overview, address continued operations, and plan for meeting project objectives and performance measurements. Proposed use of grant funds must align clearly with the mission, vision, and philosophy of the school. The applicant must provide strong evidence that the funds will assist the school in meeting the identified needs of the students. School level project objectives and performance measures must be comprehensive, well-defined, and realistic. Budget and budget

narrative information must be aligned, detailed, and leave no question regarding expenditures. Time frames must be logical with realistic projected costs stated for each goal indicator.

Tennessee's subgrant application and competition will also include competitive priorities with preference points awarded to applicants who demonstrate a clearly defined plan for: 1.) improving learning for educationally disadvantaged students; 2.) closing achievement gaps; 3.) replication of high-quality schools; 4.) conversion of the state's lowest performing schools; and 5.) demonstration of a proven track record of student academic success. These preferences align with the purpose of the charter school grant program in addition to state specific priorities and goals for student achievement. The department will provide training and technical assistance to all eligible applicants on the application process.

To ensure a reliable review process, peer reviewers with relevant expertise (e.g., federal grants, finance) will be recruited. The department will maintain a pool of peer reviewers by including this as a requirement for all grantees post-award. As a condition to receive the grant funds, grantees must sign that they are willing to serve as a future peer reviewer. Additional reviewers will be enlisted from the department and LEAs. Peer reviewer training will include onsite training of peer reviewers in addition to remote webinar training as needed. Peer reviewer training will include the completion of practice scoring templates on each section of the application and a post-scoring discussion to ensure understanding of inter-rater reliability. Post-training conference calls will be scheduled as needed.

Once the competition closes, the review process will begin with the department conducting an initial review of applications to ensure completeness and all technical requirements are met. Complete applications will then be divided among teams of reviewers. At least three reviewers will be assigned to each application. Reviewers will use a department-created scoring rubric to evaluate each application and assign points utilizing a leveled point

scale for each subsection. Peer reviewer score reports will be signed and delivered electronically back to the department. Finally, applications will receive a final review by department staff to review allowable activities, accurate budget coding, and assignment of preference points. The complete review process will occur within one month of the competition closing.

A score of eighty percent (80%) will be required for a school to be awarded the CSP grant. Any applicant scoring below 80 will not receive an award. Grant funds will be awarded in differentiated amounts commensurate with the applicant’s overall score. Subgrant awards will be made via award letters from the grant manager.

The application timeline ensures sufficient time for applicant awareness and capacity-building

Subgrantees will be required to sign an award letter which contains the conditions of the grant and assurances page. Grant funds will be provided to awardees in installments with the first installment to occur immediately following announcement of the award. The first and second issuance of funds must be reconciled while the third and any remaining disbursements must be reimbursed. The following annual timeline details Tennessee’s CSP activities (beginning in July to coincide with new charter school contract announcements in Tennessee).

Month	Tennessee CSP Subgrant Competition Process
July	Announce CSP subgrant competition and call for reviewers
August	Provide training and technical assistance to applicants and reviewers
September	Open competition, receive applications
October	Review and score applications
November	Awards announced and post award training
December	First disbursements
Jan - June	Process reconciliation/reimbursement documents

The department will award dissemination subgrants following this same process and timeline, however the dissemination grant application will require success with educationally disadvantaged students and closing achievement gaps as absolute priorities. Competitive priorities will include best practices related to student discipline and school climate as discussed

in section e2. Dissemination grants will be awarded to charter schools that have been in operation for at least three consecutive years, have demonstrated success in improving student academic achievement, and have demonstrated strong operational and financial capacity. Schools that are awarded CSP funds will assist other entities interested in opening high-quality charter schools and develop partnerships with academically poor-performing charter schools.

Ten to 12 annual subgrants will increase the capacity of charters and increase the number of high-quality charters in Tennessee

Tennessee proposes to award ten (10) planning and implementation subgrants annually, two of which the department anticipates will be replication of high-quality charter schools. This number was determined based upon the number of applications received during the previous award cycle. Tennessee also proposes to award at least two (2) dissemination grants annually during the grant period.

The following table outlines Tennessee’s proposal for the year-by-year estimate number of subgrants and average awards.

	Year 1 2016-17		Year 2 2017-18		Year 3 2018-19	
	# of Grants	Avg. award amount	# of Grants	Avg. award amount	# of Grants	Avg. award amount
Planning and Implementation Grants	10*	\$600,000	10*	\$600,000	10*	\$600,000
Dissemination Grants	2	\$100,000	2	\$100,000	2	\$100,000
*Anticipate two for replication of high quality charter schools.						

The department and the TCSC have determined that approximately \$600,000 is needed in funding by a startup school during the planning and first two years of operation. The significant costs are the hiring of administrative staff and teachers that need to be brought on during startup year, facilities costs, technology infrastructure, and equipment and textbooks.

Two dissemination grants of \$100,000 each will be awarded annually to impact educationally disadvantaged and other students in meeting state academic content and achievement standards, and/or to promote best practices in student discipline and school climate.

84 percent of applicants previously received grants reflecting a high-quality applicant pool

During Tennessee’s previous CSP grant period, 84 percent (84%) of eligible applicants were awarded CSP grants. Building on the success of the previous grant period, Tennessee will implement an improved review process and award subgrants only to applicants who demonstrate the capacity to create high-quality charter schools.

(d)(2) Process for Monitoring CSP Subgrantees

Tennessee’s CSP monitoring plan is designed with three purposes in mind: 1) to assess the extent to which grantees are implementing their approved grant projects in compliance with statutes, regulations, and guidance; 2) to examine effective uses of CSP grant funds in Tennessee charter schools; and 3) to support the overall strategy for increasing the number of high-quality charter schools in the state.

Desk and onsite monitoring will ensure adherence to grant requirements

The department will monitor CSP subgrantees on a regular basis, beginning in the planning year and then during the first and second year of operation. Immediately following the announcement of awards, grantees will be provided with guidance on requirements and a timeline of monitoring expectations in the grant award notification letter. Post-award training on federal regulations, uniform guidance, allowable costs, cash management, and asset tagging will be provided to all awardees. Grantees will be monitored during each year of the grant utilizing both desk monitoring and onsite school monitoring. Desk monitoring will be used as an efficient way to assist grantees with funding requests and review and track school performance on a regular basis. The department will utilize desk monitoring to document reimbursement requests,

receipts, inventory logs, and financial statements, and to ensure compliance with standard bidding procedures and uniform guidance. The department will conduct additional desk monitoring with each subgrantee to discuss progress on objectives as a supplement to on-site monitoring.

Onsite monitoring of subgrantees will occur at least once yearly during each year of the grant period. In the fall/winter of the first implementation year, subgrantees will complete a monitoring instrument form, which the department will use to inform the site visit. This self-assessment will include organizational compliance as well as opportunities to reflect on the school's relationship with the authorizer and its progress toward its specific goals. In the winter/spring of the second and third implementation year, subgrantees will complete a different monitoring instrument form which is used to inform the site visit. This form will also include an opportunity to review the effective use of grant funds with an eye toward providing future subgrantees helpful guidance. The department will provide increased opportunities for monitoring and support as needed.

Improved disbursement approach will ensure accuracy and efficiency

Tennessee's previous model used for processing CSP disbursements is cumbersome and outdated. Upon award of the grant, Tennessee plans to immediately begin a selection process for new grant management software. The proposed software would include an interactive interface that would allow grantees to input yearly budgets, submit requests for initial disbursements, submit reimbursement invoices with attached receipts and documentation, and make budget amendments. Through this software, the grant manager will be able to monitor and process subgrant disbursements with more accuracy and efficiency.

Annual reporting on disbursements and outcomes will be shared with the public

The department will create an annual report of all charter schools receiving funds to analyze the extent to which grant objectives are being met and to identify effective uses of funds and correlations to student achievement. This report will be made publicly available to increase transparency.

(e) Dissemination of Information and Best Practices

(e)(1) Serve as a Dissemination Leader in the State Using Data to Assess Impact

The SEA will identify information and research about best/promising practices

Dissemination of information and best practices is critical as Tennessee continues to expand the number of high-quality charters. TCA § 49-13-131 specifies, “The department of education, in collaboration and cooperation with charter schools, shall identify charter school most promising practices and implement a system for dissemination of such practices. The system shall include identification of those schools that could benefit most directly from innovative practices in charter schools. The system of dissemination shall allow LEAs across the state and traditional public schools to learn from charter schools' most promising practices.”

Tennessee has undertaken several initiatives to encourage and facilitate best practice sharing in alignment with the statutory language outlined above. During the previous CSP grant, the department commissioned two reports on best practices within charter schools. The first report looked at high-performing charter schools and traditional public schools and surveyed the school leadership to determine common themes on the conditions and practices necessary to see high student achievement. The second report focused on the best practices in how previous subgrantees used funding from the CSP grant. Both of these studies were widely disseminated and are available publicly on the department’s website.

Tennessee will undertake four new strategies to facilitate identification of best practices

Tennessee plans to build off of these practices to create additional methods and space for charter schools to share successful strategies with other charter schools, traditional schools, as well as families and communities. The department will focus on four main approaches to developing and promoting best practice sharing: 1) formation of the Tennessee Charter School Task Force; 2) commissioning of a report on best practices of high-quality charter schools; 3) facilitation of local school district and charter school collaboration sessions to share best practices; and 4) the granting of CSP dissemination subgrants.

1) The Tennessee Charter School Task Force will include representatives of high-quality charter schools, authorizers, advocacy groups, department staff, and parents. The task force will meet at least once annually throughout the grant term to discuss research related to challenging areas of school operation such as student discipline policies, school climate, educating educationally disadvantaged students, or serving special populations. Members of the task force will bring to bear both research and academic data and their own insights regarding challenges they observe and practices for which they have evidence of success. The task force will be responsible for publishing an annual report on the best practices identified through the process.

2) To identify best or promising practices of successful charter schools, the department will commission a data-driven research study of the high-quality charter schools in Tennessee. The purpose of this research will be to develop a bank of common strategies that lead to high student achievement. The report will pay specific attention to charter schools that are demonstrating success at serving educationally disadvantaged students, zoned populations through conversion charter schools, and a large population of students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch.

3) District/charter partnerships can only serve to strengthen educational opportunities for all students. The department will work closely with the TCSC and the Tennessee Association of Charter School Authorizers (TACSA) to facilitate district-charter collaborative sessions as a

space for operators to share strategies and innovative practices. The department will work with authorizers to establish bi-annual leader collaboration sessions focused on innovative, successful strategies. In these sessions, the department will assemble data-informed best practices.

4) As discussed in (d) Project Design, Tennessee plans to use a portion of the CSP grant funds to award subgrants focused specifically on dissemination of best practices. Schools that are awarded CSP funds will assist other entities interested in opening high-quality charter schools and develop partnerships with academically poor-performing charter schools.

The SEA will disseminate information and research about best/promising practices

To disseminate all of these best and promising practices, the department will aggregate and widely disseminate the report from the task force, the commissioned study, and the practices identified through charter-district collaboration sessions. Additionally, the department's Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) offices will serve as a repository for best practices amongst charter schools in their regions and help to disseminate the best practices across the state. The department has eight regional CORE offices throughout the state staffed with an executive director and support staff to provide districts with the support to create regional collaborative relationships, differentiated professional development and evidence based best practice sharing.

The department will continue to work closely with the TCSC to disseminate information and research on best practices. For example, in 2015 the department, in conjunction with TCSC, convened a task force focused on special education in charter schools and invited charter operators, authorizers, state board members, and special education experts to discuss challenges and successes in serving students with special needs. The task force consisted of over 20 members and met three times over the course of a year to discuss special education policies and practices in districts and charter schools and to develop recommendations regarding funding for special education students across all schools. The task force also produced a primer on special

education in charter schools for parents of current and future charter school students to educate them on their rights and expectations for services in charter schools. See Appendix E-7 for *Special Education in Tennessee Charter Schools* report.

The department will enlist the help of TACSA to disseminate information and research on best practices through their regular quarterly meetings and training sessions.

The SEA will use data to assess the impact of its dissemination activities

The department will assess the impact of dissemination activities through a variety of methods. The department will measure and review the frequency of access to the department's website pages that contain published best practices as well as the frequency of opened emails that distribute these best practices. The department will review the qualitative information shared by CORE offices about the value of best practices to partner schools and measure the quality of collaboration activities around best practices through post-session surveys to participants. Finally, any schools completing applications for dissemination grants will be required to provide information on how they plan to evaluate the impact of their dissemination activities.

(e)(2) Student Discipline and School Climate

TN will solicit input on data reporting approach and publicize discipline and climate data

The first step toward disseminating information on best practices related to student discipline and school climate is to make key data publicly available. Tennessee will partner with NACSA to increase the reliability, transparency, and availability of data related to student discipline in charters. To evaluate the effectiveness of current data collection and reporting processes, and to facilitate dialogue with internal and external stakeholders, the department will facilitate a series of in-person stakeholder working group meetings. These meetings will allow the department to collect feedback from authorizers, charter schools, support organizations, and

department staff. At the same time, the meetings will also provide an opportunity for the department to communicate its priorities for identifying best practices in student discipline.

NACSA and the department will disseminate information about discipline and climate

The department will also partner with NACSA to build the capacity of authorizers in Tennessee to monitor and evaluate charter school discipline policies and practices appropriately and effectively. Specifically, the department will publish resources and conduct in-person and virtual dissemination workshops with authorizers and charter schools across the state. Resource and workshop content will focus on promoting better understanding of the civil rights of students in charter schools related to school discipline and the policies and practices that charter schools must employ to ensure that those rights are protected. Content will build authorizer knowledge about the role of federal law in student discipline, including protections for students with special needs; how state law on discipline applies to charter schools; and the authorizer’s responsibility for monitoring and ensuring charter school compliance. It will promote effective strategies for authorizers to use to evaluate and oversee charter school discipline policies and practices at the charter application stage, at charter renewal, and throughout the course of the charter term.

Learning conditions survey and climate survey will surface best practices from which to learn

The department has been awarded a discretionary grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support district and school measurement of, and targeted programmatic interventions to improve, conditions for learning. Tennessee is one of 11 states that have been awarded this grant. Tennessee is the only state that has developed our own survey to determine conditions for learning with a goal to connect academic data to the conditions for learning data.

School climate and discipline will be priorities for CSP dissemination subgrant

The department will analyze the Tennessee School Climate Survey results to identify charter schools with the best conditions for learning aligned with high achievement data. Once

identified, the department will partner with these schools to assess best practices and encourage these schools to apply for dissemination grants. Student discipline and school climate data will be included as competitive priorities in awarding dissemination grants.

(f) Oversight of Authorized Public Chartering Agencies

Tennessee has become a leader in education reform across the nation and recognizes that quality charter school authorizing is a powerful strategy for creating exceptional public schools and offering high-quality educational opportunities for all students regardless of economic status, language barriers, or special needs. To that end, the department is committed to providing high-quality oversight of charter school authorizers through regular monitoring, evaluation of performance, technical assistance, and accountability through public reporting.

(f)(1) Quality of SEA’s Plan to Ensure that Authorizers are:

(i) Focusing on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Student Bodies

Tennessee requires charters to plan to serve diverse learners

The state’s charter law maintains statutory provisions to help foster racially and ethnically diverse student bodies in public charter schools. This is in contrast to most district schools around the state that assign students to schools based on home address zoning assignments. Tennessee figures as one of the lowest diversity ranked states in K-12 public education, according to the 2014 Diversity Index rating³. Among Southern peer states, Tennessee has one of the lowest index scores (a low index score means less diverse).

This zone based assignment program that is predominant throughout the state often leads to racially isolated and segregated schools. Family income and housing patterns within towns and cities are powerful forces that, with a predominantly zone based school assignment system, results in more isolated and segregated demographic compositions of individual schools. In

³ <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/11/25/minnesota-school-race-diversity/18919391/>

addition, the demographic data of many academic magnet schools (largely considered the “best” public schools) throughout the state indicate a much lower percentage of minority or ethnically diverse student representation within the school. Academic magnets by nature maintain admissions standards which are typically achievement score based, which is strongly correlated to family income, and often ends up having a discriminatory effect on low income and minority students gaining admissions into the state’s academic magnet schools.

Tennessee maintains three key provisions in its charter law to help encourage racial and ethnic diversity in public charter schools:

- A) TCA § 49-13-107 maintains that all public charter schools must be open enrollment by nature. Tennessee charter schools may not discriminate in admissions based on academic qualifications or any race or ethnic related factors. The law details that if the applications exceed the number of available seats, a lottery must be run that must be certified by the department or an independent accounting firm. In addition, authorizers maintain a watch on the enrollment practices of charter school operators to ensure that recruitment practices are equitable in nature.
- B) TCA § 49-13-114 makes clear that Tennessee charter schools that offer transportation services to enrolled pupils receive a higher per pupil rate. Thus, there is an economic incentive for charter operators to offer transportation to a student body, which helps expand access to racially and ethnically diverse student bodies within an LEA service area where housing patterns tend to be segregated.
- C) TCA § 49-13-107 requires that all applications to open a charter school must provide “a description of the anticipated student enrollment and the nondiscriminatory admission policies.” The department has taken this one step further by creating a state standard application that requires the applicant to describe in detail their plan to utilize and incorporate

evidence-based models and practices to recruit, enroll, and serve all types of students including racial and ethnically diverse and educationally disadvantaged students. Charter operators must articulate how they plan to address diversity during the application process.

The application requires signed assurances that the school will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. Applicants must describe the community from which the proposed school intends to draw students, including the demographic profile and school zones within the LEA; provide a rationale for selecting the community where the proposed school will locate; discuss the academic performance of surrounding schools in that community; describe the specific population of students the proposed school intends to serve including how the implementation of the academic plan will meet the needs of the proposed target population; and provide a description of how the proposed school will provide a needed alternative for the community in which it seeks to locate.

Applicants must also explain how the school culture will embrace students with special needs, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure; describe the marketing, recruitment, and enrollment practices of the proposed school; describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the school; and describe plans for outreach to diverse populations including families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and other students at risk of academic failure.

Additionally, applicants are required to attach their school enrollment policy, which must include the nondiscriminatory admission policies, pursuant to TCA § 49-13-107. Any misrepresentation of this information could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award.

Based on training provided in coordination with TACSA, authorizers will be expected hold schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to all students as outlined in Tennessee law, which includes non-selective, non-discriminatory access to all eligible students, fair treatment in admissions and enrollments, utilizing an impartial lottery system as outlined in statute if applications exceed contracted number of students, and ensuring appropriate services for all students including those with disabilities and English learners. As detailed in TACSA Standards, a quality authorizer considers diverse educational philosophies and approaches, expresses a commitment to serve students with diverse needs, and demonstrates a desire to ensure a diverse population of students has access to high-quality educational choices.

Diverse learning environments are critical to ensuring that K-12 students in Tennessee are prepared for postsecondary, future careers, and to be mindful citizens in society, and there is recognition of this in the state’s charter school law through maintaining statutory provisions that help encourage racial and ethnic diversity in public charter schools.

(ii) Establishing Measureable Performance Expectations

TACSA support has strengthened and increased authorizers’ performance expectations

Tennessee has a thorough oversight structure in place that guides the work of authorizers in the state. Each authorizer in Tennessee has established a set of processes for measuring and reporting the performance of its portfolio of charter schools, including the performance frameworks it uses to evaluate school performance, detailed charter school report cards which include school performance summaries, and published annual reports. During the previous CSP grant cycle, the department worked closely with TACSA to improve authorizing practices across the state. TACSA was founded with the goal of ensuring high-quality charter authorization across the state by advancing excellence and accountability in the authorization and oversight of charter schools in Tennessee. TACSA’s purpose is to create a professional pipeline for

authorizing, develop authorizer talents and abilities, offer statewide standards, and develop expertise that results in making Tennessee a national model of excellence in charter authorizing. There is strength in collaboration, and the department believes that all charter school authorizers in Tennessee working collectively will invariably result in excellent charter schools across the state that are authorized under the same high-quality standards.

One of the first actions completed by TACSA was establishing a Tennessee specific set of principles and standards. Using NACSA’s Principles & Standards as a guide, and with collaboration from authorizers, the department, the TCSC, the ASD, and the Tennessee School Boards Association, the Tennessee principles and standards are the outcome of an unprecedented attempt to find common ground and to strive for high standards in the charter sector with a goal of recognizing and sharing the same best practices reflected in NACSA’s original document while meeting Tennessee’s requirements and unique needs. The TACSA Principles & Standards for Quality Authorizing include three core authorizing principles. An authorizer must: 1) Maintain high standards for schools; 2) Uphold school autonomy; and 3) Protect student and public interests (see Appendix E-8 for TACSA Principles and Standards).

Future TACSA support will ensure robust, aligned, authorizer expectations

The department plans to extend the scope of its work with NACSA to develop state-specific model performance frameworks. Currently, each authorizer in Tennessee has established their own unique set of processes for measuring and reporting the performance of its portfolio of charter schools. With the CSP grant, Tennessee will contract with NACSA to develop Tennessee specific modules and resources that all authorizers can use in their daily practice. Specifically, the funding will be used to create the following model documents for use by authorizers: 1) Model performance frameworks; 2) Model annual authorizer report; 3) Model ready-to-open

checklist and process; 4) Model site visiting monitoring tools; 5) Training on maintaining the autonomy and accountability bargain.

In an effort to achieve consistency among authorizers across the state, model performance frameworks will be created and utilized to provide authorizers with a clearly defined measure of academic achievement (based on the definition of high-quality charter school as defined in this notice) as well as operational and financial performance expectations. Using the performance frameworks, authorizers will be able to provide charter schools with clear and measurable expectations, timely feedback, and maximize transparency. Performance frameworks will also serve as a comprehensive guide for charter renewal determinations.

SBE's support from NACSA will enhance authorizing practices state-wide

In accordance with state statute, the SBE is required to adopt national authorizing standards. It has contracted with NACSA to train staff and board members, develop authorizing policies, create a performance framework, and build out an application review process in line with high-quality authorizing standards. The SBE serves as an exemplar for authorizing and non-authorizing local boards of education on how to adopt national authorizing standards, and it works closely with all local boards to share best practices and improve authorizing practices statewide.

(iii) Providing Annual Public Performance Reports

TN publishes annual, public reports on individual authorizer and charter school performance

Annual public reporting promotes transparency and facilitates state monitoring to ensure that all authorizers are carrying out effective, responsible oversight, thereby protecting the public investment in the state's public charter school movement. The department's annual report on charter schools provides cumulative state-wide charter school results in addition to authorizer and individual charter school data. Additionally, the TCSC publishes its annual State of the

Sector report to offer a progress report on the statewide charter school movement and provide enrollment, demographic, achievement, and growth data for each authorizer/portfolio (See Appendix E-9 for *2014-15 State of the Sector: Tennessee Charter Schools* report).

CSP will enable the department to support annual reporting by authorizers

Although the department and the TCSC provide annual authorizer reporting, the department sees the benefit in offering authorizers a uniform template for annual reporting. As a result, the department will utilize the resources provided by the CSP grant to develop a rigorous template for authorizers to use to provide a meaningful annual report on each of their charter schools. The annual authorizer report will be an accumulation of data from the performance frameworks and will provide information on each authorizer’s charter schools as well as provide authorizer accountability metrics to help maintain transparency and accountability on the authorizers throughout the state.

(iv) Supporting Charter School Autonomy

Tennessee recognizes the importance of maintaining the accountability and autonomy bargain between authorizers and its charter schools, but this line can be gray at times. Therefore, the department has prioritized supporting authorizers in ensuring an appropriately high level of accountability, balanced with sufficient levels of autonomy.

The department provides clear guidance to authorizers on upholding autonomy

The TACSA Principles & Standards for Quality Authorizing include three core authorizing principles. The first is to “Uphold School Autonomy”. According to this TACSA principle, which all Tennessee authorizers have adopted, a quality authorizer: 1) Respects and preserves core autonomies crucial to school success including: Governing board independence; Personnel; School vision and culture; Instructional programming, design, control of calendar, use of time; and Budgeting; 2) Strives for clarity, consistency, and transparency in developing and

implementing policies and procedures; 3) Assumes responsibility for holding schools accountable for their performance; 4) Minimizes administrative and compliance burdens on schools while holding them accountable for adhering to both state and federal requirements; and 5) Ensures objective and verifiable measures of student achievement as the primary measure of school quality, holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than processes.

Statute and department support ensure authorizers hold charters accountable

While the department supports charter school autonomy, charter schools will continue to be held accountable to meeting the terms of their performance contracts. Tennessee statute requires a contract with clear objectives for student performance, and charter schools must report progress on their performance goals annually. Authorizers may revoke charter schools which fail to comply with the terms of the charter.

In order to help authorizers continue to conduct an oversight process that is respectful of schools' autonomy, going forward the department, with the support of TACSA, will develop and provide training for the staff of authorizing districts on the key challenges to maintaining the autonomy bargain, strategies for holding schools accountable that do not overstep the bounds of this autonomy, and methods to maintain high expectations for charter school achievement.

(f)(2) Quality of SEA's Plan to Ensure that Authorizers are:

(i) Seeking and Approving High-Quality Charter Schools

The department has multiple approaches to ensuring approval of high-quality operators

In order to ensure that authorizers are seeking and approving petitions from applicants that have the capacity to create high-quality charter schools, the department has taken two specific approaches. First, it has created a streamlined application process for existing, high-quality school operators in Tennessee. Allowing proven operators to submit a replication application in lieu of an original application streamlines the application process and reduces

duplication of effort for applicants that have demonstrated academic, operational, and financial success and viability. The replication application allows authorizers to assess the applicant’s capacity to operate additional schools based on the results of its existing school(s).

Secondly, in order to ensure approval of high-quality petitions, the SBE hears appeals from charter school applicants who have been denied by local boards of education. Should the board overturn the district denial, they may direct the school district to approve the application, in which case the school district must act as authorizer to the charter school applicant. TCA § 49-13-108 provides “If the application is for a charter school in an LEA that contains at least one (1) priority school on the current or last preceding priority school list and if the state board finds that the local board's decision was contrary to the best interests of the pupils, school district or community, the state board may approve the application for the charter school. The decision of the state board shall be final and not subject to appeal. The state board shall be the chartering authority.” Just this year, the SBE ruled in favor of two charter school applicants seeking to open in a district with at least one priority school. The SBE is now the authorizer of these two schools.

The table below illustrates charter school applications, approvals, and appeals since charter school legislation was passed in Tennessee, demonstrating the selective nature for authorizing public charter schools in Tennessee. Thirty-six percent (36%) of new applications have been approved by LEAs. To date, the state board has received 72 appeals and 23 were successful (32% approval rate).

Year	# New Applications: # Approved	# SBE Appeals: # Successful	# ASD Applications: # Approved
2002	8:4	3:0	--
2003	18:4	8:1	--
2004	14:7	2:1	--
2005	3:0	1:0	--
2006	5:2	1:0	--
2007	10:4	1:0	--
2008	12:6	1:1	--
2009	28:8	9:0	--
2010	23:11	6:2	--
2011	38:6	20:15	9:2
2012	15:5	5:1	10:8
2013	22:4	3:0	18:9
2014	26:17	6:0	7:1
2015	25:11	6:2	8:2
Total	247:89	72:23	52:22

(ii) Monitoring and Conducting In-depth Reviews

Authorizers monitor charter schools on an annual basis per charter school reporting

Working with charter schools and authorizers, the department has developed state guidance for periodic reviews. The guidance focuses on what the authorizer, school, and community should know at different stages in the school’s existence.

Mandatory annual reports by all public charter schools in the state provide authorizers with insight into the success of a school long before the mandatory five year review. As outlined in Absolute Priority 1, TCA § 49-13-120 details that “the governing body of the public charter school shall make at least an annual progress report to the sponsor of the school, the chartering authority, and the commissioner of education.” These reports must include financial and operational performance data and the progress of a school towards achieving the academic goals outlined in its charter. Information extracted from these reports provides authorizers with timely information. If areas of concern are seen, the authorizer has the opportunity to intervene, impose

consequences, and reduce the length of time that failing schools remain open. As detailed in earlier sections, the department supports legislation that would require authorizers to report annually on their entire portfolio of charter schools on a school by school basis. The state will use CSP funds to create performance frameworks that strengthen this annual report.

Reviews every five years, as required by law, are monitored by the department

Additionally, Tennessee law specifically requires a five-year review. TCA § 49-13-121 specifies “[a]n interim review of a charter school shall be conducted by the chartering authority under guidelines developed by the department of education in the fifth year of a charter school's initial period of operation and also in the fifth year following any renewal of a charter agreement. Such guidelines shall require a charter school to submit to the chartering authority a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards and other terms of the approved charter agreement.” In an effort to support and assist authorizers and schools, the department has begun the process of strengthening the guidance and materials provided to support this five year review.

(iii) Using Data for Renewal and Revocation Decisions

As stated in Absolute Priority 2, increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students is the most important factor in determining whether to renew or revoke a school’s charter. As mentioned above in part ii, Tennessee law establishes a framework for an in-depth and consistent flow of data to help authorizers make key renewal or revocation decisions. These include requirements to ensure that operators submit: annual budgets and financials, year-end annual financial reports, annual school performance reports, annual independent audits and that charters also maintain a website to share information and maintain transparency regarding governance documents of the school.

Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-102(a), the purpose of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act is to “improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students”. There is clear statutory oversight governing authorizers when it comes to the parameters of renewal and non-renewal decisions. Pursuant to T.C.A § 49-13-121, the renewal application criteria clearly spells out that a renewal applications shall contain a report detailing student academic performance and progress towards closing the achievement gap over the entire life of the charter, not just in the year or two prior to renewal. The statute outlines the importance of demonstrating consistent past academic performance throughout the duration of the charter term rather than promises of future changes. Authorizers have a rich database and information set to draw on given the yearly reporting requirements over the life of a charter to make informed renewal and/or revocation decisions.

At any time during the charter term, state statute allows for the authorizers to revoke a charter agreement. Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-122, authorizers can revoke or non-renew a charter agreement for reasons that include failure to meet the minimum performance requirements outlined in their charter agreement, for material violations of their charter, and fiscal management. If a charter school is identified as a priority school accounting to the state accountability system, the authorizer must revoke the school’s charter. Revocations due to identification as a priority school are not appealable to the SBE.

The performance frameworks discussed in selection criteria (f)(1)(ii) will provide authorizers and charter schools with yearly comprehensive information. Charter schools will be notified of their current status annually with respect to the renewal of their charter agreement: renew, renew with conditions, or non-renewal based on the school’s academic performance, organizational management, and fiscal policies. Through the utilization of performance

frameworks, authorizers and charter schools will see data-driven evidence and rigorous indicators of performance.

(iv) Ensuring Accountability During Accountability Transition

Charter schools will continue to be held accountable during any transitions to new state assessments or accountability systems. Charter schools in Tennessee are included in the state’s accountability system and are measured in the same way as all other public schools. When any measures or metrics change based on new standards or accountability systems, requirements for charter schools will be adapted through this process in accordance with state statutes. Pursuant to TCA 49-13-105, “neither the chartering authority nor the commissioner shall waive regulatory or statutory requirements related to federal and state student assessment and accountability.” During any transition to new assessments or accountability systems, charter schools will still be required to take state assessments and be held accountable to their contracts. The department in partnership with authorizers throughout the state communicates any new changes to state accountability systems to school operators.

(g) Policy Context for Charter Schools

(g)(1) Degree of Flexibility

Charter flexibility is a priority captured within Tennessee charter law

The purpose and intent of the Tennessee charter school law, per TCA § 49-13-102(b), is “to provide an alternative means within the public school system for ensuring accomplishment of the necessary outcome of education by allowing the establishment and maintenance of public charter schools that operate within a school district structure but are allowed maximum flexibility to achieve their goals.” Tennessee charter schools operate with a high degree of flexibility as indicated through waivers, fiscal independence, audits, and charter school powers.

(i) Exempt from State or Local Rules

Charters may request waivers and have exemptions that offer them flexibility

Charter schools in Tennessee are provided the autonomy to operate and manage their schools with fidelity so that students achieve. TCA § 49-13-105(a) provides latitude to charters to, “apply to either the chartering authority or to the commissioner of education for a waiver of any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission statement.” Waivers may be requested within the charter application or at any time during the charter term. For each requested waiver, the applicant must state how the waiver of a rule will help improve student achievement.

Waivers are granted to charter schools on a case by case basis by either the authorizer or the commissioner of education. Some examples of approved waivers in Tennessee include variations to student/teacher contact hours per day, duty free lunch period, licensed principals, school year commencement, use of approved textbooks, licensed personnel salaries, etc. One example of an automatic waiver granted in statute for all charter schools is exemption from required participation in state group insurance plans. Charter operators have the autonomy to choose their own insurance plans.

(ii) High Degree of Autonomy

Charters have autonomy over budget, spending, staffing, procurement and curriculum

Tennessee’s charter schools are freed from much of the bureaucracy that often diverts a school’s energy and resources away from students, teachers and the mission of the school. This enables schools to use innovative models and approaches to help improve student learning.

TCA § 49-13-102 defines the purpose of charter schools is to “encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and provide greater decision making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance.” That same statute continues with its intention “to provide an alternative means within the public school

system for ensuring accomplishment of the necessary outcomes of education by allowing the establishment and maintenance of public charter schools that operate within a school district structure but are allowed maximum flexibility to achieve their goals.”

TCA § 49-13-104 empowers the governing body of a charter school with decisions, “including, but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum and other operating procedures ...and by overseeing management and administration.” One of the most central components of the delivery of educational services is through management of the organization itself. TCA § 49-13-124 enumerates powers that a charter school has. Specifically, the charter school shall conduct activities necessary and appropriate to carry out its responsibilities including, 1) contract for services; 2) buy, sell or lease property; 3) borrow funds as needed; and 4) pledge its assets as security. TCA § 49-13-111 further delineates governing body powers to include the “control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school”.

Due to the fact that public charter schools receive a per pupil payment (the money follows the child), the dollars are budgeted and spent “micro-locally” at the school level. This flexibility of funds, rather than having a pool of funds centralized in a district central office for numerous district schools, allows charter schools to spend more dollars in the classroom and tailor programs and practices at the school level that better align with the needs of their particular student body. Rather than district wide spending decisions that may affect more than a hundred schools, charter schools for example can mix and match the purchase of a curriculum program that best meets the educational needs of their respective student bodies.

(g)(2) Comply with Federal Law

Authorizing LEAs ensure charters comply with Federal law

Tennessee charter schools must provide special education services for students as provided in Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans

with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Pursuant to state and federal law, charter schools are required to serve the needs of special student populations, including hiring licensed and endorsed special educators and licensed ESL instructors. School personnel shall participate in developing and implementing the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); identify and refer students for assessment of special needs; maintain records; and hire appropriate personnel as may be required in an IEP (ex. Speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.).

All charter applicants must include in their application (which if approved becomes a legally binding contract) a signed assurances form that if awarded a charter they will “provide special education services for students as provided in TCA § Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it; will follow all federal and State laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services.” Since Tennessee charter schools are not their own LEAs, authorizers ensure compliance within charter schools. LEAs must themselves meet these same requirements and are required annually to report compliance in these areas to the department’s general counsel. The commissioner of education is responsible for ensuring all laws are faithfully executed and is charged with taking corrective action when an LEA is not in compliance. The adherences by LEAs to laws are monitored through verification of data sources and annual monitoring visits.

Application requirements:

1. Disseminating best practices - Response to this application requirement can be found in the response to selection criteria (e) Dissemination of Information and Best Practices.

2. Federal fund and programs – Offices of Federal Programs within each authorizing district publicize federal funding opportunities to all schools, both traditional and charter. Offices of Federal Programs are also responsible for the administration and oversight of federal dollars in all schools. This includes distributing funds, ensuring that schools are in compliance with federal rules and regulations, and providing training and conducting school visits to provide assistance in how to use federal dollars. The Office of Consolidated Planning and Monitoring within the department is responsible for ensuring that districts distribute and spend their ESEA dollars in accordance with federal laws and guidelines. Districts submit applications, which include charter schools, for federal title dollars to the department annually. Each district also submits an annual budget that reflects any modifications made to the original application due to changes in actual allocations received from the federal government. All figures related to charter schools are reviewed by the department to ensure that the district has planned to allocate funds to all schools appropriately. The Office of Consolidated Planning and Monitoring also conducts district site visits to verify that federal funds are distributed and spent in accordance with federal law and guidelines. Districts are monitored annually. Any errors detected by the department may require the district to reallocate funds to a charter school. Charter schools with questions or ongoing concerns regarding their share of federal funding may contact the department for assistance in verifying that funds have been distributed appropriately.

3. IDEA Compliance – Tennessee charter schools are not considered to be LEAs under state law. LEAs in which charter schools are located will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of IDEA. LEAs must provide special education services for students as provided in Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with

Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Pursuant to state and federal law, LEAs are required to serve the needs of special student populations, including hiring licensed and endorsed special educators and licensed ESL instructors. LEAs shall ensure that school personnel participate in developing and implementing the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); identify and refer students for assessment of special needs; maintain records; and hire appropriate personnel as may be required in an IEP (ex. Speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.).

4. Logic model – The logic model can be found in (b) Vision for Growth and Accountability.

5. Lottery and enrollment preferences – TCA § 49-13-113 covers charter school enrollment and lottery preferences and mandates that “a charter school shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building.” The statute lays out the following preferences should applications exceed the planned capacity of the charter school: 1) Pupils in attendance in the previous school year at any public school that converts to become a public charter school; 2) Pupils attending during the previous school year another charter school that has an articulation agreement with the enrolling public charter school; provided, that the articulation agreement has been approved by the chartering authority; or a pre-K program operated by the charter sponsor; 3) Children residing within the LEA service area in which the public charter school is located, but who are not enrolled in public schools, if those children would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus; and 4) Children residing outside the LEA in which the public charter school is located and whose needs would be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus. If enrollment within a one or more of the above preference groups exceeds the planned capacity of the school, enrollment within that group must be determined on the basis of a lottery. Within the lottery, preference may be afforded to: the

children of a teacher, sponsor or member of the governing body of the charter school, not to exceed ten percent (10%) of total enrollment or twenty-five (25) students, whichever is less; or the siblings of a pupil who is already enrolled. Charter schools must either request the department review and approve the lottery process or provide to the department with certification by an independent accounting or law firm that each lottery complies with the law.

A charter school may submit an application to focus on serving students who are assigned to, or were previously enrolled in, a school identified as a priority school; students who, in the previous school year, failed to test proficient in the subjects of reading/language arts or mathematics in grades three through eight (3-8) on the Tennessee comprehensive assessment program examinations (or end of course assessments in grades nine through twelve (9-12)); or students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. If so, then the school may give preference in enrollment to students from such group or groups.

The department will require each applicant for a CSP subgrant to include descriptions of its recruitment and admissions policies and practices, including a description of the proposed lottery and any enrollment preferences the school employs or plans to employ, and how those enrollment preferences are consistent with State law and the CSP authorizing statute.

6. Objectives – The department has identified three program objectives in order to support the overall goals of the charter school program. During the project grant period, Tennessee will: 1) Increase the number of high-quality charter schools; 2) Decrease the number of poor-performing charter schools; and 3) Support improvement in all schools with emphasis on educationally disadvantaged students. Additional information, including how these objectives will be fulfilled can be found in selection criteria (b) Vision for Growth and Accountability.

7. Revolving loan fund – This application does not propose to establish a revolving loan fund.

8. Waivers – This application does not contain any requests for waivers.

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Funding Opportunity Number:ED-GRANTS-042116-001 Received Date:Jun 01, 2016 02:08:41 PM EDT

CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM ASSURANCES – STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Pursuant to Section 5203(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA); Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2016; and sections 200.302(a) and 200.331(d) of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, a State educational agency (SEA) application for a grant under the CSP must contain the following assurances.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify to the following:

- 1) The applicant will require each eligible applicant desiring to receive a subgrant to submit an application to the SEA containing:
 - A. A description of the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including (i) how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards; (ii) the grade levels or ages of children to be served; and (iii) the curriculum and instructional practices to be used;
 - B. A description of how the charter school will be managed;
 - C. A description of (i) the objectives of the charter school; and (ii) the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives;
 - D. A description of the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency;
 - E. A description of how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design and implementation of the charter school;
 - F. A description of how the authorized public chartering agency will provide for continued operation of the school once the Federal grant has expired, if such agency determines that the school has met its objectives;
 - G. A request and justification for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the eligible applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school, and a description of any State or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes to be waived, or otherwise not apply to, the school;
 - H. A description of how the subgrant funds will be used, including a description of how such funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education;
 - I. A description of how students in the community will be (i) informed about the charter school; and (ii) given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school;
 - J. An assurance that the eligible applicant will annually provide the Secretary and the SEA such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in subparagraph (C)(i);
 - K. An assurance that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary and the SEA in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;
 - L. A description of how a charter school that is considered a local educational agency under State law, or a local educational agency in which a charter school is located, will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

- M. If the eligible applicant desires to use subgrant funds for dissemination activities under section 5202(c)(2)(C), a description of those activities and how those activities will involve charter schools and other public schools, local educational agencies, developers, and potential developers; and
- N. Such other information and assurances as the Secretary and SEA may require.

2) The applicant will –

- A. Use the grant funds to award subgrants to one or more eligible applicants in the State to enable the applicant to plan and implement a charter school in accordance with this program; and
- B. Use a peer review process to review applications for subgrants.

3) State law, regulations, or other policies in the State where the applicant is located require that –

- A. Each authorized charter school in the State operate under a legally binding charter or performance contract between itself and the school’s authorized public chartering agency that describes the obligations and responsibilities of the school and the public chartering agency; conduct annual, timely, and independent audits of the school’s financial statements that are filed with the school’s authorized public chartering agency; and demonstrate improved student academic achievement; and
- B. Authorized public chartering agencies use increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA as one of the most important factors when determining to renew or revoke a school’s charter.

4) The applicant will monitor the activities of the subrecipient as necessary to ensure that the subaward is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward; and that subaward performance goals are achieved.

5) The applicant and each subrecipient will use financial management systems, including records documenting compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award, that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by general and program-specific terms and conditions; and the tracing of funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that such funds have been used according to the Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

Candice McQueen

NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Commissioner

TITLE



SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

8/09/16

DATE

TN Dept. of Education

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION

6-1-16

DATE SUBMITTED

Marcy Tidwell

[Redacted]

Appendix C – Letters of Support

1. Governor Bill Haslam
2. Speaker of the House - Beth Harwell
3. Senator Dolores Gresham
4. State Board of Education Executive Director, Sara Heyburn
5. NACSA CEO, Greg Richmond
6. Tennessee Charter School Center Chief Executive Director, Maya Bugg
7. The Peak Pyramid Foundation Executive Director, James R. Boyd
8. MNPS Director of Charter Schools, Carol Swann
9. Freedom Prep Charter School Founder and CEO, Roblin J. Boxill
10. Valor Collegiate Academies Founder and CEO, Todd Dickson
11. Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence Founder/Executive Director, Marcia Griffin



BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR
STATE OF TENNESSEE

May 16, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

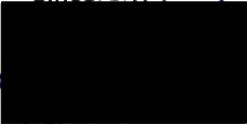
I am writing to voice my support for Tennessee's Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant application. As governor, improving the quality of educational opportunities for Tennessee students has been one of my top priorities. The teachers, school leaders, parents, and students within Tennessee's public charter school sector are proving what is possible in public education. Prior CSP funds have helped many of Tennessee's highest performing charter schools during their critical start-up years, and we need more schools that can find innovative strategies to help all students succeed.

In 2013, we launched the Drive to 55: Tennessee's statewide effort to make sure at least 55 percent of Tennesseans hold postsecondary credentials by 2025. We are working hard to ensure Tennessee's K-12 public schools prepare all of our students effectively for college and career, and the charter school sector is playing a key part in this work. In 2015, 13 public charter schools performed in the top five percent of all schools in the state and served a student population composed of over 70 percent economically disadvantaged students.

Our state's charter schools have shown strong measures in helping students move into postsecondary opportunities. Graduation rates among the state's charter high schools have been strong, and recent college-going rates from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission show that charter school graduates pursued secondary studies at nearly a 20 percent higher rate than district peers in traditional public schools. These trends are truly encouraging as our state works to meet the Drive to 55. As communities across the state look for ways to improve opportunities for their students, additional resources to help public charter schools in their work to improve student outcomes will be critical.

CSP funds can help ensure that Tennessee will become home to even more high quality public charter schools, allowing more students the opportunity to succeed. I certainly endorse Tennessee's application for these needed resources.

Sincerely,



Bill Haslam

STATE OF TENNESSEE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



BETH HARWELL
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for Tennessee's Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant application. As Speaker of the House in the Tennessee General Assembly, I have long supported public charter schools, which represent high quality public educational opportunities for thousands of Tennessee students and important options for parents.

Tennessee's public charter school sector is one of the strongest in the country. In a 2013 national Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) study from Stanford University, Tennessee was found to be one of the top states in the nation for public charter school reading and math gains – only Rhode Island and the District of Columbia showed similar or greater gains. Additionally, Tennessee's public charter schools are serving our highest need students, and serving them well. In 2015, 13 public charter schools were named Reward Schools under our State's Accountability Framework (the top 5 percent of schools in the state), and all of these schools served a student population composed of over 70 percent economically disadvantaged students.

Past CSP funds have played a critical role in establishing some of our state's highest performing public charter schools, such as:

- STEM Preparatory Academy in Nashville, which has developed innovative programs for English Language Learners that are being replicated within the Metro Nashville Public Schools district,
- Valor Collegiate Academies, which strive to serve a uniquely diverse student body and emphasize both social-emotional learning as well as rigorous academics, achieving some of the strongest school performance measures in the state during the 2014-2015 school year, and
- Power Center High School in Memphis, which serves a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students and has been a Tennessee Reward School for three years running.

We are working hard to ensure Tennessee's public schools prepare students effectively for college and career and the charter school sector is playing a key part in this work. The Drive to 55 Initiative reflects our statewide goal to equip at least 55 percent of Tennesseans with post-secondary credentials by 2025. Recent college-going rates from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission show that charter school graduates pursued secondary studies at nearly a 20 percent higher rate than district peers in traditional public schools. The charter sector is showing what is possible in Tennessee public education, and we must replicate these successes across all public schools.

STATE OF TENNESSEE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



BETH HARWELL
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

CSP funds can help ensure that Tennessee sees growth of more high quality public charter schools, especially as many high performing middle schools in our state prepare to expand and add high school grades. It is with enthusiasm that I endorse Tennessee's application for these important resources, and express my sincere interest in the growth of our state's charter school sector.

Sincerely, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Beth Harwell
Speaker of the House
Tennessee General Assembly

DOLORES GRESHAM

STATE SENATOR

26th SENATORIAL DISTRICT

308 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243
PHONE: (615) 741-2368
TOLL FREE (800) 449-8366, EXT. 12368
FAX (615) 253-0204
sen.dolores.gresham@capitol.tn.gov

HOME:

P.O. Box 877
SOMERVILLE, TENNESSEE 38068
(901) 465-9433



Senate Chamber
State of Tennessee
NASHVILLE

COMMITTEES:

CHAIRMAN
Education

MEMBER

Commerce and Labor

Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources

May 3, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to inform you of my support for the State of Tennessee's charter schools program grant application. While Tennessee has recently made great strides of improvement in educational attainment, the State still has work to do to ensure every child is provided a quality education. The awarding of this grant would allow for greater flexibility in the use of high quality charter schools to help close achievement gaps for educationally disadvantaged students, as well as assisting in the turnaround of our lowest performing schools. As we look toward the future we must invest in the expansion of excellent charter schools throughout the state to give parents and students options in pursuing high quality education.

It is with great pleasure that I endorse the State of Tennessee's charter schools program grant application, so that Tennessee and Districts all across our great State can continue to invest in high quality educational choices for students.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Senator Dolores Gresham.

Senator Dolores Gresham
Chairman, Senate Education Committee



STATE OF TENNESSEE
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
1st FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-1050
615-741-2966 615-741-0371 fax
www.tn.gov/sbe

BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR

Dr. SARA L. HEYBURN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 11, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to express the Tennessee State Board of Education's support for the Charter School Program (CSP) grant proposal submitted by the Tennessee Department of Education. The State Board works closely with the Department of Education in many areas of our work, and I have full confidence that the Department has the experience, expertise, and the capacity to fully implement the plan outlined in the grant proposal.

The State Board of Education recognizes the important role that high quality charter schools play in providing quality educational options to all students regardless of their zip code, background, or previous achievement. Since 2003, the State Board has heard all appeals of denied charter school applications across the state. In this work, the Board has been instrumental in supporting the establishment of high quality charter schools as one tool to improve educational outcomes of students as well as preventing applicants that are not high quality from being approved.

In the past twelve years, the caliber of charter applications submitted to Tennessee school districts has increased significantly, and the competition for start-up capital and fundraising is greater than ever. It is imperative that all qualified charter schools have the opportunity to access resources needed to serve students most in need of quality school options. CSP funding would support the creation of high quality charter schools by bolstering school start-up and operating resources.

In addition, as of 2014, the State Board of Education is an appellate authorizer of charter schools and authorized its first two schools in October 2015. In this new role, the State Board provides another avenue for supporting high quality school options regardless of school type. Furthermore, through this work, the Board recognizes more than ever the importance of supporting high quality schools from authorization through the opening of doors to students. The CSP funding is critical to the success of schools authorized by the State Board, as well as the state's charter school movement as a whole.

It is my pleasure to endorse the CSP grant proposal submitted by the Tennessee Department of Education in our shared effort to increase high quality school options for all students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best,



Sara Heyburn, Ed.D.
Executive Director



105 W. Adams St.
Suite 1900
Chicago, IL 60603

T: (312) 376-2300
F: (312) 376-2400

www.qualitycharters.org

May 25, 2016

Office of Innovation and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary King:

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is pleased to offer its support for Tennessee's Charter School Programs (CSP) grant proposal. NACSA believes deeply in the importance of high quality authorizing and in the positive impact it has on the quality of charter schools. To that end, NACSA has agreed to partner with the Tennessee Department of Education to implement key projects in the state that are in line with the grant's stated priority for 'High Quality Authorizing and Monitoring' processes and practices.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers is a not-for-profit, membership association committed to advancing excellence and accountability in the charter school sector and to increasing the number of high-quality charter schools across the nation. NACSA's work includes evaluation, training, and development of authorizing tools and processes, all informed by the best practices of the nation's leading authorizers. NACSA provides professional development, practical resources, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers. It is devoted exclusively to improving public education by improving the policies and practices of the organizations responsible for authorizing charter schools.

If awarded the CSP grant, NACSA and the Tennessee Department of Education (the Department) would partner to develop high quality authorizing practices in two ways. NACSA would develop a state-wide charter school performance framework that would act as an accountability mechanism by establishing performance criteria for charter schools while ensuring that authorizers are accountable to charter schools. NACSA will also work with the Department to publish resources and conduct in-person and virtual dissemination workshops with authorizers across the state related to assist the state's authorizers in developing and implementing policies and practices for effective evaluation and oversight of school discipline.

We look forward to partnering with the Tennessee Department of Education to further develop its authorizing practices and support the state's efforts to expand high quality charter schools.

Sincerely,



Greg Richmond, CEO



May 9, 2016

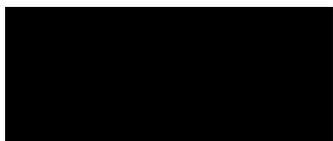
To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Tennessee Charter School Center, I am writing to express our full endorsement of Tennessee's Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant application. As the state's primary charter school support organization, we have witnessed first-hand the transformative work that is happening in our charter school sector. We are on a track to innovate the next generation of education and believe that high-quality public charter schools are a key factor to ensuring these opportunities.

Tennessee's charter school sector is strong and growing -- in number, quality, diversity of academic offerings, and student enrollment. Currently, 98 charter schools serve more than 29,000 students in the state, yet the magnitude of our impact extends far greater. More than 83-percent of economically disadvantaged students enrolled in Tennessee charters graduate high school. Not only are they graduating, but statistics also show that charter school graduates are pursuing secondary education at nearly a 20-percent higher rate than their peers attending traditional public schools in the same district. Tennessee charter schools are achieving these goals with fewer resources and rebuilding hope in communities that need it most. Additional support from CSP funding will better equip operators and districts with the tools they need to recruit, staff and direct our students and schools towards further success.

TCSC is passionately committed to our mission for educational equity and opportunities for all students across Tennessee and consider it an honor and privilege to endorse Tennessee's CSP proposal. We are additionally positioned to provide guidance, strategic support and advocacy in this effort and appreciate the opportunity to continue improving public education. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,



Maya Bugg
Chief Executive Officer

THE
Pyramid Peak™
FOUNDATION

May 16, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Pyramid Peak Foundation, I am writing in strong support of the Charter School Program (CSP) grant proposal submitted by the Tennessee Department of Education. I have full confidence that the Department has the experience, expertise, and the capacity to fully implement the plan outlined in the grant proposal.

The Foundation recognizes the critical role that public charter schools play in providing high-quality educational options to students regardless of their zip code, background, or previous achievement. In Memphis, there are over 65 charter schools serving approximately 21,000 students. Many of these charters have become some of the highest performing public schools in the state and are putting thousands of students on the path to college and successful careers. In a 2013 study conducted by Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), Tennessee was shown to have one of the highest performing charter sectors in the nation. That is why Pyramid – along with other philanthropic organizations in Memphis – is proud to support the work of our charter schools, and we are encouraged by the talented education leaders and innovative school models that continue to come into our community and the state more broadly.

One of the key challenges, though, in starting a charter school is securing the necessary resources to cover significant startup costs (staff, facilities, technology, curricular resources) in the planning year as well as first few years of operation. CSP funding has been a vital resource for new charter schools in Tennessee, and, we believe, will continue to be a key ingredient in encouraging the creation of new, high-performing charters.

It is my pleasure to endorse the CSP grant proposal submitted by the Tennessee Department of Education, and I am confident that this funding will create an opportunity to provide significantly more high-quality school options for the students who need them most. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



James R. Boyd
Executive Director
The Pyramid Peak Foundation



May 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the CSP application of the Tennessee Department of Education. As one of the largest authorizers of charter schools in Tennessee, we have enjoyed an extraordinarily strong partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education, and together we are building a robust charter portfolio in our state that places a premium on authorizing only the highest quality charter schools. As a result, we know firsthand how important the CSP has been in advancing our mission of authorizing excellent charter schools that change lives, and we sincerely hope to see that support continue as we strive together to realize our vision of all children and communities empowered through exemplary public schools.

As authorizer members of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools embraces the Principles and Standards it sets forth as a measure of charter school readiness, and our state application reflects the high bar set by NACSA. Over the past seven (7) years we have led rapid, high-quality growth of charter schools in Nashville, and we remain strongly committed to performance management of existing schools, replication of high performers, and closure of those schools that fail to advance our goals for children. The CSP funds, as implemented by the Tennessee Department of Education, can play a significant role in that work, specifically due to the high level of collaboration between the department and authorizers in Tennessee. We stand solidly side by side in our promotion of high quality schools for all children.

We believe that all students can learn, and when they are not, it is the adult systems and practices that need to change. CSP support for quality charter authorizing is one of the most critical tools in our tool box for making sure those changes happen for the benefit of children. Thank you for the opportunity to pursue that support once again for the students in Tennessee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Carol Swann



FREEDOM PREPARATORY
ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

t: 901.259.5959 f: 901.789.9004
#15132 JONETTA STREET MEMPHIS, TN 38109

May 19, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend the State of Tennessee charter school grant fund application. As the Founder and CEO of Freedom Prep Charter Schools in Memphis, TN, I can personally attest to the importance of receiving charter school grant funds to grow high-performing schools.

Freedom Prep opened with 100 6th graders in the Fall of 2009 and currently serves approximately 1,200 students in Grades Pre K – 11th grade. Freedom Prep has been a Reward School for academic growth in the State of TN for 3 years in a row. We also had the highest composite growth scores of all middle schools in the State of TN in 2013-2014. These remarkable accomplishments of our students would not have been possible without being able to intensely plan a year before our opening and being able to hire strong talent early to ensure a strong start to our school through the use of CSP funds.

I fully endorse the State of Tennessee application this year so that more Districts across the State will be able to continue to invest in school choice for all families.

Sincerely,

Roblin J. Boxill
Founder & CEO



VALOR COLLEGIATE
Academies

May 5, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend the State of Tennessee charter school grant fund application. As the Founder and CEO of two recently approved charter schools in Tennessee, I can personally attest to the importance of receiving charter school grant funds to grow high-performing schools.

Valor Collegiate Academy finished its inaugural year this past Spring and was the only middle school in Nashville to receive level 5 growth AND achievement in every subject. These remarkable accomplishments of our scholars started with being able to have a year of intensive preparation work leading up to our opening last Summer. That preparation work would have been severely compromised without the CSP funds. The additional funds we received for our second middle school allowed us to hire the talent necessary to prepare for its successful launch this past Fall.

I whole-heartedly endorse the State of Tennessee's application this year so that Tennessee and Districts all across our great State can continue to invest in alternatives to traditional public schools.

Sincerely,



Todd Dickson
Founder and CEO
Valor Collegiate Academies



Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence

May 3, 2016

Founder/
Executive Director:

Marcy Tidwell
Director of School Choice
Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37423

Marcia Griffin

Board of Directors:

Ruel Harrison
Chair

Dear Ms. Tidwell,

Lucien Ellington
Vice Chair

It is with great pleasure that I submit this letter of recommendation for the Tennessee Department of Education to receive another CSP grant award from the U.S. Department of Education.

Renee Krehl
Secretary

Our school would have experienced numerous challenges had it not been for the CSP grant award. Those funds were very much appreciated during the planning year, as well as the first two years of operations. Without a doubt, the funds paved the way to a successful start to the school year! The grant funds were used to purchase technology equipment, furniture, teacher and classroom supplies. Additionally, we purchased playground equipment, along with curriculum materials for the school.

Laurence Brown
Treasurer

Cliff Butler
Community Relations

Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence remains committed to providing a highly innovative, rigorous educational choice option for students in Hamilton County. Over the past several years, numerous children and families have benefited from the nurturing and personally supportive learning environment we provide to students in grades K-5.

In addition to the learning environment which is supported by a team of highly skilled and dedicated professionals, Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence has realized increased levels of student learning and performance. The present success of our school is directly linked to our receipt of CSP funds from the Tennessee Department of Education which provide the requisite support and strong foundation during our school's inception. The continued provision of these funds to the Tennessee Department of Education will further support educational choice options and improved learning for students.

Sincerely,

██████████

Marcia Griffin
Founder/Executive Director

Appendix E – Additional Information

1. Charter School Annual Report Guidance	Page 2
2. 2015 TN Annual Charter School Report	Page 5
3. TN Charter School Application	Page 29
4. TN Charter School Application Scoring Rubric	Page 59
5. TN Charter School Renewal Application	Page 83
6. MNPS 2015 Annual Report	Page 91
7. Special Education in TN Charter Schools	Page 135
8. TACSA Principles and Standards	Page 150
9. 2014 – 2015 State of the Sector: TN Charter Schools	Page 165



Tennessee Charter Annual Report Guidance – May 2015

“Data are collected and analyzed in order to answer critical questions facing all education stakeholders: everyone from parents to policy-makers. Student-level data shine a light on what is working, so decisions at all levels are informed by high-quality data aimed at improving the achievement of every student.”¹

Tennessee law requires each public charter school to report certain information on an annual basis. The required information is submitted to the chartering authority and the State. The information in annual reports should help school operators, chartering authorities, policymakers, and parents make decisions that will lead to improving achievement of all public school students.

Charter school operators may use annual reports to measure progress toward the goals outlined in their charter, adjust operations based on this information, and gauge the likelihood of renewal of their charters. Chartering authorities may use annual reports to provide effective oversight of charter schools, share best practices across all schools in their jurisdiction, and to make renewal, nonrenewal or revocation decisions. Operators, authorizers, and policymakers may use annual reports to measure the return on investment in schools and programs. They may then use this information to support existing high-performing schools and programs, foster more innovative school models, and decrease the number of low-performing schools.

Tennessee’s Public Charter Schools Act anticipates that some charter schools will not be successful. Innovation inevitably results in some failure. One purpose of reporting school performance annually (for all public schools, not just charter schools) is to reduce the length of time that failing schools remain open. Tennessee law requires chartering authorities to provide charter operators with “a performance report that directly reflects the renewal evaluation,” one year prior to renewal. T.C.A. § 49-13-121(e). However, charter school operators and authorizers should know long before the mandatory five year review or one year prior to expiration of the charter whether the school is successful.

Tennessee law does not require that charter schools use a specific form for their annual reports. Thus, chartering authorities have discretion to use the attached annual report form, or another form, as long as it includes the required information, listed below. Most academic performance, attendance, transfer and other student achievement information will already be available to chartering authorities through the Department’s school report cards and data warehouse. Chartering authorities are likely to have locally-developed performance frameworks or other instruments. It is also important to note that a charter school’s audit, required by T.C.A. § 49-13-111(m) and 127, likely satisfies the financial reporting requirements in T.C.A. § 49-13-120. Thus, a separate financial report may not be necessary.

Each school is required to report the following information annually (T.C.A. § 49-13-120 and 133):

- “The progress of the school towards achieving the goals outlined in its charter,
- “The same information required in the reports prepared by local boards of education pursuant to state laws, rules and regulations,
- “Financial records of the school, including revenues and expenditures, and
- “The number of students who leave the school, including when and why.”
- “A detailed accounting, including amounts and sources, of funds other than those funds received under §49-13-112(a). The funds shall include, but are not limited to, any funds received from sources under §49-13-112(e).

¹ The Data Quality Campaign, *Data: The Missing Piece to Improving Student Achievement* (2011), available at <http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/resources/details/1583> (last viewed May 3, 2013).

In addition to annual reports, Tennessee charter schools are subject to a five year review by the chartering authority, and must submit an application to renew their charter one year prior to its expiration.

The table below shows information that may be of particular interest to chartering authorities at each stage of a charter school's existence:

Application	Pre-Opening	Annual Report	5 Year Review	Renewal Application
Academic program	Insurance	Progress toward goals in charter	Accounting for increased costs	Cumulative data
Governance structure	Board changes	Academic achievement	Succession plans	Solid community connections
Community outreach plans	Community ties	Student mobility	Functioning community partnerships	Stability independent of any one leader
School leader (process/qualifications)	Staff licenses, background checks	Operational compliance	Board adapted from startup to maintaining	
Board & staff training plans	Record retention plans	Financial sustainability	Organizational or structural changes	
Facilities plans	Certificate of occupancy	Growing community partnerships	Enrollment, network and financial projections	
		Leadership changes	Financial efficiency (return on investment)	
			Facility plans	

Chartering authorities may use annual reports to present achievement and other data to the charter school and ask the school to write the operational and academic story that data tells.

However an annual report is prepared, it should be useful to all parties: operators, chartering authorities, policymakers and parents.

Annual Report Submission Instructions

Annual reports are due to the chartering authority and the Tennessee Department of Education no later than the close of business on September 1. The chartering authority may set an earlier deadline. If the due date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the report shall be due by the close of the next business day.

The governing body must submit one electronic copy to the department via email:

Marcy Tidwell, Director of Charter Schools


Please check with the chartering authority to find out how to submit electronic copies of the annual report and any hard copies that may be required.

If the original sponsor of the school is a different entity than the governing body preparing the report, then a copy must also be submitted to the sponsor.

Section I – Progress toward the charter school’s goals (including academic achievement)

Describe the progress made during the last year toward the goals outlined in the current charter agreement (use tables and data, as appropriate). This may include performance frameworks agreed to by the school and the chartering authority, a written response to data provided by the chartering authority, and additional school specific goals from the charter application.

Section II – Student mobility

List the reasons students left the school during the last year, and why they left. Include the total number of students leaving for each reason. Do not, however, include student names. Describe the school’s plans to improve student retention in the coming year.

Section III – Operations and finance

Describe what the school has done or will do in response to any operational or fiscal challenges faced during the past year. Address any findings from the most recently completed school audit. If the chartering authority formally notified the school of particular concerns, include a brief summary of those concerns and the school’s efforts to remediate those concerns. Provide a detailed accounting, including the amounts and sources, of funds other than those funds received under per pupil state and local funds and federal allocations. Include any funds received from: 1) federal grants, 2) grants, gifts, devises, or donations from any private sources, 3) state funds appropriated for the support of the public charter school, and 4) any other funds that may be received by the local school district.

Section IV – Leadership changes

Note any changes in board membership or school leadership during the past year.

Section V – Parent and community involvement

Briefly summarize parent and community involvement efforts during the past year, including any new community partnerships. Describe how parent and community involvement is effecting or how you anticipate it will effect student achievement.

Section VI – Promising practices

If not already outlined above, describe 3-5 operational practices that have had the most impact on student achievement.

Action Steps

List some specific action steps the school plans to take in response to the information gathered and summarized for this annual report. As you consider what steps to take, keep in mind the critical questions the chartering authority will be asking at the time of renewal:

- Is the school an academic success?
- Has the school met its non-academic goals and been faithful to its mission and charter design?
- Has the school been effectively governed?
- Is the school fiscally sound?
- Are parents and students satisfied?
- Has the school satisfactorily met its legal requirements?
- If the school’s charter is renewed, are its plans for the next charter term likely to be achieved?



Tennessee Department of Education | Office of Research and Policy | March 2015

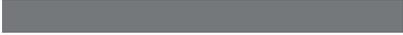
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Tennessee Charter School Quick Facts	1
The Charter School Landscape in Tennessee	2
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Each year, the Tennessee Department of Education produces an annual report on charter schools operating in the state. In compliance with Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-13-116(b), 49-13-120(b), and § 49-13-133, the report provides information on charter school applications, their approvals and appeals, charter school characteristics and academic performance, as well as mobility of students out of charter schools.

Additional information regarding public charter schools is available on the Tennessee Department of Education's website, including a list of currently operating public charter schools, application and authorization materials, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Tennessee Charter School Quick Facts

- Operating Tennessee charters are currently located in four districts across the state: Hamilton County, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Shelby County, and the Achievement School District.
- Charters have expanded considerably since their introduction in 2003-04 reaching 15,000 students in 2013-14, yet they still serve only 2 percent of the student population statewide and 7 percent of the student population in their home districts.
- The charter student population is over 80 percent economically disadvantaged and over 90 percent minority.
- Charter performance varies considerably at the school level; charter schools range from the highest to lowest levels of value-added scores in patterns similar to district-run schools.
- Student attendance in charter elementary schools looks similar to district-run schools, but charter high schools average significantly higher attendance and graduation rates.
- Charter schools document fewer disciplinary incidents than district-run schools, but suspend students at higher rates for rule violations.
- A considerable number of charter schools have earned recognition as Reward Schools for year-over-year growth in student performance.



Legislative History

A charter school is a public school that is established and operating under the terms of a charter agreement and in accordance with the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 (T.C.A. § 49-13). Governed by independent operators, charter schools have greater autonomy over their budgets, personnel, curricula, and operations in exchange for heightened accountability. Tennessee law prohibits for-profit entities from operating or managing charter schools and requires all governing bodies to be not-for-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) exemption. They are publicly funded, and as such, subject to the same performance standards outlined by the Tennessee State Board of Education as traditional public schools. Charter schools may be closed if they demonstrate poor academic performance, violate their charter agreement or engage in practices of fiscal mismanagement. As of 2014, a public charter school agreement must be revoked or denied renewal by the chartering authority if it receives designation as a priority school under the state's accountability system.

The Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 allowed for the establishment of charter schools as “alternative means within the public school system for ensuring accomplishment of the necessary outcomes of education,” T.C.A. § 49-13-102(b). Although restrictions initially limited the number of charter schools that could operate in Tennessee, that cap was removed in 2011 to facilitate the replication of high-quality charter schools in the state. Enrollment eligibility was also extended to all students in 2011, whereas preference had originally been given to those students in failing schools or qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

Local boards of education, the Achievement School District (ASD), and the State Board of Education (SBE) serve as charter school authorizers in Tennessee. Local boards of education authorize the majority of charter applications and were the only charter authorizers in Tennessee when the establishment of the ASD in 2012 created a new state-run entity with the license to authorize charter operators in schools whose academic performance placed them in the lowest 5 percent of achievement statewide. The SBE hears appeals from charter school applicants who have been denied by their local boards of education, and can choose to uphold or overturn a district's denial. As of 2014, the SBE can also serve as authorizer to charter applicants seeking to establish a school in a district with at least one priority school.

Charters by the Numbers

Charter schools currently operate in four districts in Tennessee: Hamilton County, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Shelby County, and the Achievement School District. In 2013-14, a total of 67 charter schools operated in these districts, serving 15,839 students.

The average charter high school attendance rate is significantly higher than the district-run school attendance rate.

Figure 1 depicts the change in total charter schools statewide since the first of these schools opened in 2003-04. While expansion has been relatively steady over time, the greatest increases in school numbers occurred since 2010.

Figure 1. Openings and Closings of Charter Schools over Time

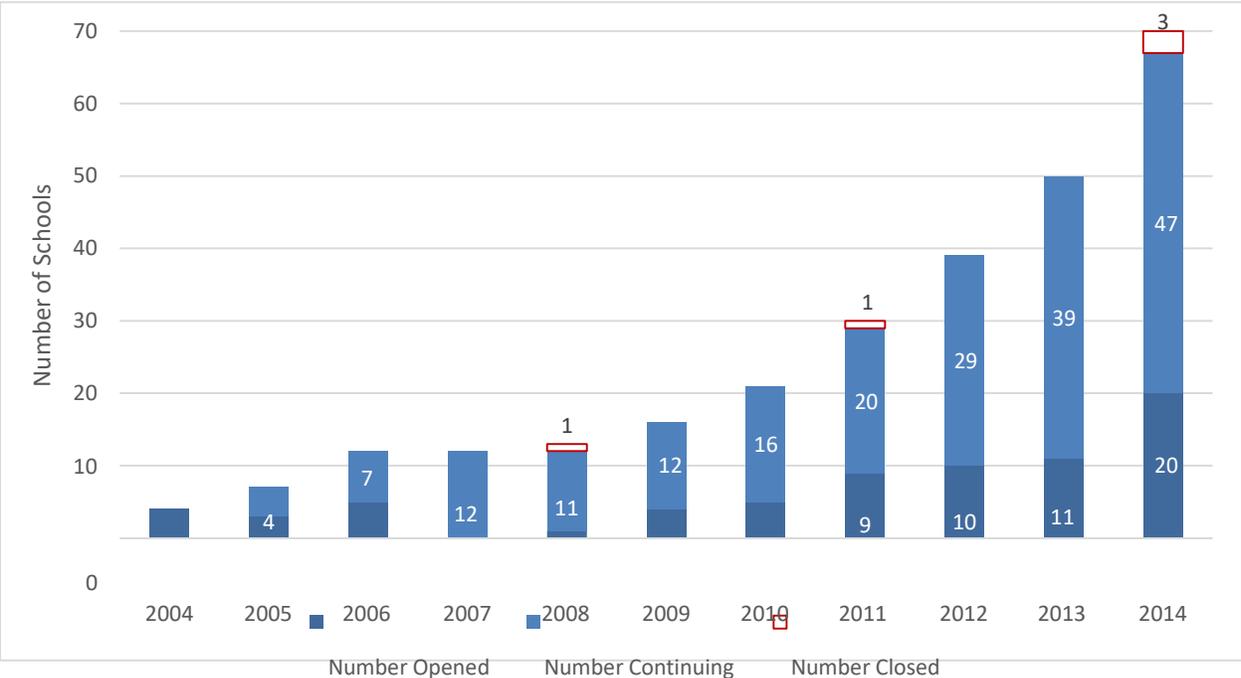
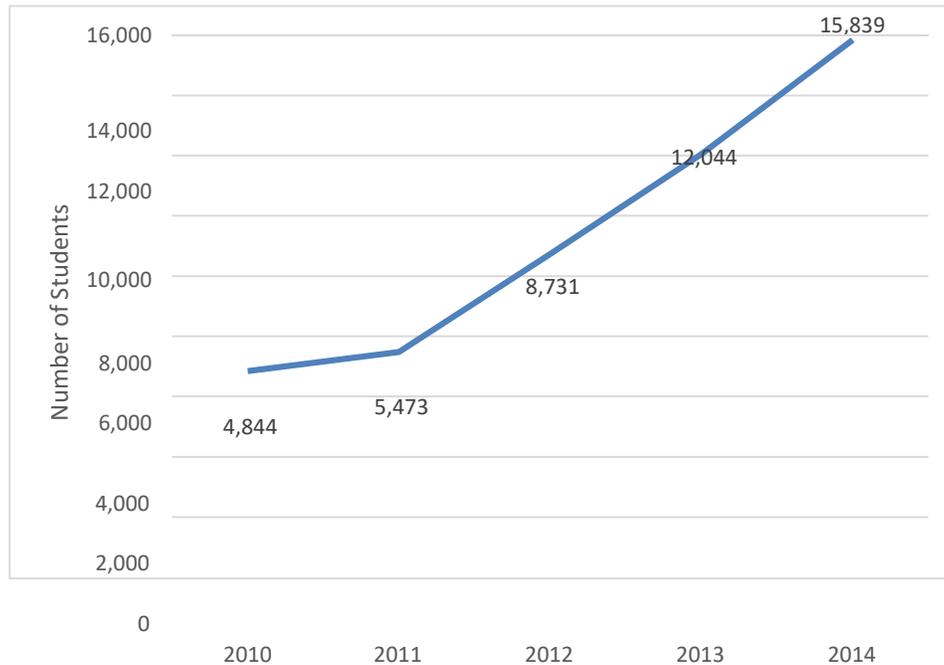


Figure 2 shows the corresponding growth in charter school enrollment since 2010, with the number of students expanding over 200 percent, from around 5,000 to 15,000 students.

Figure 2. Growth in Charter School Enrollment over Time



Even with the rapid charter expansion, charter enrollments still account for only 2 percent of the total 991,000 public school enrollment in the state. Looking specifically within the four Tennessee school districts where charters are located, charter students make up 7 percent of the total student population. Table 1 breaks down charter enrollment across the districts.

Table 1. Charter School Enrollment by District, 2014

	Number of Charter Schools	Charter Enrollment	District Enrollment	% Charter Enrollment
Hamilton County	3	706	43,531	2%
Metro Nashville Public Schools	17	4,018	82,806	5%
Shelby County	37	8,987	149,928	6%
Achievement School District	10	2,128	4,110	52%
Tennessee	67	15,839	993,759	2%

Notably, only five charter schools have closed down across the years with three of those closures happening after the 2013-14 school year. At the same time, districts appear to be setting a high bar for charter approval. Table 2 documents the ratios of submitted versus approved applications by year over the decade-long history of charters in Tennessee. To date,

only 35 percent of charter school applications have been approved by their respective local board of education and 32 percent of SBE appeals have been successful.

Table 2. Charter School Applications, Approvals, and Appeals

Year	# New Applications: # Approved	# SBE Appeals: # Successful	# ASD Applications: # Approved
2002	8:4	3:0	--
2003	18:4	8:1	--
2004	14:7	2:1	--
2005	3:0	1:0	--
2006	5:2	1:0	--
2007	10:4	1:0	--
2008	12:6	1:1	--
2009	28:8	9:0	--
2010	23:11	6:2	--
2011	38:6	20:15	9:2
2012	15:5	5:1	10:8
2013	22:4	3:0	18:9
2014	26:17	6:0	7:1
Total	222:78	66:21	44:20

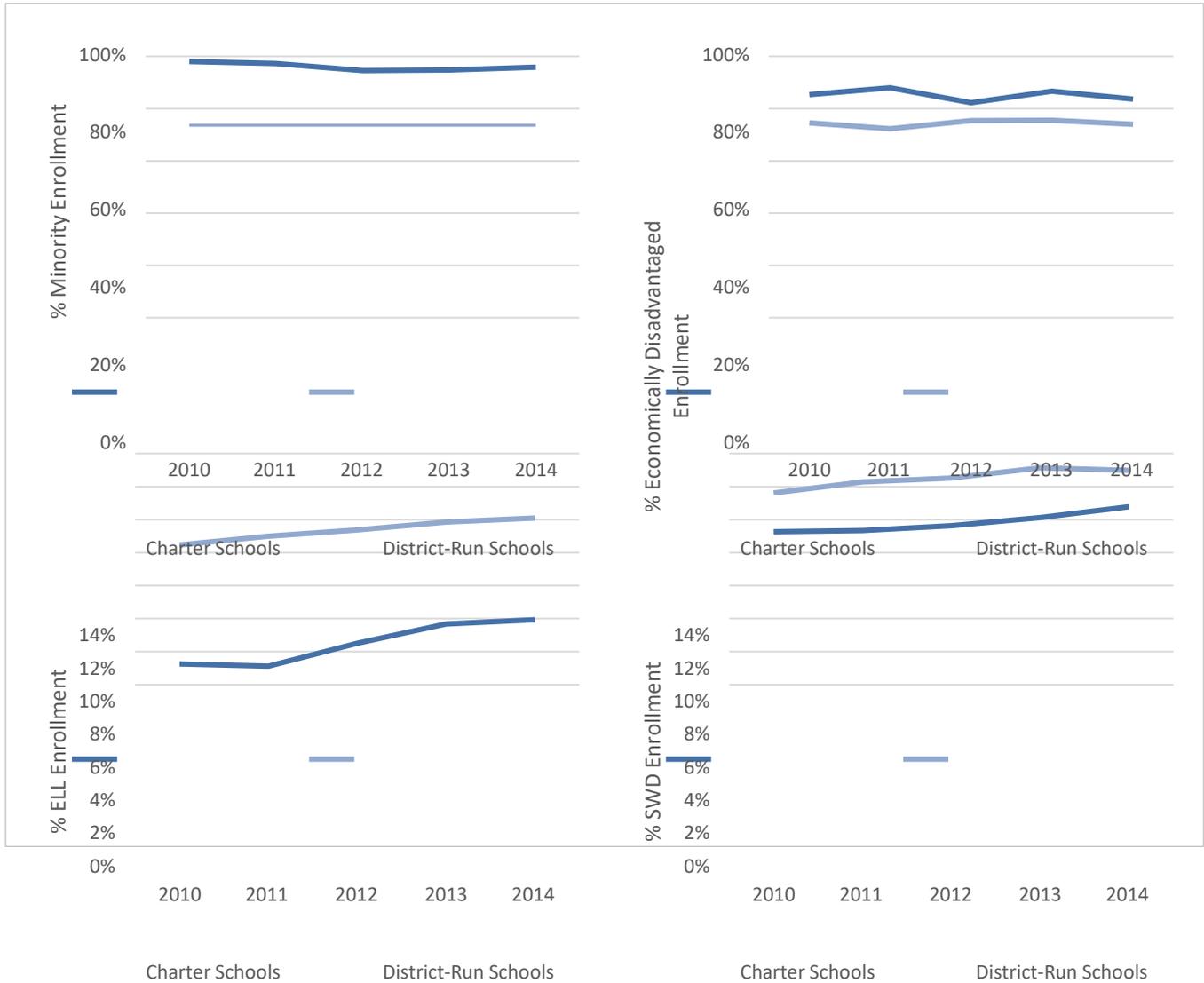
Student Characteristics

The following sections compare the demographics of students in charter schools to the demographics of students in the schools that charter students might conceivably have attended. Comparisons at the district level compare the students in that district’s charters to the students in other schools within the same district. Total charter comparisons compare students in charter schools to non-charter students in the state’s four charter districts: Hamilton County, MNPS, Shelby County, and the ASD. Since all Shelby County charter schools fall within Memphis City borders, we limit the comparison sample to only include those Shelby County schools within the borders of the previous Memphis City school district.

Compared to district-run schools in Hamilton County, MNPS, Memphis City, and the ASD, Tennessee’s charter schools disproportionately serve minority and economically disadvantaged

students. Figure 3 depicts the percentages of minority students,¹ economically disadvantaged students,² English language learners (ELL), and students with disabilities (SWD) served by charter schools compared to district-run schools since 2010.

Figure 3. Student Demographics Served by Charter Schools over Time



Over the past five years, charter schools have continued to serve 23 percent more minority students and 10 percent more economically disadvantaged students than district-run schools, while serving 2-3 percent fewer students with disabilities than district-run schools and 5-6 percent fewer English language learners. As shown in Table 3, which breaks down charter

¹ Minority includes African American, Hispanic, and Asian students.

² Economically disadvantaged is defined as those students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

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school demographics by districts, the discrepancy in ELL enrollment between charter schools and district-run schools is driven by differences within Memphis City.

Table 3. Demographics of Charter Schools by District, 2014

	Hamilton County		MNPS		Memphis City ³		ASD	
	Charter Schools	District-Run Schools	Charter Schools	District-Run Schools	Charter Schools	District-Run Schools	Charter Schools	District-Run Schools
% White	17%	58%	11%	32%	1%	8%	1%	2%
% Black	72%	30%	66%	44%	95%	79%	97%	96%
% Hispanic	10%	8%	22%	20%	4%	11%	2%	1%
% Asian	0.3%	2%	1%	4%	0.2%	2%	0.3%	0.3%
% Economically Disadvantaged	88%	58%	86%	71%	83%	83%	81%	95%
% ELL	4%	4%	11%	15%	1%	9%	1%	0%
% SWD	10%	13%	13%	12%	9%	14%	14%	13%

School Size and Structure

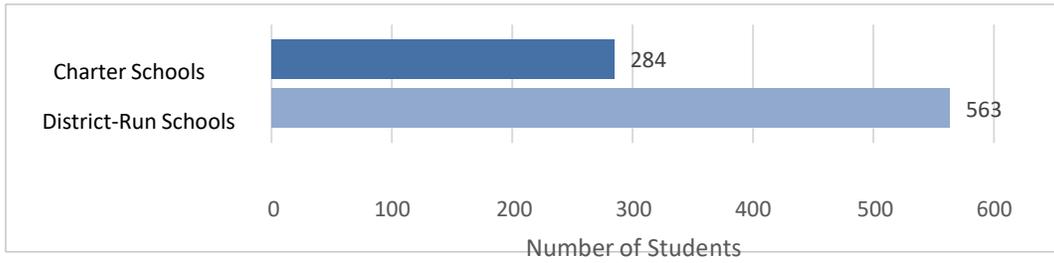
Tennessee law allows for the creation of entirely new schools through the charter process as well as the conversion of traditional public schools to charter status. To date, however, most Tennessee charters outside the ASD with the single exception of Cameron College Prep have been new schools. Within the ASD, all charters represent conversions of previously operating district schools, with the single exception of GRAD academy.

Charter schools in Tennessee tend to enroll fewer students than comparable district-run schools (Figure 4). The average enrollment of charter schools was 284 students in 2013-14 compared to 563 students for district-run schools.⁴ Characteristics of individual charter schools are listed in Appendix A.

³ As noted above, since 2013-14, Memphis City is part of Shelby County school district. However, all charter schools are within Memphis City borders, so they are only being compared to non-charter schools in Memphis City.

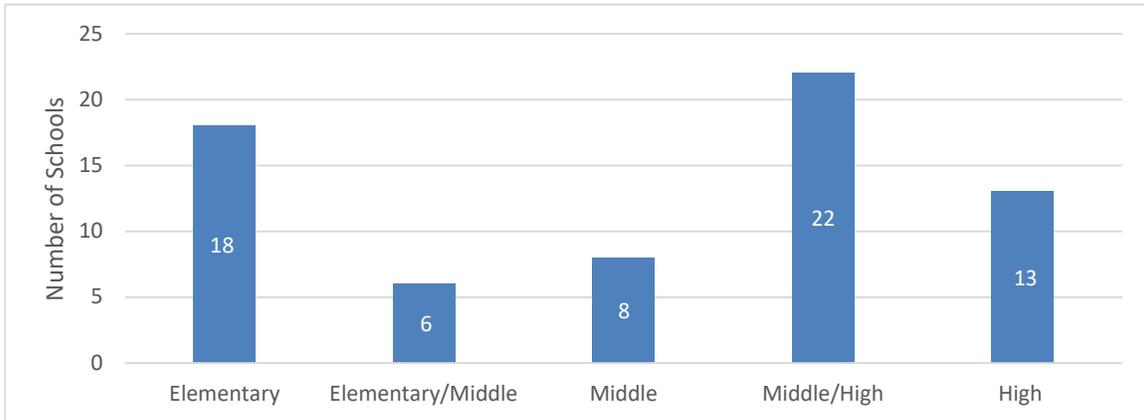
⁴ Only charter schools that have reached their full grade span are included in the average of total school enrollment.

Figure 4. Average Enrollment at Charter Schools and District-Run Schools



Charter schools also tend to scale up over time, often starting with only a single grade and taking multiple years to reach a planned grade configuration. Currently, only 29 out of the 67 operating charter schools in Tennessee have reached their ultimate grade configuration. Figure 5 shows the anticipated grade configurations of all currently operating charters as indicated in their applications. As illustrated, most charters are slated to be either elementary or combined middle/high schools, although the range of grade configurations is substantial, as it is for district-run schools across the state.

Figure 5. Grade Configurations of Charter Schools





The following sections provide comparisons between charter and district-run schools across a variety of academic and behavioral outcomes that the state tracks over time. As noted in the previous section, however, charter schools are serving a significantly different population of students than their district counterparts, and the comparisons presented here should not be interpreted as reports on the differential *effects* of charter versus traditional public schools. The most recent studies that have attempted to untangle the causal impact of Tennessee charter schools on student outcomes come from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University and can be found at the following link:

<https://credo.stanford.edu/>

Academic Achievement

Tennessee's accountability system holds schools accountable for the academic performance of their students. At the end of every school year, students in grades 3-8 take TCAP exams in Math, Reading/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. Students in Grades 9-12 take End of Course Exams (EOCs) in English I, English II, English III, Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, and U.S. History. Student performance on these exams is reported using four levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic. Students who score proficient or advanced on these exams can be said to be performing at grade level.

The average charter high school attendance rate is significantly higher than the district-run school attendance rate.

Figure 6 depicts the percentage of students in charter schools scoring proficient or advanced in Math, Reading, Algebra II, and English II compared to that of district-run schools in 2014. Charter schools perform similarly on average to district-run schools on TCAP and EOC exams. However, substantial variation in student performance exists across charter schools, which can be seen in the breakdown of achievement by district in Table 4. Whereas MNPS charter schools appear to outperform the district's non-charter schools, Hamilton County charter schools tend to perform worse than the district's non-charter schools. Memphis City and ASD charter schools perform similarly to their district-run schools. For school-level percentages of students scoring proficient or advanced in each subject, please see Appendices B and C.

Figure 6. Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Math, Reading, Algebra II, and English II

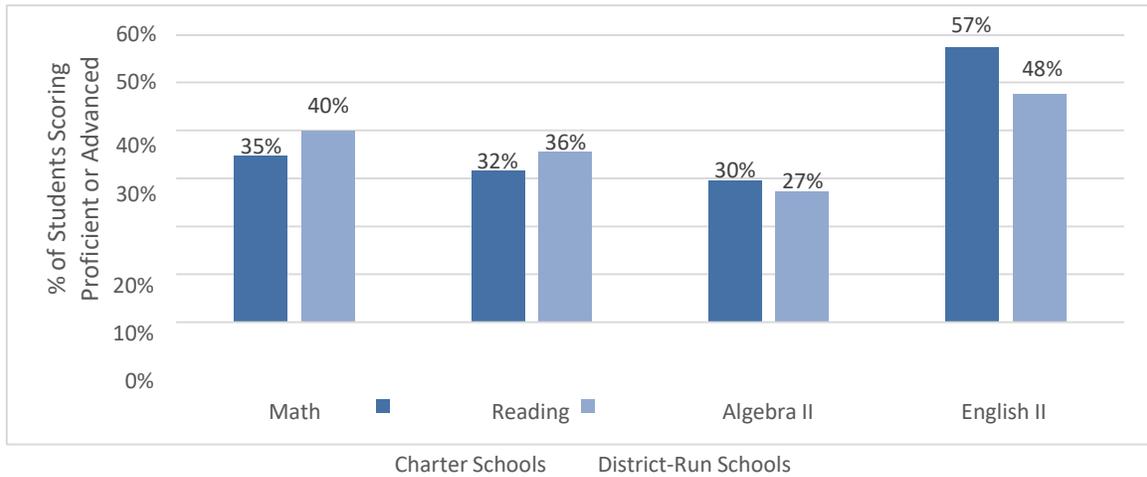
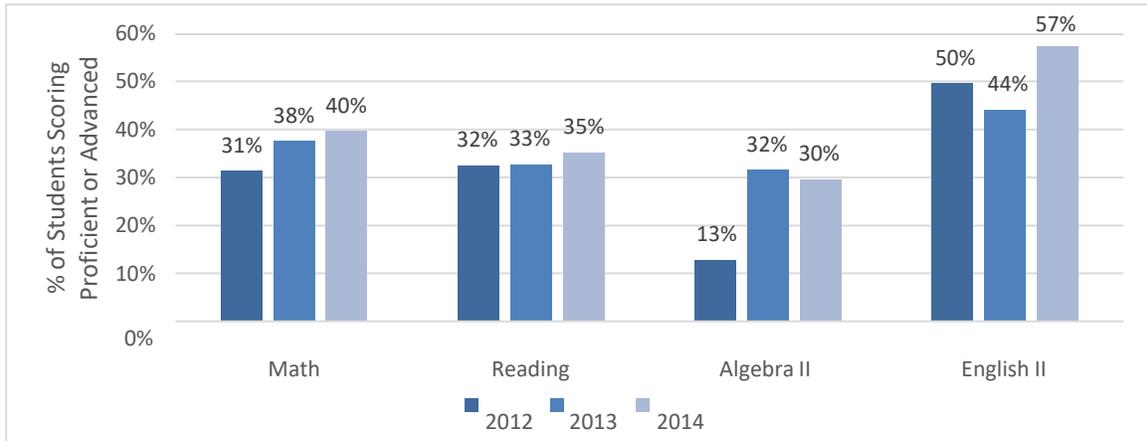


Table 4. Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on TCAP and EOC exams by District, 2014

	Hamilton County		MNPS		Memphis City		ASD	
	Charter Schools	District-Run Schools						
TCAP								
Math	42%	56%	53%	41%	28%	32%	22%	20%
Reading	28%	46%	45%	39%	29%	29%	15%	12%
EOC Exams								
Algebra II	18%	37%	34%	30%	31%	21%	N/A	N/A
English II	60%	59%	74%	56%	55%	36%	N/A	N/A

Charter schools, like the rest of the state, have also witnessed improvement in achievement levels over the past few years. Figure 7 illustrates the increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in Math, Reading, Algebra II, and English II for charter schools that have been open for at least three years.

Figure 7. Change in Percent of Charter School Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Math, Reading, Algebra II, and English II over Time



Value-Added Measures of School Effectiveness

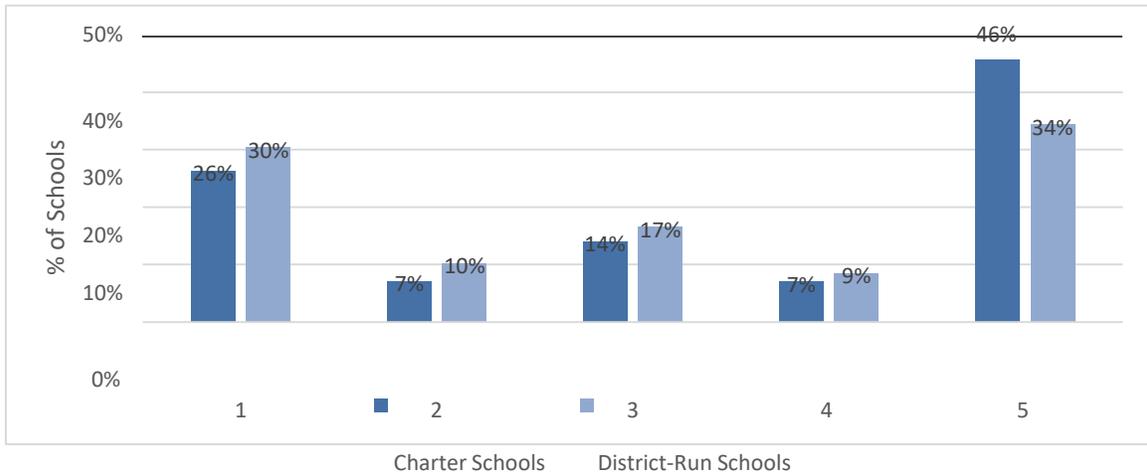
The Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) provides measures of school effectiveness by estimating the impact teachers and schools have on their students’ academic progress.

Charter schools vary in effectiveness as measured by Composite TVAAS scores.

TVAAS measures growth in student achievement from one year to the next. Schools are assigned Composite TVAAS scores each year ranging from Level 1 to Level 5. Level 1 schools are described as “Least Effective,” while Level 5 schools are “Most Effective.” A Composite TVAAS score of 3 indicates a school whose students are making expected levels of growth across a year. Composite TVAAS scores measure growth in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies on TCAP exams for schools serving grades 3-8. For schools offering EOC exams, Composite TVAAS scores measure students’ growth in English I, English II, English III, Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, and U.S. History.

As shown in Figure 8, both charter schools and district-run schools display considerable variation in overall effectiveness as measured by Composite TVAAS scores. Just over half of charter schools received TVAAS scores that suggest students were making greater than expected growth. However, 26 percent of charter schools were also rated least effective with a Composite TVAAS score of 1. Composite TVAAS scores for individual schools are included in Appendices B and C.

Figure 8. Composite TVAAS Scores, 2014



Attendance, Promotion, Transfer, and Graduation

Table 5 shows rates of student attendance and progression across charters and district-run schools. T.C.A. § 49-13-133 requires that within-year transfer or mobility rates of charter schools be reported annually. As schools of choice, it is possible that charter schools would experience student mobility at a different rate than that of traditional public schools, as parents of charter school students have already exercised choice by opting out of the traditional public school system. The mobility rate is defined as the number of students who transferred out of a school divided by the number of students who attended the school at any point during the 2013-14 school year. Students who attended the school for less than a week are excluded. As the table shows, there are no significant differences in mobility rates between charter schools and district-run schools.

Table 5. Attendance, Promotion, Graduation, and Mobility Rates, 2014

	Grades K-8			Grades 9-12		
	Attendance	Mobility	Promotion	Attendance	Mobility	Graduation
Charter Schools	96%	11%	95%	97%	9%	89%
District-Run Schools	95%	13%	96%	90%	13%	75%

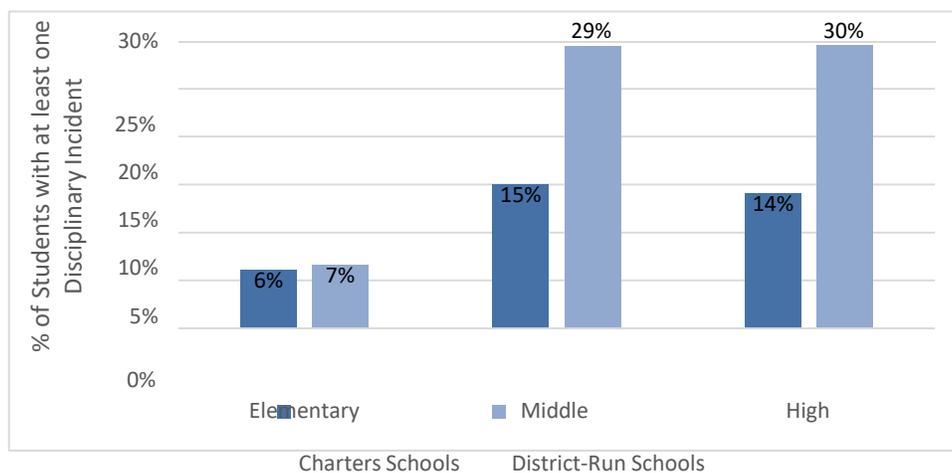
Student attendance rates are uniformly high for students in charters and district-run schools at the K-8 level, however the average charter high school attendance rate of 97 percent is significantly higher than the district-run school attendance rate of 90 percent. The trend is similar in high school graduation, where there is a significant 14 percentage point difference between the 89 percent average graduation rate for charter schools and the 75 percent graduation rate for district-run schools. In contrast, student promotion rates across grades look almost identical between charters and district-run schools.

The average charter high school attendance rate is significantly higher than the district-run school attendance rate.

Discipline

Each year, Tennessee schools report on disciplinary incidents experienced by students, including the reason for the incident and the type of disciplinary action taken. As illustrated in Figure 9, charter middle and high schools document fewer disciplinary incidents on average than district-run schools.⁵ Whereas district-run middle and high schools report that 29-30 percent of their students experience at least one disciplinary incident, charter middle and high schools report that 14-15 percent of their students experience at least one disciplinary incident.

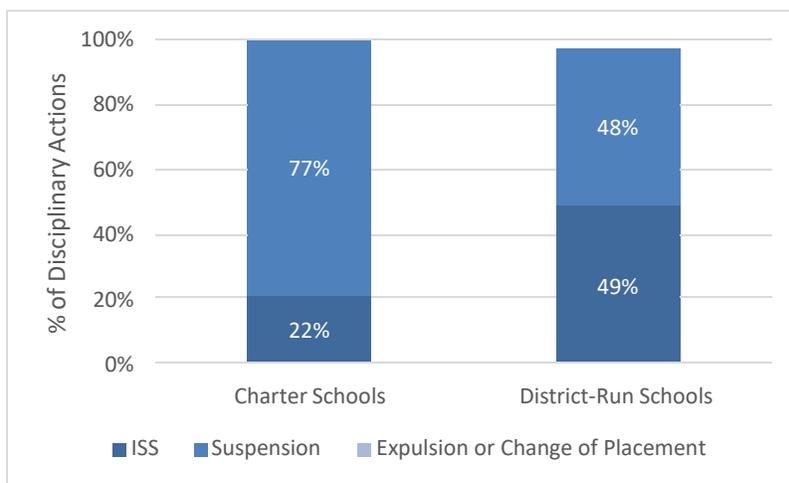
Figure 9. Disciplinary Incidents in Charter Schools and District-Run Schools



⁵ Discipline figures are based on 2012-13 data, as 2013-14 discipline data were not available at the time of writing this report.

Despite documenting fewer disciplinary incidents, charter schools suspend students at higher rates for documented rule violations, which constitute the majority of disciplinary incidents in both charters and district-run schools. Figure 10 shows that 77 percent of charter school students who were disciplined for documented rule violations in 2013-14 received out-of-school suspension as punishment, compared to only 48 percent of students at district-run schools.

Figure 10. Disciplinary Action Taken by Charter Schools and District-Run Schools for Rule Violations



School Recognitions

Each year under the state’s accountability system, the Tennessee Department of Education recognizes schools for their success. These Reward Schools represent the top five percent of schools in the state for performance and the top five percent of schools in the state for year-over-year growth. Of the 168 schools designated Reward Schools in 2014, 15 were charter schools (Table 6). Eight of these charter schools also received Reward School designations in 2013. They are Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, KIPP Academy Nashville, Liberty Collegiate Academy, Nashville Prep School, STEM Preparatory Academy, Freedom Preparatory Academy, Memphis Academy of Health Sciences, and Power Center Academy High School.

Table 6. Charter Schools Designated as Reward Schools in 2014

District	School	Reward Status
Hamilton	Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy	Progress
MNPS	Cameron College Preparatory	Progress
	KIPP Academy Nashville	Progress
	Knowledge Academy	Progress
	Liberty Collegiate Academy	Performance & Progress
	Nashville Prep School	Performance & Progress
	New Vision Academy	Progress
	STEM Prep Academy	Progress
Memphis City	Freedom Preparatory Academy	Progress
	Memphis Academy of Health Sciences	Progress
	Memphis Business Academy High School	Progress
	Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory Charter School	Progress
	Power Center Academy High School	Progress
	Soulsville Charter School	Progress
	Veritas College Preparatory	Progress

The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) also recognizes schools annually for demonstrating success in improving student achievement. The SCORE Prize is awarded each year to the Tennessee elementary, middle, and high school that leads the way in student learning. Two charter schools, KIPP Academy Nashville and Freedom Preparatory Academy were selected as SCORE Prize finalists in 2014. This marks the second consecutive year that Freedom Preparatory Academy has been a SCORE Prize finalist.

Priority Schools

The Tennessee Department of Education also identifies Priority Schools every three years in accordance with the state’s accountability system. Priority schools are the lowest-performing five percent of schools in Tennessee in terms of academic achievement. These schools are eligible for inclusion in the ASD or in district Innovation Zones. Four charter schools were designated priority schools for 2015 (Table 7). Pursuant to § 49-13-122, which was amended in 2014, these schools are subject to automatic closure at the end of the 2014-15 school year.

Table 7. Charter Schools Designated as 2015 Priority Schools

District	School
Memphis City	City University Boys Preparatory
	Omni Prep Academy - North Point Lower School
	Omni Prep Academy - North Pointe Middle School
	Southern Avenue Middle

Five charter schools were also designated Priority Schools in 2012. They are Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, Smithson Craighead Middle School, Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering, Memphis Academy of Excellence, and New Consortium of Law and Business II. Two of these schools, Smithson Craighead Middle School and New Consortium of Law and Business II, have since closed due to low academic achievement. However, Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy has consistently demonstrated high growth and, as indicated in the previous section, has been identified as a Reward School for progress the past two years.

Appendix A. Charter School Enrollment, Type, and Grades Served

Hamilton County					
School	Enrollment	Charter Type	Year Opened	Grades Served (2013-14)	Ultimate Grade Configuration
Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence	327	Start-up	2011-12	K-5	Elementary
Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy	247	Start-up	2009-10	6-12	Middle/High
Ivy Academy, Inc.	132	Start-up	2009-10	9-12	High
Metro Nashville Public Schools					
School	Enrollment	Charter Type	Year Opened	Grades Served (2013-14)	Ultimate Grade Configuration
Boy's Prep	120	Start-up	2012-13	7-8	Middle/High
Cameron College Preparatory	452	Conversion	2011-12	5-7	Middle
Drexel Prep	242	Start-up	2011-12	K-5	Elementary/Middle
East End Preparatory School	288	Start-up	2011-12	K-2	Elementary
Intrepid College Preparatory Charter School	79	Start-up	2013-14	5	Middle/High
KIPP Academy Nashville	350	Start-up	2005-06	5-8	Middle
KIPP Nashville College Prep	96	Start-up	2013-14	5	Middle
Knowledge Academy	215	Start-up	2012-13	5-7	Middle
Lead Academy	568	Start-up	2007-08	5-12	Middle/High
LEAD Prep Southeast	52	Start-up	2013-14	5	Middle/High
Liberty Collegiate Academy	322	Start-up	2011-12	5-7	Middle/High
Nashville Classical	99	Start-up	2013-14	K	Elementary/Middle
Nashville Prep	316	Start-up	2011-12	5-7	Middle/High
New Vision Academy	183	Start-up	2010-11	5-8	Middle
Purpose Prep	87	Start-up	2013-14	K	Elementary
Smithson Craighead Academy	253	Start-up	2003-04	K-4	Elementary
STEM Prep Academy	296	Start-up	2011-12	5-7	Middle
Memphis City					
School	Enrollment	Charter Type	Year Opened	Grades Served (2013-14)	Ultimate Grade Configuration
Arrow Academy of Excellence	29	Start-up	2013-14	K-1	Elementary

Aurora Collegiate Academy	118	Start-up	2012-13	K	Elementary
Circles Of Success Learning Academy	248	Start-up	2003-04	K-5	Elementary
City University Boys Preparatory	115	Start-up	2009-10	6-8	Middle
City University School Girls Preparatory	37	Start-up	2013-14	6	Middle
City University School Of Liberal Arts	313	Start-up	2004-05	9-12	High
DuBois Elementary School of Arts Technology	203	Start-up	2013-14	K-5	Elementary
DuBois Elementary School of Entrepreneurship	185	Start-up	2013-14	K-5	Elementary
DuBois High School of Arts Technology	74	Start-up	2013-14	9	High
DuBois Middle of Leadership Public Policy	107	Start-up	2013-14	6-8	Middle
DuBois Middle School of Arts Technology	139	Start-up	2013-14	6-8	Middle
Freedom Preparatory Academy	376	Start-up	2009-10	6-10	Middle/High
KIPP Memphis Collegiate Elementary	228	Start-up	2012-13	K-1	Elementary
KIPP Memphis Collegiate High School	322	Start-up	2011-12	9-11	High
KIPP Memphis Collegiate Middle	302	Start-up	2008-09	5-8	Middle
KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	203	Start-up	2012-13	5-6	Middle
Memphis Academy Of Health Sciences	311	Start-up	2003-04	6-8	Middle
Memphis Academy of Health Sciences High School	384	Start-up	2008-09	9-12	High
Memphis Academy Of Science Engineering Middle/High	364	Start-up	2003-04	6-12	Middle/High
Memphis Business Academy Elementary School	179	Start-up	2011-12	K-3	Elementary
Memphis Business Academy High School	322	Start-up	2008-09	9-12	High
Memphis Business Academy Middle	264	Start-up	2005-06	6-8	Middle
Memphis College Preparatory	217	Start-up	2010-11	K-3	Elementary
Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory Charter School	179	Start-up	2012-13	6-7	Middle
Memphis School of Excellence	393	Start-up	2010-11	6-12	Middle/High
New Consortium of Law and Business II	97	Start-up	2010-11	6-9	Middle/High

New Consortium of Law and Business	73	Start-up	2011-12	6-8	Middle/High
Omni Prep Academy - North Point Lower School	194	Start-up	2010-11	K-4	Elementary
Omni Prep Academy - North Pointe Middle School	129	Start-up	2010-11	5-8	Middle
Power Center Academy High School	406	Start-up	2011-12	9-11	High
Power Center Academy Middle	361	Start-up	2008-09	6-8	Middle
Promise Academy	463	Start-up	2005-06	K-5	Elementary
Soulsville Charter School	589	Start-up	2005-06	6-12	Middle/High
Southern Avenue Charter School Of Academic Excellence Creative Arts	364	Start-up	2005-06	K-5	Elementary
Southern Avenue Middle	266	Start-up	2010-11	6-8	Middle
Star Academy	238	Start-up	2004-05	K-5	Elementary
Veritas College Preparatory	195	Start-up	2010-11	6-8	Middle
Achievement School District					
School	Enrollment	Charter Type	Year Opened	Grades Served (2013-14)	Ultimate Grade Configuration
Aspire Hanley #1	328	Conversion	2013-14	PreK-5	Elementary/Middle
Aspire Hanley #2	307	Conversion	2013-14	PreK-5	Elementary/Middle
Brick Church College Prep	177	Conversion	2012-13	5-6	Middle
Cornerstone Prep - Lester Campus	489	Conversion	2012-13	PreK-5	Elementary/Middle
GRAD Academy Memphis	166	Start-up	2013-14	9	High
Humes Preparatory Academy - Lower School	32	Conversion	2013-14	5	Elementary
Humes Preparatory Academy - Upper School	355	Conversion	2012-13	6-8	Middle
KIPP Memphis Academy Elementary	91	Conversion	2013-14	K	Elementary
KIPP Memphis Preparatory Middle	66	Conversion	2013-14	5	Middle
Klondike Preparatory Academy	117	Conversion	2013-14	K-2	Elementary/Middle

Appendix B. Charter School Performance, Grades 3-8

Hamilton County				
School	Composite TVAAS	% Proficient or Advanced		
		Math	Reading	Science
Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence	2	42%	21%	28%
Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy	5	43%	35%	52%
Metro Nashville Public Schools				
School	Composite TVAAS	% Proficient or Advanced		
		Math	Reading	Science
Boy's Prep	2	17%	23%	34%
Cameron College Preparatory	5	52%	32%	53%
Drexel Prep	3	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Intrepid College Preparatory Charter School	5	51%	63%	63%
KIPP Academy Nashville	5	79%	57%	78%
KIPP Nashville College Prep	5	62%	49%	67%
Knowledge Academy	5	54%	51%	75%
Lead Academy	4	31%	36%	50%
LEAD Prep Southeast	5	47%	45%	84%
Liberty Collegiate Academy	5	74%	66%	91%
Nashville Prep	5	83%	60%	88%
New Vision Academy	5	63%	51%	77%
Smithson Craighead Academy	1	46%	38%	46%
STEM Prep Academy	5	74%	59%	89%
Memphis City				
School	Composite TVAAS	% Proficient or Advanced		
		Math	Reading	Science
Circles Of Success Learning Academy	3	50%	31%	41%
City University Boys Preparatory	3	N/A*	16%	38%
City University School Girls Preparatory	1	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
DuBois Elementary School of Arts Technology	1	N/A*	15%	N/A*
DuBois Elementary School of Entrepreneurship	1	19%	N/A*	27%
DuBois Middle of Leadership Public Policy	1	N/A*	N/A*	35%

DuBois Middle School of Arts Technology	1	20%	29%	29%
Freedom Preparatory Academy	5	53%	40%	62%
KIPP Memphis Collegiate Middle	4	17%	21%	45%
KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	3	32%	28%	47%
Memphis Academy Of Health Sciences	5	53%	37%	46%
Memphis Academy Of Science Engineering Middle/High	1	15%	22%	46%
Memphis Business Academy Elementary School	4	28%	20%	53%
Memphis Business Academy Middle	5	25%	29%	43%
Memphis College Preparatory	N/A	66%	N/A*	N/A*
Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory Charter School	5	24%	23%	58%
Memphis School of Excellence	5	57%	42%	60%
New Consortium of Law Business II	1	14%	33%	33%
New Consortium of Law and Business	N/A	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Omni Prep Academy - North Point Lower School	1	14%	14%	N/A*
Omni Prep Academy - North Pointe Middle School	5	31%	29%	30%
Power Center Academy Middle	1	54%	61%	73%
Promise Academy	2	48%	30%	35%
Soulsville Charter School	5	22%	31%	46%
Southern Avenue Charter School Of Academic Excellence Creative Arts	5	39%	22%	53%
Southern Avenue Middle	2	19%	25%	38%
Star Academy	1	37%	N/A*	N/A*
Veritas College Preparatory	5	35%	28%	61%
Achievement School District				
School	Composite TVAAS	% Proficient or Advanced		
		Math	Reading	Science
Aspire Hanley #1	1	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Aspire Hanley #2	1	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Brick Church College Prep	5	41%	37%	37%
Cornerstone Prep - Lester Campus	5	25%	15%	22%
Humes Preparatory Academy - Lower School	3	32%	13%	N/A*
Humes Preparatory Academy - Upper School	5	22%	19%	29%
KIPP Memphis Preparatory Middle	3	20%	N/A*	55%

Note: * Indicates that results were masked due to FERPA regulations.

Appendix C. Charter School Performance, Grades 9-12

Hamilton County								
School	Composite TVAAS	Graduation Rate	% Proficient or Advanced					
			Alg I	Alg II	Eng I	Eng II	Eng III	Bio I
Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy	5	91%	62%	64%	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
Ivy Academy, Inc.	1	74%	20%	18%	58%	N/A*	33%	62%
Metro Nashville Public Schools								
School	Composite TVAAS	Graduation Rate	% Proficient or Advanced					
			Alg I	Alg II	Eng I	Eng II	Eng III	Bio I
Lead Academy	4	93%	82%	34%	N/A*	74%	N/A*	83%
Memphis City								
School	Composite TVAAS	Graduation Rate	% Proficient or Advanced					
			Alg I	Alg II	Eng I	Eng II	Eng III	Bio I
DuBois High School of Arts Technology	1	N/A	19%	N/A	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A
KIPP Memphis Collegiate High School	3	N/A	25%	43%	55%	47%	N/A*	N/A
City University School Of Liberal Arts	4	98%	63%	21%	58%	51%	12%	36%
Memphis Academy Of Science Engineering Middle/High	1	65%	31%	N/A*	55%	48%	41%	32%
Power Center Academy High School	5	N/A	83%	52%	N/A	78%	24%	73%
Memphis Academy of Health Sciences High School	5	93%	52%	20%	68%	55%	19%	55%
Memphis Business Academy High School	5	89%	53%	N/A*	71%	49%	N/A*	51%
Soulsville Charter School	5	98%	98%	63%	70%	64%	42%	59%
Freedom Preparatory Academy	5	N/A	18%	N/A	87%	N/A	N/A	87%
New Consortium of Law and Business II	1	N/A	N/A*	N/A	47%	26%	N/A	N/A*
Memphis School of Excellence	5	N/A	79%	N/A*	83%	N/A*	24%	69%
Achievement School District								
School	Composite TVAAS	Graduation Rate	% Proficient or Advanced					
			Alg I	Alg II	Eng I	Eng II	Eng III	Bio I
GRAD Academy Memphis	3	N/A	37%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24%

Note: * Indicates that results were masked due to FERPA regulations.



Department of
Education

Charter Schools

***Application for a
Public Charter School
Opening in the 2017-18 School Year
Including Replication***

Commissioner, Dr. Candice McQueen

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Introduction

This application provides sponsors the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to design and implement academic and business plans, and to do so as good stewards of public funds. The application should be a plan for helping all students at the school prepare for post-secondary success in education, work, and citizenship. It should also be similar to an operations manual, showing future students, families, teachers, and school staff what success will look like for the school.

The application is divided into three main sections: academic, operational and financial, with additional sections to address network plans and capacity and past performance for existing operators. Decisions to approve or deny, revoke or renew charters are based on the sponsor or governing body's academic, operational, financial, and past performance if applicable, including compliance with the law and the charter agreement. Academic program capacity and past performance are the most critical factor in evaluating applications and schools. However, operational performance and financial stability directly affect a school's ability to help students succeed in the academic program. Thus, the application should manifest alignment across each section and address the best interests of the pupils, school district or community.

Determine Submission Requirements

This application is designed for use by for all new charter schools in Tennessee including new start charter schools, existing Tennessee operators proposing to replicate an exact model (including focus and grade levels) of an existing school, existing Tennessee operators who would like to change their focus and/or grade structure, or existing charter school operators who are not yet established in Tennessee. Tennessee law requires one application for each proposed school.

ALL applicants must complete the **General Information** and **Assurances** page. The flow chart below should be used to determine which additional sections of this application must be completed.

APPLICANT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	REQUIRED SECTIONS
New-Start Applicant	Operator with no existing schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.1 through 1.12 • Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.1 through 2.10 • Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.1 and 3.2
Existing Tennessee Operator Proposing New Focus/Grade Structure <i>OR</i>	Operator with existing schools in Tennessee proposing to change their focus and/or grade structure <i>OR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.1 through 1.14 • Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.1 through 2.16 • Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.1 through 3.3 • Portfolio Review and Performance Record: 4.1
Existing non-Tennessee operator	Operator with existing schools outside of Tennessee	
Existing Tennessee Operator Proposing Exact Focus/Grade Structure	Operator with existing schools in Tennessee proposing no change in focus or grade structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit original application • Academic Plan Design and Capacity: 1.2, 1.13, and 1.14 • Operations Plan and Capacity: 2.11. through 2.16 • Financial Plan and Capacity: 3.4 • Portfolio Review and Performance Record: 4.1

Existing Operators in Tennessee Applying to Replicate Exact Focus/Grade Structure:

A Tennessee operator requesting replication must:

- be in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and their charter contract;
- be in at least Year 2 of operation in Tennessee;
- provide student performance data analysis from state assessments, including: TCAP Achievement, EOC, K-2, Writing, EXPLORE/PLAN/Aspire, and ACT.

Contents

These items must be included in the public charter school application in the order listed below:

1. General Information
2. Assurances form signed by the authorized agent of the public charter school sponsor
3. Table of Contents
4. Application Narrative by section
5. Applicable Attachments

Format

1. Place hard copies in three ring binders, with the front cover and spine labeled with, at minimum, the name of the proposed charter school.
2. The application, including attachments, but not including the budget, may not exceed 250 pages.
3. Clearly label and tab each section of the application according to the table of contents.
4. Number all pages in the application (after the table of contents) sequentially (e.g. 1 of 178).
5. Clearly label applicable attachments and reference as appropriate in the narrative.
6. The electronic copy must be an exact version of the hard copy and must be in the order listed above. The electronic copy must be submitted as **ONE** PDF document including all attachments and the budget. In addition, include one excel version of the budget worksheet.

Filing

Materials must be received by the close of business on **April 1**.

Note: Tennessee law provides that when the April 1 deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or State observed holiday, the application materials are due to the State on the next business day.

Applicants may be required to submit up to five (5) hard copies, and one electronic copy of the application materials to the authorizer. Authorizers may charge an application fee of up to \$500 per school.

Applicants must submit one electronic copy to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). Electronic copies may be submitted via email, online file transfer service, CD, USB drive, etc. Please use the contact information below:

Email: charter.schools@tn.gov

Mail: Director of Charter Schools
Tennessee Department of Education
9th Floor – Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0379

When amended applications are submitted to an authorizing local education agency (LEA), one electronic copy must also be submitted to the TDOE.

NOTE: The Achievement School District (ASD) has a separate process for chartering schools, outlined [here](#). Do not use this application if you are applying to the ASD.

Before starting on a charter school application, sponsors should do all of the following action items:

1. Review all elements of The *Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act*, available online at: <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/tncode/>. Once at this site, click on the link for Tennessee Code and Constitution. The Charter School law is found in Title 49, Chapter 13.
2. Review the startup guides, reference guide, timeline, FAQs, and other materials included on the [Tennessee charter school webpage](#).
3. Contact the LEA which will receive the application to find out any local guidelines for applicants. Several Tennessee LEAs have, as a means of defining what they believe are “the best interests the pupils, school district or community,” (T.C.A. § 49-13-108) outlined specific priorities they ask sponsors to address in applications. Sponsors may choose not to address any of those priorities and, if denied for failing to do so, may appeal to the State Board of Education. However, because Tennessee charter schools “operate within a school district structure,” seeking to align interests early on is likely to increase “accomplishment of the necessary outcomes of education.” (T.C.A. § 49-13-102).

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: _____

CHARTERING AUTHORITY FOR PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: _____

SPONSOR/SPONSORING AGENCY: _____

THE SPONSOR IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WITH 501(c)(3) STATUS: Yes ___ No ___ In Process ___

MODEL OR FOCUS OF PROPOSED SCHOOL: _____

Provide the name of the person who will serve as **the primary contact** for this application. **The primary contact** should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this application.

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PRIMARY TELEPHONE: (____) _____ ALTERNATE TELEPHONE: (____) _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF PROPOSED SCHOOL LEADER (IF ANY): _____

REPLICATION APPLICATION: Yes No

PROJECTED YEAR OF SCHOOL OPENING: _____

CITY OR GEOGRAPHIC COMMUNITY: _____

Does the proposed school intend to contract or partner with a charter management organization (CMO) or not-for-profit education service provider? *Note: Tennessee law currently permits an operator to contract with non-profit service providers. It does not permit operators to contract with for profit service providers.*

Yes No

If yes, identify the CMO or other partner organization:

Does this applicant have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the United States? Yes No

If yes, complete the table below, adding lines as needed.

STATE	AUTHORIZER	PROPOSED SCHOOL NAME	APPLICATION DUE DATE	DECISION DATE

Indicate Applicant Type:

- New-Start Applicant**
 Existing TN Operator Proposing New Focus/Grade Structure OR Existing non-TN operator
 Existing Tennessee Operator Proposing Exact Focus/Grade Structure

ASSURANCES

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for _____ [name of school] _____ is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award; and if awarded a charter, the school:

1. Will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the chartering authority and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act;
2. Will follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to T.C.A. § 49-13-105;
3. Will provide special education services for students as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. Will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;
5. Will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. Will comply with all provisions of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act, including, but not limited to
 - a. employing individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
 - b. complying with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 et seq.; 10-7-503, 504) (guidance is available from the [Office of Open Records Counsel](#));
 - c. not charging tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and T.C.A. § 49-6-3003;
 - d. following state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111, 120, and 127;
 - e. requiring any member of the governing body, employee, officer or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by T.C.A. § 8-19-101; and
7. Will, at all times, maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

Signature

Printed Name of Authorized Signer

Title of Authorized Signer

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION NARRATIVE

1. ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

1.1 School Mission and Goals

Provide a mission statement for the proposed charter school. Note: the mission statement should indicate in measureable terms what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire application.

Describe the vision and goals of the proposed school and how they will help achieve the school's mission. In this section describe:

- How the mission and vision of this school will meet the prescribed purposes for charter schools found in T.C.A. § 49-13-102.
- How the mission and vision of this school addresses any priorities set by the chartering authority.
- Specific barriers and/or school needs that may impact student achievement. Explain how this school will help students overcome those specific barriers.
- What the school will look like when it is achieving its mission.

1.2 Enrollment Summary

- Describe the community from which the proposed school intends to draw students, including the demographic profile and school zones within the LEA.
- Provide a rationale for selecting the community where the proposed school will locate.
- Discuss the academic performance of surrounding schools in that community.
- Describe the specific population of students the proposed school intends to serve including how the implementation of the academic plan will meet the needs of the proposed target population.
- Provide a description of how the proposed school will provide a needed alternative for the community in which it seeks to locate.
- If you are an existing operator, describe any enrollment practices, processes, and policies that will *differ* from the existing school.
- Complete the enrollment summary and anticipated demographics charts below.

GRADE LEVEL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS					
	YEAR 1 20__	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	AT CAPACITY 20__
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

ANTICIPATED DEMOGRAPHICS	% OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	% OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

1.3 School Development

Provide an overview of the design and development of your proposed school.

- Describe how the concept of your proposed school emerged and detail the process/steps taken to develop your plan from abstract idea to concrete proposal. [Optional: Include the timeframe for each task (i.e., research, drafting, etc.).]
- Detail who participated on the design team and explain the specific roles, responsibilities, and contributions of each design team member.
- If an existing school or organization, provide a summary of how teachers, staff, administrators, parents, and where applicable, students, participated in the development of the school plan.

1.4 Academic Focus and Plan

Academic Focus:

Describe the academic focus of the school. Tennessee law describes an academic focus as “a distinctive, thematic program such as math, science, arts, general academics, or an instructional program such as Montessori or Paideia.” (T.C.A. § 49-13-104).

Academic Plan:

Outline the school’s academic plan, defined by the law as “a platform that supports the academic focus of the charter school and will include instructional goals and methods for the school, which, at a minimum, shall include teaching and classroom instruction methods, materials, and curriculum that will be used to provide students with knowledge, proficiency, and skills needed to reach the goals of the school.” (T.C.A. § 49-13-104). In this section:

- Articulate how the academic focus supports the school’s mission.
- Describe the most important characteristics of the academic plan, including any specific educational philosophy, instructional methods, or other important features of the proposed school.
- Describe research supporting the academic plan and how the plan will drive academic improvement for all students and help close achievement gaps.
- Detail the proposed instructional goals and methods, including specific academic benchmarks.
- List specific requirements for implementing the particular approach used, such as co-teaching or aides, technology needs, physical space, etc.
- Explain why the instructional strategies are well-suited for the targeted student population.
- Explain how the academic plan will meet the needs of students with disabilities, English Language Learners and accelerated or gifted students.
- Explain how the academic plan aligns with Tennessee’s academic standards.
- Describe how the school will implement Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) procedures, including a plan for how data will be collected, progress will be monitored, and instructional decisions made related to student performance.
- If your academic plan includes blended learning, describe which blended learning model the school will use (i.e. online content in various lessons only, a single course, or an entire curriculum), include goals and objectives for each grade level that clearly state what students are expected to know and how you will measure that knowledge, the role of the teachers within the blended learning environment and explain how and why this approach will drive academic gains and close the achievement gap with the targeted population of students, using the latest data analyses and research.

1.5 Academic Performance Standards

- Describe the proposed charter school’s annual and long-term academic achievement goals, in measurable terms.
- Describe the process for setting, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals.
- Describe corrective action plans if school falls below state and/or district academic achievement expectations.
- Explain how students will matriculate through the school (i.e., promotion/retention policies and graduation requirements).
- Provide the school’s exit standards for students. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.

- Describe the school's approach to help remediate students' academic underperformance. Detail the interventions and remediation to be implemented and how they will be chosen. Cite the research/rationale for the chosen methods.

1.6 High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (high schools only)

- Explain how the school will meet Tennessee graduation requirements. Describe how students will earn credits, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed those required by the State, explain the additional requirements.
- Describe how graduation requirements will ensure readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (i.e., technical centers, community colleges, military, or workforce).
- Outline systems or structures the school will use to assist students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting graduation requirements throughout the term of the charter.

1.7 Assessments

Charter school students must take the same State mandated assessments as students in other public schools. Charter schools also administer additional interim assessments. In this section:

- Identify the primary interim assessments the school will use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school's chosen curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.
- Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, sub-groups, and the entire school throughout the school year, at the end of the academic year, and for the term of the charter agreement.
- Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic data, use data to inform and improve instruction, and report that data to the school community. Identify the person/persons or positions that will be responsible for the collection and analysis of assessment data.
- Explain how school will evaluate data to inform instruction and evaluate academic progress for at-risk students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners.
- Describe the process for collecting data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement.
- Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data.

1.8 School Calendar and Schedule

- Provide the annual academic calendar for the school as **Attachment A**.
- Explain how the annual academic calendar reflects the needs of the academic program.
- Describe how the school will use time strategically to support the vision, mission, and education program to drive gains in academic achievement.
- Describe goal for student attendance and explain how the school will ensure high rates of student attendance.
- Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day including start and dismissal times. Explain why this schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.
- Summarize the number of hours/minutes and days allocated for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring, and other academic activities.
- Describe a typical school day for a teacher and a student.
- Describe any proposed extra-curricular or co-curricular activities or any other student focused programming the school will offer; when will they begin, how often will they occur, and how will they be funded?
- If Saturday School or summer school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program, including the number of hours and weeks. Discuss the anticipated participants, including the number of students and the methodology used to identify

them. For identified students, is the program mandatory? What are the anticipated resource and staffing needs for these programs?

1.9 Special Populations and At-Risk Students

Provide a detailed, comprehensive plan on how the school will serve students with special needs including but not limited to those students with federally recognized disabilities; students with Section 504 Plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of dropping out. In this section describe:

Special Education:

- The extent to which one or more of the founding school team (founding board, instructional leader, etc.) has experience working with special populations.
- Methods for identifying students with special needs and avoiding misidentification.
- How the school will handle over-identification of special education needs.
- Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for special needs students.
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students, including coordination with the LEA's monitoring and evaluation.
- Processes and procedures aligned with IDEA law to exit students who demonstrate sufficient progress.
- Plans for promoting graduation for students with special needs (high school only).
- How the daily schedule, staffing plans and support strategies (i.e. service providers, nursing, and educational assistants) will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of the students.

English Learners (EL):

- Methods for identifying EL students (and avoiding misidentification).
- Specific instructional programs, practices and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students.
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of EL students, including exiting students from EL services.
- Means for providing qualified staff for EL students.

At-Risk Students:

- Methods for identifying at-risk students through academic and behavioral processes.
- How the proposed school will meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports that will be provided.

1.10 School Culture and Discipline

School Culture:

- Describe the desired school culture or ethos of the proposed school and how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce the charter school's mission, goals, and objectives.
- Explain how the school's culture will reflect high levels of both academic expectation and support.
- Explain how you will create, implement, and sustain this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for acculturating students who enter mid-year.
- Explain how the school culture will embrace students with special needs, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure.

School Discipline:

Provide the student discipline policy as **Attachment B**. Describe the philosophy for student discipline that supports your proposed school's model. Include:

- Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior.
- A list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively.

- Procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion.
- An explanation of how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings.
- A description of the individuals responsible for carrying out the discipline policies which includes the job description and qualifications (at the administrative level).

1.11 Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment

- Describe the marketing, recruitment, and enrollment practices of the proposed school.
- Describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the school.
- Describe your plan to recruit students in your pre-opening year, including the strategies, activities, events, responsible parties, and benchmarks and timelines that will demonstrate suitable progress over time. Describe student recruitment after the school has opened. How will it differ from pre-opening recruitment?
- Describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the school. Specifically describe any plans for outreach to: families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and other students at risk of academic failure. If your school has a specific area of focus, describe the plan to market that focus.
- Provide as **Attachment C** the school Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:
 - Tentative dates for the application period and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including an explanation of how the school intends to receive and process application forms;
 - Nondiscriminatory admission policies, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-107;
 - Any proposed articulation plans or agreements, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-113;
 - An explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents; and
 - Policies and procedures for student waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.
- What outside groups would you target for marketing and recruitment? Consider pre-schools, civic groups, camps, summer programs, faith-based institutions, etc.

1.12 Community Involvement and Parent Engagement

- Describe how parents and community members have been and will continue to be involved and engaged in the development of the proposed school.
- Describe any programs you will offer to parents and/or the community and how they may benefit students and support the school mission and vision.
- Provide as **Attachment D** the Student Handbook and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families, including any “contracts” with students and parents.
- Describe how parents will be informed and educated on all school policies and any commitments or volunteer opportunities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of, parents.
- Outline how the school will engage parents and community members in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parent involvement.
- Discuss the community resources that the school will cultivate for students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will seek to establish with community organizations, businesses, or other institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, term, and scope of each partnership, including any fee based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning opportunities. Include any documentation of pledged support from prospective partners as an **Attachment E**.
- Include, as **Attachment F**, letters of support, memoranda of understanding, or contracts that indicate the proposed school is welcomed by the community in which the school intends to locate, is viewed as an attractive educational alternative, and reflects a community’s needs and interests.

1.13 Existing Academic Plan (for existing operators)

- Describe the existing academic plan.
- Describe any key academic plan features for the replication school that will *differ* from the operator’s existing schools.

- Explain why you would implement these different features, any new resources they would require, and the rationale for the variation in approach.

1.14 Performance Management (for existing operators)

- Describe any mission-specific educational goals and targets that the organization will have. State goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments you plan to use.
- Explain how the organization will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, each school, and the network as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract.
- Describe the organization’s approach to academic underperformance for schools that fall short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level.
- Describe the organization’s plans to monitor performance of the portfolio as a whole. What actions will you take if the network as a whole fails to meet goals? Discuss how the organization assesses its readiness to grow and under what circumstances the organization will delay or modify its growth plan.

2. OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

2.1 Governance

- Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.
- Describe the composition and size of the governing board. Explain how the proposed governance structure and composition will ensure there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders and will ensure the school will be an educational and operational success.
- Describe how the board will evaluate the success of the school, the school leader, and its own performance.
- Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. How will the board expand and develop over time?
- Is the current board the founding board only or will it transition to a governing board upon approval? How will the transition take place? Provide a specific timeline by which the transition will occur.
- Describe the training or orientation new board members will receive. What kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive?
- How will this board handle complaints? This process should be clear and follow an appropriate route for resolution of concerns raised by students, parents, and/or stakeholders.
- List all current and identified board members and their areas of focus or expertise roles on the table below (adding rows as needed).

FULL NAME	CURRENT JOB AND EMPLOYER	AREA OF FOCUS/EXPERTISE
CHAIR:		
VICE-CHAIR:		

Please include the following governance documents as **Attachment G**:

- G1.** Articles of Incorporation
- G2.** Proof of non-profit and tax exempt status
- G3.** By-laws
- G4.** Code of Ethics
- G5.** Conflict of Interest Policy
- G6.** Board member resumes (including references)
- G7.** Board policies (including policies on open meetings and open records)

2.2 Start-Up Plan

- Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals (including compensation for those individuals).
- Describe what you anticipate will be the challenges of starting a new school and how you expect to address these challenges. This plan should align with the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget in the Budget Workbook.

2.3 Facilities

This section does not require a formal agreement for a facility; however, viable options should be explained. Include in your explanation reasonable space requirements, a plan for space utilization, a discussion of potential costs including build-out, and a timeline for when a facility will be ready for student use. Please list your plan for facilities and include the following:

- Describe the school's facility needs based on the educational program and projected enrollment, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, classroom types, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities. Discuss both short-term and long-term facility plans. Demonstrate that the estimate included in your budget is reasonable.
- Additional classroom needs including: science labs, art room, computer labs, library/media center, performance/dance room, auditorium, main office and satellite offices, work room/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, and other spaces.
- The process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or real estate consultants you are employing to assist in finding a facility.
- A plan for compliance with all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, all applicable city planning review procedures and all health and safety requirements per T.C.A. § 49-13-107.
- Timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility occupation.

2.4 Personnel/Human Capital

- Describe the school's proposed leadership structure, and the school's plan for recruiting and selecting faculty and other staff.
- Give a thorough description of the process for hiring the school leader. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and explain the evaluation model used for the school leader.
- Describe your strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring additional key staff, including, but not limited to, operational staff, administrators, and teachers. Include school's plan for hiring appropriately licensed "highly qualified" staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school design.
- Describe the capacity of school leadership in terms of skills, experience, and available time to identify and respond to the needs of the staff and students. Provide resumes for school leadership and previous student achievement data for the individual responsible for academic programming (if available) as **Attachment H**.
- Outline the proposed salary ranges and employment benefits, as well as any incentive or reward structures that may be a part of the compensation system. Explain the school's proposed strategy for retaining high-performing teachers.
- Explain how teachers will be supported and developed. Describe the policies and procedures for evaluating staff, providing feedback, and celebrating excellence.
- List any positions that will be grant funded. Include the purpose of these positions and how they will be sustained following the grant period.
- Describe how the proposed school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes.
- Define and elaborate on the procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.
- Include a copy of the school's employee manual and/or personnel policies as **Attachment I**.
- Include a copy of the school's organizational chart and highlight the areas of this structure that relate directly to the school's vision and mission as **Attachment J**. The organizational chart should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/educator councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.

Complete the staffing chart below outlining your staffing projections. Adjust or add functions and titles as needed to reflect variations in school models.

POSITION	START-UP	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
PRINCIPAL/SCHOOL LEADER						
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL						
DEAN(S)						
ADDITIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP						
ADDITIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP						
CLASSROOM TEACHERS						
CLASSROOM TEACHERS (NON-CORE – SPECIAL EDUCATION, ELL, FOREIGN LANGUAGE, ETC.)						
STUDENT SUPPORT POSITION (SPECIFY – E.G. SOCIAL WORKER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ETC.)						
STUDENT SUPPORT POSITION						
SPECIALIZED SCHOOL STAFF						
SPECIALIZED SCHOOL STAFF						
TEACHING AIDES OR ASSISTANTS						
SCHOOL OPERATIONS SUPPORT STAFF						

2.5 Professional Development

Describe the proposed school's professional development plan and opportunities and how they relate to the chosen academic focus and plan. In this section:

- Describe the core components of your professional development plan and how those components will support effective implementation of the academic plan.
- Provide a schedule and overview of professional development that will take place prior to the school's opening. Explain the topics that may be included during the induction period and how teachers will be supported in delivering unique or particularly challenging aspects of the chosen curriculum.
- Describe the expected number of days and hours for professional development throughout the school year and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure support this plan. Include time scheduled for collaborative planning and how such time will typically be used.
- Describe professional development plan in the areas of special education and English Language Learners, including implementation of IEP's, discipline of students with disabilities, and communication with ELL families.
- Describe how the school's culture and leadership team will support professional growth.
- Describe the plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.
- Explain how the school's staff will demonstrate a spirit of collaboration to share innovative practices across the entire district.
- If applicable, describe any key professional development features that will differ from the operator's existing schools.

2.6 Insurance

Charter schools must have appropriate insurance coverage. This includes workers compensation, employer liability, insurance for the facility and its contents, professional liability (directors and officers and teachers), and sexual abuse. Applicants should check with their local districts to determine the necessary coverage amounts and if the local entity has additional insurance requirements.

- Include a letter of required coverage from an insurance company stating they will provide the required coverage upon approval of the charter application as **Attachment K**.
Note: if the proposed school intends to have sports teams, additional liability coverage will be required.

2.7 Transportation

If applicable, outline your proposed transportation plan as follows:

- How will you transport the students to and from your school? Include extracurricular activities and Saturday school if applicable. Also include budgetary assumptions and the impact of transportation on the overall budget.
- Describe the plan for oversight of transportation operations (e.g., whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof) and who on the school staff will provide this daily oversight.
- Describe how the school will transport students with special transportation needs and how that will impact your budget.
- Describe how school will ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations related to transportation services.

2.8 Food Service

Describe the school's proposed food service plan and include the following:

- A clear description of how the school will offer food service to the students, including how it will adhere to all nutritional guidelines.
- Include any plans to meet the needs of low-income and academically low-achieving students.
- How the school intends to collect free and reduced price lunch information from qualified families (including those schools that will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision).
- If the school plans to contract for meals, identify the contractor, if known, and describe the services to be provided.
- How the school will ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations.

2.9 Additional Operations

Describe the school's plan for supporting operational needs of the following:

- Technology:
 - Describe how the school will ensure student access to technology required for state mandated assessments, include infrastructure requirements and costs in budget section.
 - Describe how technology will be integrated into the school's academic plan.
- Student information management:
 - Describe how the school will ensure compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and state regulations regarding student privacy and disclosure of student data and records.
- School health and nursing services:
 - Describe your plan for compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program, including the plan to hire a School Nurse and a description of his/her role in the school. Include who at the school will supervise the School Nurse and his/her role in ensuring compliance with health regulations.
- Safety and security:
 - Describe your plan for safety and security for students, staff, guests, and property.
- School maintenance.
 - Discuss the plan for school maintenance, including maintenance staff or plans to contract for maintenance services.
- Any additional operations as applicable.

If you intend to contract with specific educational service providers, such as a charter management organization (CMO), please detail:

- The name of the CMO or other partner organization if known.
- Selection process and criteria.
- Division of roles between the board and the service provider, and how conflicts of interest will be checked.
- How performance of the provider will be measured.
- Conditions for renewal and termination of the agreement.
- Any monetary obligations of the CMO agreement.
- Include a copy of the CMO agreement as **Attachment L** if available.

2.10 Waivers

State laws are available at this site: <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/tncode> and State Board of Education rules are available at <http://share.tn.gov/sos/rules/0520/0520.htm>. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-105, neither the local board of education nor the commissioner may waive regulatory or statutory requirements related to:

- Federal and state civil rights
- Federal, state, and local health and safety regulations
- Federal and State public records
- Immunizations
- Possession of weapons on school grounds
- Background checks and fingerprinting of personnel
- Federal and state special education services
- Student due process
- Parental rights
- Open meetings
- At least the same equivalent time of instruction as required in regular public schools

Include a list of any requested waivers in the chart below. Rows may be added as necessary.

STATE STATUTE	DESCRIPTION OF STATUTE	PROPOSED REPLACEMENT POLICY OR PRACTICE	HOW WILL WAIVER OF THIS STATUTE HELP STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

STATE BOARD RULE	DESCRIPTION OF RULE	PROPOSED REPLACEMENT RULE OR PRACTICE	HOW WILL WAIVER OF THIS RULE HELP STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

2.11 Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity (for existing operators)

- Describe the network’s strategic vision, desired impact, and five-year growth plan for developing new schools in Tennessee. Include the following information: proposed years of opening; number and types of schools; any pending applications; all currently targeted markets/communities and criteria for selecting them; and projected enrollments.
- If the existing portfolio or growth plan includes schools in other states, explain specifically how Tennessee fits into the overall growth plan.

- Provide evidence of organizational capacity to open and operate high quality schools in Tennessee and elsewhere in accordance with the overall growth plan. Outline specific timelines for building or deploying organizational capacity to support the proposed schools.
- Discuss the results of past replication efforts and lessons learned – including particular challenges or troubles encountered and how you have addressed them.
- Discuss the greatest anticipated risks and challenges to achieving the organization’s desired outcomes in Tennessee over the next five years and how the organization will meet these challenges and mitigate risks.
- If you have already identified a charter school facility, indicate the location (including street address and school zone). Describe the facility, including whether it is new construction or part of an existing public or private school building. If a facility has not been identified, indicate any existing possibilities and the process that will be used to find a suitable facility. Include a timeline for facility selection and requisition.
- Provide, as **Attachment M**, the organization’s most recent annual report.

2.12 Network Management (for existing operators)

- Identify the organization’s leadership team and their specific roles and responsibilities.
- Provide, as **Attachment N**, the organization charts for Year 1 network as a whole (including both network management and schools within the network), Year 3 network as a whole and Year 5 network as a whole. The network organization charts should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the schools. If the school intends to contract with a charter management organization clearly show the provider's role in the organizational structure of the school.
- Explain any shared or centralized support services the network organization will provide to schools in Tennessee. Describe the structure, specific services to be provided, the cost of those services, how costs will be allocated among schools, and specific service goals. How will the organization measure successful delivery of these services? (In the case of a governing board proposing to contract with a management organization, service goals should be outlined in the term sheet and draft contract).
- Using the table below, summarize school- and organization-level decision-making responsibilities as they relate to key functions.

FUNCTION	NETWORK DECISION-MAKING	SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING
Performance Goals		
Curriculum		
Professional Development		
Data Management and Interim Assessments		
Promotion Criteria		
Culture		
Budgeting, Finance, and Accounting		

Student Recruitment		
School Staff Recruitment and Hiring		
H/R Services (payroll, benefits, etc.)		
Development/ Fundraising		
Community Relations		
I/T		
Facilities Management		
Vendor Management / Procurement		
Other operational services, if applicable		

2.13 Network Governance (for existing operators)

- As applicable, describe the governance structure at the network level and how that relates to the individual school.

 - Will each school/campus have an independent governing board, or will there be a single network-level board governing multiple schools? If there will be a network-level board, discuss the plan for satisfying the statutory requirement of either: having a parent from one of the network’s Tennessee schools serve on the governing body, or having advisory councils at each school.
 - Describe the size and composition (current and desired) for the board. Explain how the proposed governance structure and composition will help ensure that there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders.
 - Discuss the powers and duties of the governing board(s). Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board(s).
 - Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; and b) the board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader.

- Will the charter be held by the same existing non-profit board or will a new board be formed?

 - If the existing board will also govern the new school, please include a copy of the by-laws and organizational chart, with emphasis on what changes, if any, will need to take place at the board level for it to be effective (i.e. add members, re-distribute roles responsibilities, etc.).
 - If a new board will be formed, describe how and when the board will be created and what the relationship between the two boards will be (including any overlapping responsibilities). Please include biographies of the new board members, roles and responsibilities needed to govern the new school, organizational chart, and governing board structure. If available, include the by-laws of the new governing board. Please indicate if the charter will ultimately be held by the existing non-profit or a different non- profit board. If the latter, explain the transition.

- If the existing board will govern the proposed school(s), discuss the plan to transform the board’s membership, mission, and bylaws to support the charter school expansion/replication plan. Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.
- If a new board will be formed, describe how and when the new board will be created and what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit’s board will be.

2.14 Charter School Management Contracts (if applicable)

- If the proposed school intends to contract with a charter management organization (CMO) or other education service provider (ESP) for school management, provide the following information as **Attachment O**:
 - An explanation of how and why the CMO was selected;
 - A term sheet setting forth the proposed duration of the contract; roles and responsibilities of the school governing board, the school staff, and the service provider; scope of services and resources to be provided by the CMO; performance evaluation measures and mechanisms; detailed explanation of compensation to be paid to the provider; financial controls and oversight; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract;
 - A draft of the proposed management contract;
 - Disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school governing board and proposed service provider or any affiliated business entities; and
 - Documentation of the service provider’s non-profit status and evidence that it is authorized to do business in Tennessee.

2.15 Personnel/Human Capital - Network-wide Staffing Projections (for existing operators) Complete the following table indicating projected staffing needs for the entire network over the next five years. Include full-time staff and contract support that serve the network 50% or more. Change or add functions and titles as needed to reflect organizational plans.

YEAR	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
Number of elementary schools					
Number of middle schools					
Number of high schools					
Total schools					
Student enrollment					
MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION POSITIONS					
[specify]					
Total back-office FTEs					
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF					
Principals					
Assistant Principals					
Add'l School Leadership Position 1 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 2 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 3					

[specify]					
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)					
Classroom Teachers (Specials)					
Student Support Position 1 [e.g., Social Worker]					
Student Support Position 2 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 1 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 2 [specify]					
Teacher Aides and Assistants					
School Operations Support Staff					
Total FTEs at elementary schools					
MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF					
Principals					
Assistant Principals					
Add'l School Leadership Position 1 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 2 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 3 [specify]					
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)					
Classroom Teachers (Specials)					
Student Support Position 1 [e.g., Social Worker]					
Student Support Position 2 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 1 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 2 [specify]					
Teacher Aides and Assistants					
School Operations Support Staff					
Total FTEs at middle schools					
HIGH SCHOOL STAFF					
Principals					
Assistant Principals					
Deans					
Add'l School Leadership Position 1 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 2 [specify]					
Add'l School Leadership Position 3 [specify]					
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)					
Classroom Teachers (Specials)					
Student Support Position 1 [e.g., Social Worker]					
Student Support Position 2 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 1 [specify]					
Specialized School Staff 2 [specify]					
Teacher Aides and Assistants					
School Operations Support Staff					
Total FTEs at high schools					
TOTAL NETWORK FTEs					

2.16 Personnel/Human Capital – Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation (for existing operators)

- Describe the organizational structure of the proposed school.
- Provide the **school** organizational chart as **Attachment J**.
- Delineate the relationship of the school organization to the network organization as a whole.
- Describe the operator's current or planned process for sourcing and training potential school leaders. Explain how you have developed or plan to establish a pipeline of potential leaders for the network as a whole. If known, identify candidates already in the pipeline for future positions.
- Describe your organization's strategy and plans for recruiting and hiring teaching staff, including the plan for hiring highly qualified staff. Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school design.
- Explain how the organization intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.

3. FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The budget worksheet and narrative should be provided as **Attachments P and Q**. They do not count toward the 250 page limit for the application.

3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheet (Attachment P)

The budget and financial plan for the charter school must include all anticipated revenues and expenditures. Public charter schools are required to operate under an annual budget on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year. For purposes of this application, the proposed charter school must submit the Public Charter School Planning and Budget Worksheet which is provided on the department's [website](#).

Provide, as **Attachment P**, a detailed budget for the proposed school. The budget must include:

- A back-office budget
- Any per-pupil management fees
- Financial implications of facilities plans
- Explicitly detail major assumptions including but not limited to:
 - Student enrollment
 - **All** anticipated funding sources¹, including:
 - Local, state, and federal per-pupil funding; eligibility levels; and annual increases
 - Other government resources
 - Private fundraising
 - eRate
 - Student fees
- Compensation, including:
 - Salary table and number of staff by position
 - Yearly pay increases
 - Pension contribution and other benefits
- Line items for each major expense and delineation of assumptions, including:
 - Instructional materials and supplies
 - School equipment and furniture
 - Technology for student and instructional use
 - Professional development
 - Student assessments

¹ Note: Both the budget forms and narrative should specify the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated and include evidence of firm commitments, where applicable.

- Student information system
- Special education services
- Student activities
- Contracted services at school (audit, I/T, PD, etc.)
- Rent and utilities
- Office supplies and equipment
- Technology for administrative use
- Fundraising materials and resources (non-staff)
- School start-up costs
- Management fees and any other management compensation
- Facility scenarios
- Capital, contingency, and insurance reserve funds

3.2 Budget Narrative (Attachment Q)

Present a budget narrative including detailed descriptions of budget assumptions, revenue, and expenditure projections reflecting proposed growth over time. In this section include:

- A plan for compliance with state and federal accounting and reporting requirements.
- How the proposed budget is adequate to ensure your proposed school model can be implemented fully and how it supports your theory of action concerning student achievement.
- An explanation of student enrollment and BEP projections.
- An explanation of all anticipated funding sources, including grants, state, federal, and local per pupil eligibility, other government resources, private fundraising, eRate, student fees, donations, etc.
- An explanation of all anticipated expenditures including salaries and benefits, yearly pay increases, instructional materials and supplies, equipment and furniture, technology for both student and instructional use, professional development, special education services, student activities and field trips, contracted services (ex. CMO, audit, payroll, IT, etc.), rent and utilities, office supplies and equipment, management fees, capital, contingency and insurance reserve funds.
- The systems and processes by which the organization and school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Include any draft policies on financial controls, etc.
- The procedures governing the deposit and investment of idle funds and comprehensive travel regulations.
- Describe how the school will provide an independent annual audit of organizational and school level financial and administrative operations.
- Describe your team's individual and collective qualifications and capacity for implementing the financial plan successfully.
- Discuss the school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected.
- Describe Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.
- Discuss how one or more high needs student with disabilities might affect the budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.
- If there is a plan to outsource any or all financial management areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, fundraising, accounting, etc., include a statement on how you will choose the vendors and how you will oversee their activities to ensure fidelity and compliance.

3.3 Financial Plan (for existing operators required to complete Sections 3.1 and 3.2)

- Describe the fiscal health of other schools in your network. Are any of the schools on fiscal probation or in bankruptcy?
- Explain how the organization will reach its fundraising goals over the next five years. Provide a development plan that includes staffing needs.
- Provide, as **Attachment R**, a detailed budget for the network. You may reference school-level budgets provided in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, as appropriate. Applicants must submit financial forms detailing:
 - A back-office budget

- Any per-pupil management fees
- Financial implications of facilities plans
- All major assumptions including but not limited to:
 - Student enrollment
 - **All** anticipated funding sources², including:
 - Local, state, and federal per-pupil funding; eligibility levels; and annual increases
 - Other government resources
 - Private fundraising
 - eRate
 - Student fees
- Compensation (network/CMO levels), including:
 - Salary table and number of staff by position
 - Yearly pay increases
 - Pension contribution and other benefits
- Line items for each major expense and delineation of assumptions, including:
 - Instructional materials and supplies
 - School equipment and furniture
 - Technology for student and instructional use
 - Professional development
 - Student assessments
 - Student information system
 - Special education services
 - Student activities
 - Contracted services at network/CMO levels (audit, I/T, PD, etc.)
 - Rent and utilities
 - Office supplies and equipment
 - Technology for administrative use
 - Fundraising materials and resources (non-staff)
- Management fees and any other management compensation
- Facility scenarios
- Capital, contingency, and insurance reserve funds

3.4 Financial Plan (for existing operators NOT required to complete Sections 3.1 and 3.2)

- Describe the systems and processes by which the organization will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Specify any administrative services expected to be contracted; and describe the criteria and procedures for the selection of contractors.
- Describe how you will provide an independent annual audit of both **organization-level** and **school-level** financial and administrative operations.
- If applicable, describe the fiscal health of other schools in your network. Are any of the schools on fiscal probation or in bankruptcy?
- Present, as **Attachment S**, a detailed budget narrative describing assumptions and revenue estimates.
 - Include any committed contributions or in-kind donations of goods or services to be received by the charter school that will assist in evaluating the financial viability of the school. You should clearly indicate between those grants or in-kind donations which have already been firmly committed and those you are planning to pursue. For grants or donations that you are planning to pursue provide the source, estimated amount of contribution, and expected date of receipt if known.

² Note: Both the budget forms and narrative should specify the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated and include evidence of firm commitments, where applicable.

- Provide 24-month cash flow projections.
- Detail the contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
- Describe Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.
- Explain how the organization will reach its fundraising goals over the next five years. Provide a development plan that includes staffing needs.
- Provide, as **Attachment T**, a detailed budget for the proposed school, and the network budget as a whole. You may reference school-level budgets provided in the original application, as appropriate. Applicants must submit financial forms detailing:
 - A back-office budget
 - Any per-pupil management fees
 - Financial implications of facilities plans
 - All major assumptions including but not limited to:
 - Student enrollment
 - **All** anticipated funding sources³, including:
 - Local, state, and federal per-pupil funding; eligibility levels; and annual increases
 - Other government resources
 - Private fundraising
 - eRate
 - Student fees
 - Compensation (school and network/CMO levels), including:
 - Salary table and number of staff by position
 - Yearly pay increases
 - Pension contribution and other benefits
 - Line items for each major expense and delineation of assumptions, including:
 - Instructional materials and supplies
 - School equipment and furniture
 - Technology for student and instructional use
 - Professional development
 - Student assessments
 - Student information system
 - Special education services
 - Student activities
 - Contracted services at school and network/CMO levels (audit, I/T, PD, etc.)
 - Rent and utilities
 - Office supplies and equipment
 - Technology for administrative use
 - Fundraising materials and resources (non-staff)
 - School start-up costs
 - Management fees and any other management compensation
 - Facility scenarios
 - Capital, contingency, and insurance reserve funds

³ *Note: Both the budget forms and narrative should specify the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated and include evidence of firm commitments, where applicable.*

SECTION 4: PORTFOLIO REVIEW/PERFORMANCE RECORD (FOR EXISTING OPERATORS)

4.1 Past Performance

For applicants having only one school in their network, please mark not applicable where necessary.

- Is your existing educational program a success?
 - Provide detailed student achievement and growth results for **each school** in the network as **Attachment U**.
 - Have the schools in the network demonstrated success in raising student achievement levels by meeting/exceeding state and national standards for most students?
 - If applicable, provide the graduation rates for each school in the network.
 - Using the Portfolio Summary Template, provide, as **Attachment V**, a detailed summary of all of the schools in the operator's portfolio.
- Select one or more of the consistently high-performing schools that the organization operates, and discuss the school's performance.
 - Be specific about the results on which you base your judgment that the school is high-performing.
 - Discuss the primary causes to which you attribute the school's distinctive performance.
 - Discuss any notable challenges that the school has overcome in achieving its results.
 - Identify any ways in which the school's success has informed or affected how other schools in the network operate. Explain how the effective practice or structure or strategy was identified and how it was implemented elsewhere in the network.
- Select one or more of the organization's schools whose performance is relatively low or not satisfactory and discuss the school's performance.
 - Be specific about the results on which you base your judgment that performance is unsatisfactory.
 - Describe the primary causes to which you attribute the school's problems.
 - Explain the specific strategies that you are employing to improve performance.
 - How will you know when performance is satisfactory? What are your expectations for satisfactory performance in terms of performance levels and timing?
- *For all schools operating under another authorizer*, provide as **Attachment W**, the most recent performance/evaluation/renewal reports produced by the authorizer(s) (or by a third-party evaluator, if applicable).
- *For all schools operating in the state of Tennessee*, provide the following in **Attachment X**: (a) the most recent audited financial statements for each school or school(s); and (b) the most recent internal financial statements, including balance sheets and income statements.
- List any contracts with charter schools that have been terminated by either the organization or the school, including the reason(s) for such termination and whether the termination was for "material breach."
- List any and all charter revocations, non-renewals, shortened or conditional renewals, or withdrawals/non-openings of schools operated by the organization, and explain what caused these actions.
- Explain any performance deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to formal authorizer intervention with any school operated by the organization in the last three years and how such deficiencies or violations were resolved.
- Identify any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, by school, that has involved the organization or any charter schools it operates. If applicable, provide in **Attachment Y**: (1) the demand, (2) any response to the demand, and (3) the results of the arbitration or litigation.

ATTACHMENTS

Please include attachments labeled according to the following schedule:

ATTACHMENT A:	Annual School Academic Calendar
ATTACHMENT B:	Student Discipline Policy
ATTACHMENT C:	Student Enrollment Policy
ATTACHMENT D:	Student Handbook / School Forms
ATTACHMENT E:	Pledged Support from Prospective Partners
ATTACHMENT F:	Letters of Support / MOUs / Contracts
ATTACHMENT G:	Board Governance Documents G1. Articles of Incorporation G2. Proof of non-profit and tax exempt status G3. By-laws G4. Code of Ethics G5. Conflict of Interest Policy G6. Board member resumes G7. Board policies, including policies on open meetings and open records
ATTACHMENT H:	School Leader Resumes / Student Achievement Data (if applicable)
ATTACHMENT I:	Employee Manual / Personnel Policies
ATTACHMENT J:	School Organizational Chart
ATTACHMENT K:	Insurance Coverage
ATTACHMENT L:	CMO Agreement
ATTACHMENT M:	Organization/Network Annual Reports or Audits (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT N:	Network Organizational Chart (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT O:	CMO Documents, if applicable
ATTACHMENT P:	Planning and Budget Worksheet (for new starts)
ATTACHMENT Q:	Budget Narrative (for new starts)
ATTACHMENT R:	Network Budget (for existing operators completing 3.1 and 3.2)
ATTACHMENT S:	Budget Narrative (for existing operators not completing 3.1 and 3.2)
ATTACHMENT T:	School/Network Budget (for existing operators not completing 3.1 and 3.2)
ATTACHMENT U:	Student Achievement/Growth Results (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT V:	Portfolio Summary Template (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT W:	School Reports/LEA Evaluations (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT X:	School Financials (for existing operators)
ATTACHMENT Y:	Litigation Documents, if applicable (for existing operators)

CHECKLIST
For New Start Applicants with No Existing Schools

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Information and Assurances | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.1 Budget Worksheet (<u>this is Attachment P</u>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.1 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.2 Budget Narrative (<u>this is Attachment Q</u>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment B |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment D |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment E |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment F |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.8 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment G |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.9 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment H |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment I |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment J |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment K |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment L |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment P |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment Q |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.4 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.6 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.7 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.8 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.9 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.10 | |

CHECKLIST
For Existing Tennessee Operator Proposing New Focus/Grade Structure OR
Existing Non-Tennessee Operator

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Information and Assurances | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.11 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.12 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.13 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.14 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.15 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.16 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.6 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.1 Budget Worksheet (<u>this is Attachment P</u>) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.7 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.2 Budget Narrative (<u>this is Attachment Q</u>) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.3 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment A | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment P |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment B | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment Q |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment C | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment R |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.13 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment D | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment S |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.14 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment E | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment T |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment F | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment G | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment V |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment H | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment W |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment I | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment Y |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment J | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment K | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment L | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.8 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment M | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.9 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment N | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment O | |

CHECKLIST
For Existing Tennessee Operator Proposing Exact Structure/Grade Focus

- Original Application
- General Information and Assurances
- 1.2
- 1.13
- 1.14
- 2.11
- 2.12
- 2.13
- 2.14
- 2.15
- 2.16
- 3.4
- 4.1
- Attachment J
- Attachment N
- Attachment O (if applicable)
- Attachment S
- Attachment T
- Attachment U
- Attachment V
- Attachment W
- Attachment X
- Attachment Y



**TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION EVALUATION
RATINGS AND SAMPLE SCORING CRITERIA**

Ratings and Criteria

State law requires the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format,” T.C.A. 49-13-116, and “sample scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application specified in the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002,” SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.01(2).

Evaluators will use the following criteria to rate applications. Within each section, specific criteria define the expectations for a well thought out response that “Meets the Standard.” Evaluators will rate the responses by applying the following guidance:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and goals of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some aspects, but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; is unsuited to the mission and vision of the district or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s ability to carry it out

An application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how this school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant’s capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to that section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application.

Recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Applications that do not meet or exceed standard in every area will be deemed not ready for approval. Tennessee law states, “The approval by the chartering authority of a public charter school application shall be in the form of a written agreement signed by the sponsor and the chartering authority, which shall be binding upon the governing body of the public charter school. The charter agreement . . . shall be in writing and contain all components of the application.” T.C.A. § 49-13-110(a). Thus, an initial or amended charter application, to be approved, must be ready to be incorporated into a charter agreement.

INSTRUCTIONS TO REVIEWERS

Reviewers should use objective language and complete sentences in their comments on the strengths and weaknesses of each section of the application. Please also remember that all documents, including your individual review, may at some time be available to the public. Additional pages should be used as necessary. For example,

Strengths of the academic plan

“The plan aligns with the overall mission and vision because . . .”

“The chosen curriculum is research based and proven effective with the targeted population of students because . . .”

Weaknesses of the academic plan

“The curriculum and daily schedule do not align with the mission and vision because . . .”

“The discipline plan does not include provisions for students with disabilities.”

Strengths of the operations plan

“The governing body is diverse and will be able to support the school effectively.”

“The plan to recruit school leaders and teachers is robust and aligns with the mission of the school.”

Weaknesses of the operations plan

“The governing board is composed of only two people who do not have sufficient credentials to support school leadership.”

“The staffing projections do not align with the number of students or the stated mission of the school.”

Strengths of the financial plan

“The financial plan is sound and the assumptions are consistent with the mission and vision of the proposed school.”

“The budget assumptions include contingencies for high-dollar special needs students and funds are allocated in the budget document for such contingencies.”

Weaknesses of the financial plan

“The budget assumptions include a line of credit from XYZ bank, but there is no proof such an agreement exists, and no plan to repay the line of credit when it is accessed.”

“The proposed school assumes two buses in the first year, but there is no accompanying line item in the budget that allocates funds for purchasing buses nor is there any indication of salary and training for bus drivers.”

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

SCHOOL MISSION AND GOALS		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The mission statement defines the purpose of the proposed charter school. ▪ The mission statement is clear, concise, compelling and measurable. ▪ The vision provides a coherent description of what the school will look like when it is achieving its mission. ▪ Goals are aligned to both the mission and vision and critical to the school’s success. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A clear, comprehensive explanation of how the design of the school was developed. ▪ A summary of key design team participants, including specific roles and responsibilities. ▪ If an existing organization, a clear summary of how teachers, staff, administrators, parents, community stakeholders and students participated in the design of the school. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

ACADEMIC FOCUS AND PLAN		
<p>Characteristics of a strong response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A clear and comprehensive explanation of the school’s academic focus that is aligned with the school’s mission and vision. ▪ A framework for a rigorous research based academic plan that reflects the needs of the targeted student population and is aligned with the school’s stated mission and vision. ▪ A robust and quality curriculum overview, supported by research, with a plan for implementation that includes all grades the school will eventually include. ▪ Evidence the curriculum design is aligned with the Tennessee State Standards. ▪ Evidence the proposed academic plan will be appropriate and effective for growing all students while at the same time closing achievement gaps. ▪ Instructional program offers a continuum of services to students with disabilities English language learners and accelerated or gifted students. ▪ A description of effective methods for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, including a strong plan for Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) that aligns with Tennessee guidelines. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic achievement goals are rigorous, measurable and realistic and set high standards and high expectations for student learning. ▪ Academic goals contribute to the stated mission and vision of the school. ▪ Clear and compelling process for setting, monitoring and / or revising academic achievement goals. ▪ Evidence of clear, rigorous promotion/retention and exit policies and standards. ▪ Appropriate, well-defined corrective action plan if school falls below state and/or district academic achievement expectations. ▪ A clear description of the school’s approach to help remediate students’ academic underperformance based on assessment and other data, and evidence the chosen approach will result in improved academic achievement. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION STANDARDS – IF APPLICABLE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan for meeting the Tennessee Graduation Requirements (including credits, transcripts, electives, GPA calculation) and compelling explanation of any additional requirements beyond the State’s requirements. ▪ Clear, persuasive explanation of how the school’s graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities, including trade school, military service, or entering the workforce). ▪ Effective systems and structures for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

ASSESSMENTS		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment selection will provide sufficiently rich data for evaluation of the academic program and align with state standards. ▪ Assessment plan details the collection and analysis of individual students, student cohorts, and school level performance throughout the school year, at the end of the academic year and for the term of the charter. ▪ A process for using data to support instruction is clearly articulated, with detailed plans presented to provide adequate training for teachers and school leaders. ▪ An explanation of how the organization will use data to inform instruction and evaluate academic progress for at-risk students, students with disabilities and English Language Learners. ▪ Demonstrates an understating of the obligation under state law to participate in the statewide system of assessments and accountability. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

SCHOOL CALENDAR		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School calendar and student schedules meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction. ▪ Calendar and schedule support implementation of the academic plan and align with stated mission and vision. ▪ Attendance goals are clearly outlined. ▪ Description of a typical day for teachers and students align with key priorities of the academic plan and the overall mission and vision for the school. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND AT-RISK STUDENTS		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An identified founding school team member with experience working with special populations. ▪ Clear process for identifying students with disabilities, English Language Learners and at-risk students. ▪ Clear description of RTI² procedures, including a plan for how data will be collected, progress will be monitored, and instructional decisions made related to student performance ▪ A viable plan to provide students with special needs with instructional programs, practices and strategies that ensure access to the general education curriculum and academic success. ▪ Requirements and processes for monitoring services to students in need and plans to exit students that attain sufficient progress. ▪ An understanding of, and capacity to fulfill, State and federal obligations and requirements pertaining to students with disabilities and English Language Learners. ▪ A realistic plan for hiring licensed and highly qualified personnel including service providers, nursing and educational assistants. ▪ Evidence of adequate resources and staff to meet the needs of all students, including professional development for teachers. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A clear vision for school culture or ethos that will promote a positive academic environment and will reflect high levels of academic expectation and support. ▪ Coherent plan for creating and sustaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents from the school's inception, and for integrating new students and families as they arrive. ▪ Plan for how school culture will embrace students with special needs. ▪ Student discipline policy that provides for effective strategies to support a safe, orderly school climate and strong school culture while respecting student rights. ▪ Evidence of legally sound discipline policies that outline discipline procedures, suspension and expulsion procedures and appeals processes. ▪ Thoughtful consideration of how the discipline policies protect the rights of students with disabilities. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

MARKETING, RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articulated student recruitment and marketing plan, timeline, and enrollment policy that will provide equal access to all interested students and families, including those in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners. ▪ Enrollment policy that complies with state law and district policies. ▪ Compelling student outreach plan that includes community, family, and student involvement, and that is realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 1 ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

Characteristics of a strong response:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective strategies for informing parents and the community about the school's development both pre- and post-authorization. ▪ Effective plan for recruiting students prior to the school's opening. ▪ Student handbook required as Attachment 3 is comprehensive and provides all necessary information. ▪ Clear plan for informing and educating parents on school policies. ▪ A sound and compelling plan for engaging parents and community partners in the design and life of the school. ▪ Description of existing community resources and partnerships already formed that will benefit students and parents and that include a description of the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships; and evidence of commitment from identified community partners. 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

GOVERNANCE		
<p>Characteristics of a strong response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a governing board including structure, size, powers, duties and expertise that aligns with the school's mission and vision. ▪ Proposed structure is likely to ensure effective governance and meaningful oversight of school performance, operations and financials. ▪ Evidence the proposed board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school, including but not limited to educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise. ▪ Plans for meaningful board training as required by law. ▪ If applicable, a timely plan for creating or transitioning from a founding board to a school governing board. ▪ Clear, compelling plans to ensure parents have access to the governing board, including a process for complaints that is fair, transparent and a plan for communicating the process. ▪ Sound plan and timeline for board recruitment, expansion and orientation of new members. ▪ Governance documents required as Attachments 7a-7h are complete and align with state laws and district policies. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

START-UP PLAN		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compelling plan for leading the development of the school from post-approval to opening, including identification of a capable individual or team to lead the planning and start-up, as well as a viable plan for compensating this individual or team during the planning year. ▪ Adequately addresses potential challenges. ▪ Detailed start-up plan specifying tasks and timelines which are aligned with a sound start-up budget. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

FACILITIES		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facility plans are reasonable and adequately meet the requirements of the educational program and anticipated student population. ▪ A sound plan and timeline for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

PERSONNEL/ HUMAN CAPITAL		
<p>Characteristics of a strong response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chosen leaders have necessary qualifications, competencies and capacity for their assigned roles. NOTE: If school leader has not been chosen, a clear description of qualifications, expectations, responsibilities and timeline for hiring is included. ▪ Identifies strategies for supporting school leadership. ▪ Recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures are likely to result in a strong staff and meet ESEA requirements for being “highly qualified” and are well suited to the school. ▪ Compensation packages are likely to attract and retain strong staff are clearly defined. ▪ Provides a strong plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that aligns statewide evaluation requirements. ▪ Effective planning for unsatisfactory leadership/teacher performance and turnover. ▪ Employee manual required as Attachment 9 is complete and effective. ▪ The organizational charts provided as Attachment 10 clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the Board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/educator councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. ▪ Staffing projections for each year are robust and aligned with the educational program and conducive to the school’s success. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement. ▪ Thoughtful plan for professional development in the areas of special education and English Language Learners, including implementation of IEP's, discipline of students with disabilities and communication with ELL families. ▪ Professional development plan supports professional growth, generates collaboration and cultivates future leadership. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

INSURANCE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan to secure comprehensive and adequate insurance coverage, including worker’s compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, sexual abuse and any other required coverage. ▪ If applicable, additional liability for such activities as sports teams. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

TRANSPORTATION – IF APPLICABLE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear description of transportation plan that includes anticipated routes, extracurricular activities, and Saturday school where applicable. ▪ A comprehensive oversight plan that identifies school staff responsible for this oversight. ▪ Description of how the school will arrange transportation for special needs students where necessary. ▪ Demonstrated familiarity with state and federal regulations relating to provision of transportation services to students. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

FOOD SERVICE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A clear description of how the school will offer food service to all students, adhering to all nutritional guidelines. ▪ A plan to collect free and reduced price lunch information, including procedures to receive reimbursement ▪ A plan to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONS – IF APPLICABLE		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed plans for use of technology within the classroom and for state assessments ▪ Provides compelling data management plan that includes communication strategies for parents. ▪ Demonstrates understanding of health and safety requirements that includes a plan for hiring a registered nurse for creating individual health plans as required by law. ▪ Detailed safety and security plans for students, staff, guests, and property. ▪ Provides detailed maintenance plan for school facilities. ▪ Rationale and process for selecting CMO and explanation of why the CMO is a strong choice and good fit for the proposed school and community. ▪ Provides clear division of roles between the board and the service provider. ▪ The service arrangement is free of conflicts of interest and there is a viable plan for identifying and managing potential conflicts. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 2 – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

WAIVERS		
Characteristics of a strong response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed description of waivers requested that includes compelling and thoughtful rationale describing how the waivers will impact student achievement. ▪ A demonstrated understanding of the rules and statutes that cannot be waived under Tennessee law. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		

SECTION 3 – FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

CHARTER SCHOOL FINANCING		
<p>Characteristics of a strong response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget assumptions and reasonable budget numbers that reflect rent, utilities, maintenance, insurance and build-out costs. • Detailed budget assumptions that include the impact of the anticipated number of students who receive free or reduced price lunches. • Detailed financial procedures, policy, or other reasonable assurance that the proposed school will have sound systems and processes in place for accounting, payroll, and independent annual school-level and network-level (where applicable) financial and administrative audits. • Sound criteria and procedures in place for selecting contractors for any administrative services. • Complete, realistic, and viable start-up and five year operating budgets. • Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, identification of the amounts and sources of all anticipated funds, property, or other resources (noting which are secured vs. anticipated, and including evidence of firm commitments where applicable). • Sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are lower than estimated. • Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the financial plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, and accounting. 		
Application Review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets or Exceeds Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Standard
Strengths		Page
Concerns/ Questions		Page
Interview (if applicable)		
Strengths		
Concerns/Questions		



Department of
Education

Charter Schools

Charter School Renewal Application

2015-16

Commissioner, Dr. Candice McQueen

APPLICATION FOR TENNESSEE CHARTER RENEWAL 2015-16

Tennessee charter school renewal applications must provide an overview of students' academic performance (including applicable standardized test scores) and an overview of the school's operations and finances. The renewal application does not need to include copies of previously submitted performance reports and financial audits or reports, but those prior statements and reports may be referred to in the renewal application and considered by the authorizer as part of the review process.

OVERVIEW OF GUIDELINES FOR RENEWAL APPLICATION

Section I – Executive Summary (1 page maximum)

Provide a concise overview of the charter school's past performance and future goals. Explain why the students' academic performance, the school's financial and operational condition, and the school's community impact merit renewal of the charter.

Section II – Academic Performance (5 pages maximum)

Describe the academic achievement of the charter school's students over the course of the current charter term. Address progress toward decreasing achievement gaps. Share how leader and teacher professional development has affected student achievement. Discuss areas of student achievement that are of the most concern, and plans to address those deficiencies.

Section III – Operations and Governance (2 pages maximum)

Describe the development of the board members and school leadership during the current charter term. If applicable, reflect on the transition from a founding board to a working board. Explain how any changes in board membership during the current term align with the school's mission.

Section IV – Budget and Finance (3 pages maximum)

Report on the fiscal management of the school during the current charter term, based on the previously submitted audits and financial reports. Address the alignment between expenditures and the school's mission and plans for student academic growth and staff professional development. Review how any significant fiscal challenges were addressed during the current charter term, and describe the challenges that may arise during the next charter term (if renewed).

Section V – Parent and Community Involvement (1 page maximum)

Share how the school involved parents and community members in the school's mission. Articulate how parent and community members were recruited, how their involvement and satisfaction is measured, and how challenges to parent and community involvement were addressed.

Appendices (15 pages maximum)

Renewal applicants may append documents supporting the renewal application. It is not necessary to provide additional documents, however, and applicants may choose what to submit.

Evaluation of Renewal Applications

Renewal applications should allow chartering authorities to answer the following questions:

- Is the school an academic success?
- Has the school met its non-academic goals and been faithful to its mission and charter design?
- Has the school been effectively governed?
- Is the school fiscally sound?
- Are parents and students satisfied?
- Has the school satisfactorily met its legal requirements?
- If the school's charter is renewed, are its plans for the next charter term likely to be achieved?

RENEWAL APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Renewal applicants are urged to contact the chartering authority during the ninth year of operation to verify the deadline for submission, whether any hard copies are required and any other local submission requirements or guidelines.

Page Order

Page 1 - School specific cover sheet
Page 2 - Charter Renewal – Applicant Information Sheet
Page 3 - Assurances
Application narrative (12 pages maximum)
Appendices (optional; 15 pages maximum)

Format

1. The renewal application, including the information sheet, narrative, any appendices and the assurances pages, may be no more than 30 pages.
2. All pages in the application should be sequentially numbered (e.g. 1 of 18).
3. Any appendices should be clearly labeled and referenced in the narrative of the application.

Filing Instructions

Please check with the chartering authority to find out how to submit electronic copies of the renewal application and any hard copies that may be required.

The governing body must submit one electronic copy to the department. Email or submission via online file transfer service (e.g., box.net) is preferred. But electronic copies may also be submitted via CD, USB drive, etc. Please use the contact information below:

Director of Charter Schools
charter.schools@tn.gov
Tennessee Department of Education
9th Floor – Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0379
Phone: 615-532-6274
Fax #: 615-532-4791

Timeline

No later than April 1 of the year prior to the year in which the charter expires, the governing body must submit a renewal application to the authorizer. The authorizer must rule by resolution by the following February 1 whether to approve or deny the renewal application. Decisions not to renew charters may be appealed to the State Board of Education. Any appeal must be filed within 10 days of the chartering authority's denial. The state board must rule on any appeals within 60 days of receipt of the appeal.

Materials must be received by the close of business on the date specified. Tennessee law provides that when the deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or State observed holiday, the letter of intent and application materials are due to the State on the next business day.

[Insert a school-specific cover page before the information sheet.]

CHARTER RENEWAL – APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

YEAR CURRENT CHARTER EXPIRES: _____

DISTRICT FOR CHARTER SCHOOL: _____

NAME OF CHARTER SCHOOL:

NAME OF SPONSOR/SPONSORING AGENCY (if different from governing body)

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

MAILING ADDRESS:

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment for next charter term:

FIRST YEAR OF NEW CHARTER TERM:		
	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
Year One		
Year Two		
Year Three		
Year Four		
Year Five		
Year Six		
Year Seven		
Year Eight		
Year Nine		
Year Ten		

Signature of Primary Contact Person _____ **Date** _____

Assurances

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for [name of school] is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and if awarded a charter, the school:

1. will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the chartering authority and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Charter School Act;
2. will follow all federal, state and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to T.C.A. § 49-13-105;
3. will provide special education services for students as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;
5. will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. will comply with all provisions of the Charter Schools Act, including, but not limited to
 - a. employing individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
 - b. complying with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 et seq.; 10-7-503, 504) (guidance is available from the [Office of Open Records Counsel](#));
 - c. not charging tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and T.C.A. § 49-6-3003;
 - d. following state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111, 120 and 127;
 - e. requiring any member of the governing body, employee, officer or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by T.C.A. § 8-19-101; and
7. will, at all times, maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

Signature

Name of Authorized Signer

Title of Authorized Signer

Renewal Application Narrative (maximum 12 pages)

Appendices (optional - maximum 15 pages)

MNPS Office of Charter Schools



2015 Annual Report



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Welcome

A MESSAGE FROM ALAN COVERSTONE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MNPS CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

Thank you for taking the time to share in the outstanding work underway in our MNPS charter schools.



When I started the charter schools office, I knew that defining quality in common terms that could be readily accepted would be essential to building a portfolio of schools with strong outcomes. I worked collaboratively with our Research, Assessment, and Evaluation office, community stakeholders, and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers to develop a common set of measures known as our Academic Performance Framework (APF). The APF balances growth and achievement measures, gap reduction, college readiness, and school culture measures to produce a single index score, and offers a consistent measure of school quality that has enabled us to make school quality our overarching concern. The APF is an incredible tool that we now use across the district.

Since the office began in 2009, the number of MNPS charter schools has grown from 5 to 30, with most of those schools performing at the highest levels. Leaning on outcome data and closely tying meaningful accountability to that data is responsible for this result.

Our commitment to collaboration has helped to link lessons learned in our charter sector directly to reforms that the MNPS has taken to scale and implemented with great success. Our commitment to quality has led to a highly selective approval rate that has allowed opportunity and quality to expand together. Our commitment to accountability has led to school improvement and new efforts to turnaround our lowest performers for the benefit of thousands of students and their communities.

While we are proud of our work as authorizers, we must acknowledge that it is the commitment of families, the dedication of students, the engagement of teachers, and the relentless pursuit of excellence by leaders and their boards that really produce the outcomes we celebrate in this year's annual report. Let's all take a minute to step away from legitimate disagreements and recognize the people who are really responsible for the progress we are making whether in MNPS managed schools or MNPS charters. Together, we are creating a future for Nashville's children and families of which we can all be proud.

I can't wait to see where the years ahead will lead!

CHARTER SCHOOL KEY FACTS

26 MNPS campuses	54% African-American
2 ASD campuses	28% Hispanic/Latino
8,392 students	17% Caucasian
8 Excelling schools	14% English Learners
1 Achieving school	10% Exceptional Education
5 Satisfactory schools	
1 Review school	
1 Target school	
10 Uncategorized	



Our Vision

We envision a city where all children and communities are empowered through exemplary public schools.

Our Mission

The Charter Schools Office exists to authorize excellent schools that change lives.

We Believe

All students can learn and when they are not, it is the adult systems and practices that need to change.

All students bring unique cultural backgrounds, learning styles, abilities, interests, and social and health needs that benefit the learning environment.



What is a Quality Authorizer?

A quality authorizer:

- Holds schools accountable, closes low-performers, and encourages expansion of high-performers
- Defends the public trust using processes that are transparent and fair
- Promotes innovation by protecting school autonomy
- Communicates effectively

Excellent schools that change lives:

- Promote excellence in leadership, teaching, and engagement of students, families, and communities
- Create intentional systems and processes to support institutional stability and sustainability
- Build joyful and engaging cultures
- Cultivate diverse learning environments for the purpose of educating and preparing students for constructive citizenship
- Empower students and communities to access outstanding opportunities

What do
excellent
schools
look like?



Our Commitments



The MNPS Office of Charter Schools was founded in July of 2009 for the purpose of establishing a quality-based school vetting and approval process and oversight of approved charter schools. The Office became a member of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) in 2010, adopting the NACSA Principles & Standards for Quality Authorizing as the foundation for its work.

The first strategic plan for the Office followed a NACSA Quality Authorizer Review and led to the participation of the Office in a CSP National Activities Grant that NACSA received to support the study and development of exemplary policies and procedures relating to performance management, replication, and closure. Today those policies and procedures shape one of the strongest charter school sectors anywhere and help ensure that every charter school in Nashville delivers on its promise to be an excellent school that changes lives

When the Office of Charter Schools began, MNPS was authorizer of 3 existing and 2 soon-to-open schools. In the fall of 2015, MNPS will be the authorizer of 26 operating schools. In the ensuing years, the Office of Charter Schools has closed 4 schools, and the academic, operational, and financial performance of the schools in the portfolio is strong.

Quality is job one.



Tackling BIG Goals Together

In Nashville, charter schools are just one part of the mix of great schools offered by MNPS. Adding options for families is one of the purposes of charter schools, and the Office of Charter Schools strives to ensure that those options open real doors of opportunity for the students who choose them. Our strategic ambitions are to serve the students, the district, and the community of Nashville collaboratively, expanding opportunities through cooperation and mutual support.

We are committed to positively impact 26,000 students by raising the number of students enrolled in high-performing schools and reducing the number enrolled in low-performing schools by 2020.

Nashville was one of nine inaugural cities to adopt a District-Charter Collaboration Compact in 2009. Regular collaboration meetings between District and Charter leaders have continued since that time with Dr. Register's Public Schools Collaborative representing the 2014-15 version of these important events.

The Public Schools Collaborative began to lay the foundations for deeper understanding within a politically charged environment and participants began to lay the foundation for tackling some of the most challenging issues surrounding fiscal impact, school marketing, and access to capital.



Nashville's Compact represents the joint commitment of District and Charter leaders to build a system of high performing public schools throughout the county, pledging:

- To rely on, cultivate, develop, and support highly effective school leaders and teaching professionals
- To disseminate and implement at scale schools that are student-centered, pursuing innovation and actively sharing demonstrated best practices
- To empower parents by offering meaningful choices for students and developing creative ways to engage families in the design and success of their school.
- To collaborate as partners in the city-wide effort to provide an excellent education for all students and, as partners, work to share best practices between classrooms, schools, and leaders

Doing Our Part

The Charter Schools Office pursues a four-part strategy to ensure that we do our part in achieving our ambitious goals for Nashville.

1. Protect the quality of our existing schools

Nashville's charter schools are among the highest-performing schools in Nashville, and our commitment to quality in opening new schools, replicating successful schools, and closing poor-performing schools play a central role in their success. In addition, our performance-management system for charter schools helps them all to progress from good to great by monitoring and reporting on their operational, financial, and academic performance annually.

2. Increase demand for enrollment in high-performing schools

Raising expectations and increasing opportunities for students are contagious. While we are committed to increasing the number of available high-performing seats in our charter schools, we are eager to support increases in the number of high-performing seats in schools of all types. We cannot charter our way to the



ambitious goals we have set, and while we want to do our part, we know that rapidly improving non-charter schools must also play a role. Fostering greater cooperation, mutual support, and practical sharing between charters and non- charters will help us serve the children of Nashville together and more rapidly increase the availability of high-performing seats to benefit students regardless of school type.

3. Ensure equity of access to high-performing schools

Charter schools are contributors to the goals of the district, and that means serving all children equitably with excellent instruction in diverse and personalized settings. We will continue to work hard to ensure that charter schools are diverse and invigorating learning environments where all children are welcome, regardless of their race, income, language, or special need.



4. Deepen collaboration and sharing of best practices

We are all in this work together, and the time we spend on duplicative or destructive competition is time we lose in our primary mission to serve students well. Mutual respect, understanding, and sharing make us all better, and the core mission of the Charter Schools Office at MNPS has always been and will continue to be a shared mission built on collaboration and trust. Promoting discussion and dialogue, bringing people together, and sharing best practices will always play a central role in our work. We simply cannot succeed for students without it.



Our Contributions

In 2011, the Office of Charter Schools merged with the newly created Office of Innovation to link charter schools and charter-like flexibilities in operation with the Turnaround efforts that the district was undertaking at that time. The Office of Innovation produced several key initiatives that now constitute standard operating procedures across the district.

Initiatives that began in the Office of Charter Schools include:

- The Academic Performance Framework (APF) applied to all MNPS schools on an equal basis
- Student-based budgeting is now the basis for resource allocation district-wide
- The state's first conversion of a low-performing district school to charter school management
- The use of special Innovation Zones (iZones) in turning around low-performing schools

In 2015, the decision was made to again separate the departments responsible for these functions, and the current Office of Charter Schools was born.

We are in the process of compiling exemplary practices that we find in common across our highest performing schools for the purpose of discovering what works well and sharing that information with other schools without regard to type.



So far this work has identified 5 common features that exemplary MNPS schools share in common:

1. An advisory or mentoring system that focuses on social-emotional learning and is owned by all the adults in the building.
2. Family communication, community engagement, and school outreach flow directly through the front desk personnel giving the school more than a simple welcoming environment.
3. A clear and consistent vision of instructional excellence is shared and understood broadly across the faculty.
4. A professional culture of feedback and clear communication among a faculty heavily invested in a growth mindset.
5. Developing teacher leadership that capitalizes on professional community and support development and growth among instructional professionals year after year.

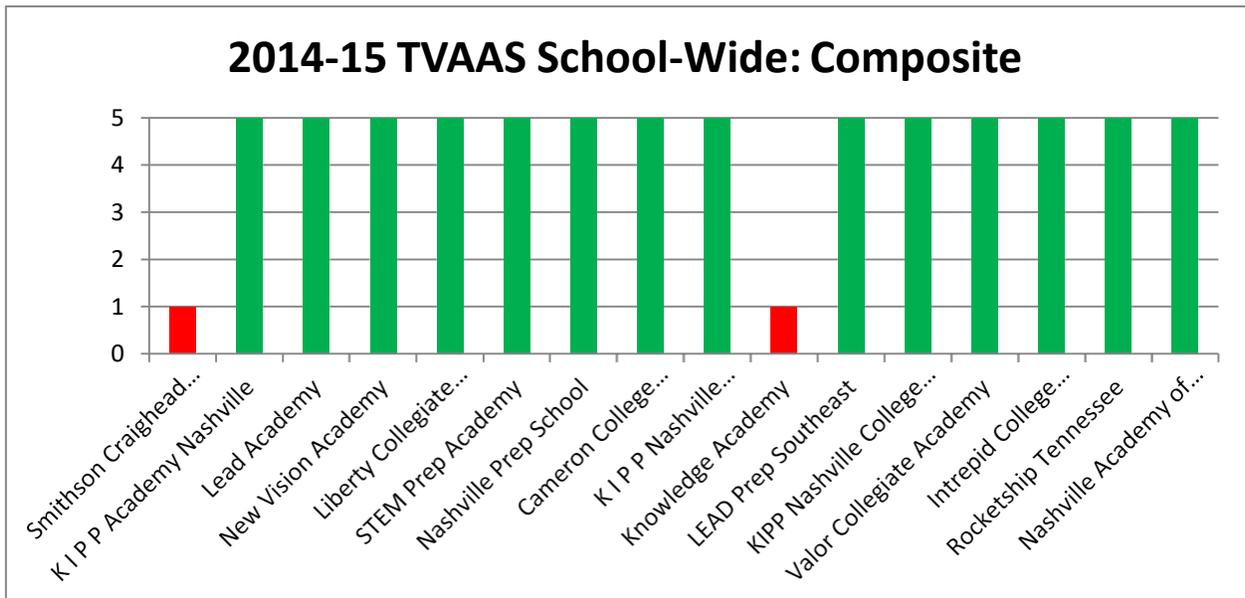
Each of these practices is supported and advanced under the strong leadership of an exemplary school leader. As a talent-seeking strategy, Nashville's charter schools have served to draw many outstanding leaders and empower and develop others over the course of the past 6 years. We are working to continue encouraging these leaders and leaders in MNPS' non-charter schools to find opportunities to interact positively. On those occasions when district and charter school leaders have gotten together to share practices, their efforts have been rewarded, and the work of the Charter Schools Office includes encouraging and facilitating this ongoing dialogue.



Our Achievements

Strong student growth

The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) measures individual student growth against projected student growth in order to determine whether students make average progress over a school year (3), above average progress (4 or 5), or below average progress (1 or 2). Taken together, these assessments of student growth are used to build a school-wide measure of the school's overall effect for students each year.

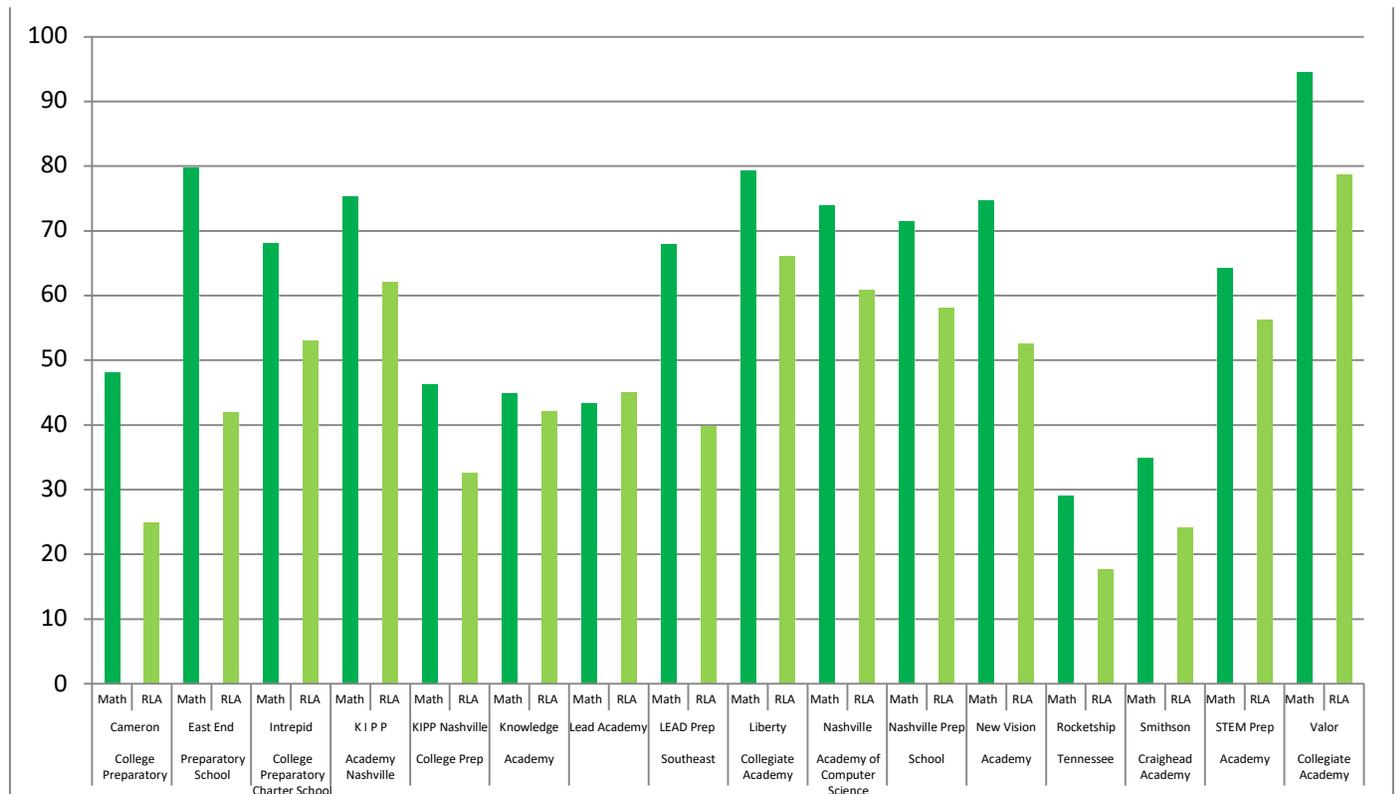


In 2014-15, Nashville's Charter Schools demonstrated strong measures of student growth almost across the board. Only 2 of the district's charter schools failed to achieve school-wide composite measures lower than 5.



Strong Student Achievement

Student performance on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) was high across the charter school sector. The state of Tennessee identified six charter schools as Reward Schools for student growth within the top 5% statewide. Liberty Collegiate Academy was identified as a Reward School for BOTH growth and achievement. Newcomer, Valor Collegiate Academy, posted the highest achievement scores in both reading and math but will have to be in operation two years before becoming eligible for Reward School recognition.



Strong Student Achievement

Academic Performance Framework

All MNPS Schools are rated annually on a balanced index of multiple measures (achievement, growth, college readiness, gap closure, school culture). The results are reported on a 5-category scale (Excelling, Achieving, Satisfactory, Review, Target) called the Academic Performance Framework (APF).

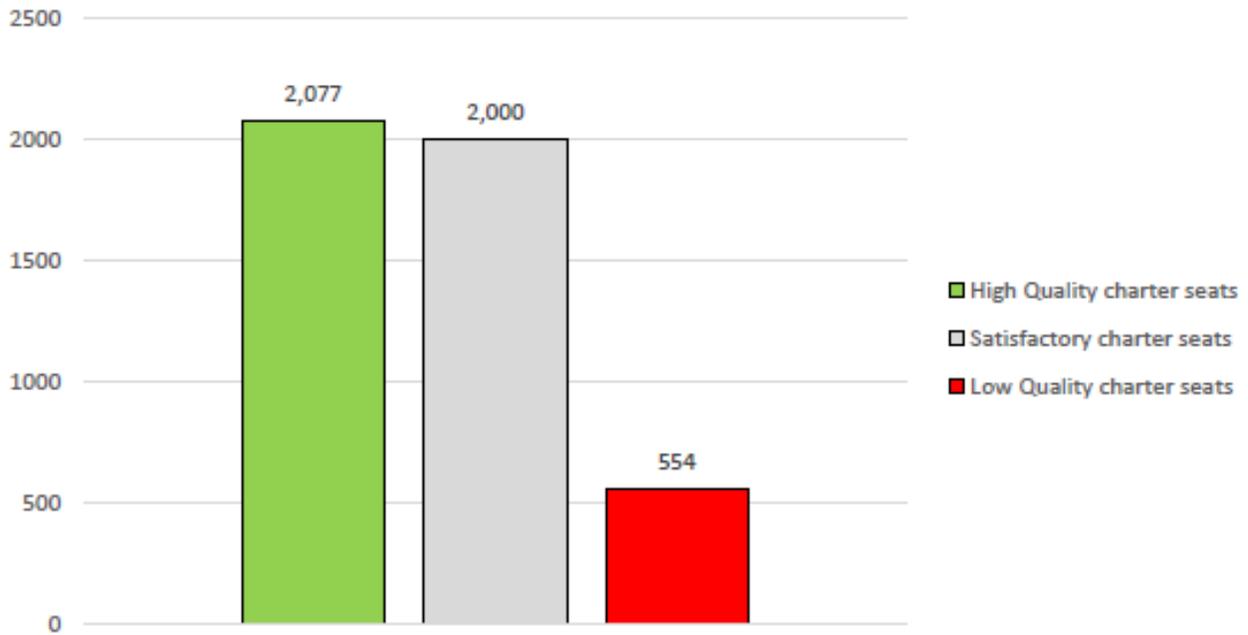
In 2014-15, eight MNPS charter Schools earned a one-year status of Excelling, and six MNPS charters have compiled 3-year averages also in the top category. Only 2 schools earned ratings below Satisfactory.

School	Overall Performance							
	2013 Total Pts	2013 Status	2014 Total Pts	2014 Status	2015 Total Pts	2015 Status	3-Year Avg Pts	3-Year Status
Valor Collegiate					94.00	Excelling		
New Vision Academy	53.50	Satisfactory			86.28	Excelling		
Acad of Computer Scie					81.80	Excelling		
Intrepid Prep			71.06	Excelling	79.15	Excelling		
LEAD Academy HS	53.12	Satisfactory	71.06	Excelling	76.57	Excelling	66.92	Excelling
Liberty Collegiate Acad			86.71	Excelling	76.50	Excelling		
LEAD Academy MS	34.66	Satisfactory	26.31	Review	73.67	Excelling	44.88	Satisfactory
KIPP Academy			68.30	Excelling	68.84	Excelling		
LEAD Prep			73.42	Excelling	62.13	Achieving		
STEM Prep Academy	79.26	Excelling	79.94	Excelling	49.21	Satisfactory	70.43	Excelling
Nashville Prep School					48.28	Satisfactory		
Rocketship TN					44.12	Satisfactory		
KIPP College Prep			70.93	Excelling	39.32	Satisfactory		
Cameron College Prep	26.47	Review	73.19	Excelling	35.86	Satisfactory	45.17	Satisfactory
Knowledge Academy	64.43	Achieving			26.28	Review	53.81	Satisfactory
Smithson-Craigh Acad			46.66	Satisfactory			25.75	Review

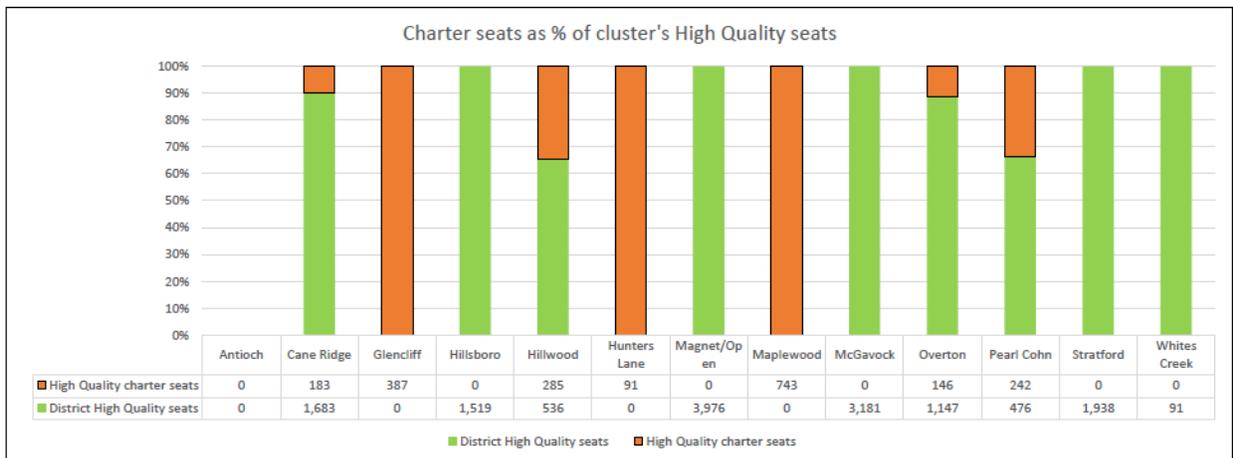


Academic Performance Framework

Charter school, by seat type, 2014-15



Calculating student enrollment in charter schools rated at various levels by the Academic Performance Framework shows that 2,077 (45%) of charter school students are enrolled in charter schools rated Achieving or Excelling, while 554 (12%) are enrolled in schools rated as Target or Review.



In three clusters, charter school enrollment comprises 100% of the enrollment in schools rated Achieving or Excelling. The chart above shows the share of enrollment in high-performing schools in each cluster that represents enrollment in charter schools.



State Accountability

The state of Tennessee recognizes schools for achievement and/or growth in the top 5% statewide. Since 2012, MNPS charter schools have been recognized each year.



2012 Reward Schools	2013 Reward Schools	2014 Reward Schools	2015 Reward Schools
New Vision Academy	KIPP Academy Nashville	Cameron College Prep	Intrepid Prep
	Liberty Collegiate	KIPP Academy Nashville	KIPP Academy Nashville
	Nashville Prep	Knowledge Academy	LEAD Academy
	STEM Prep	Liberty Collegiate	LEAD Prep SE
		Nashville Prep	Liberty Collegiate
		New Vision Academy	New Vision Academy
		STEM Prep	

Tennessee SCORE Prize

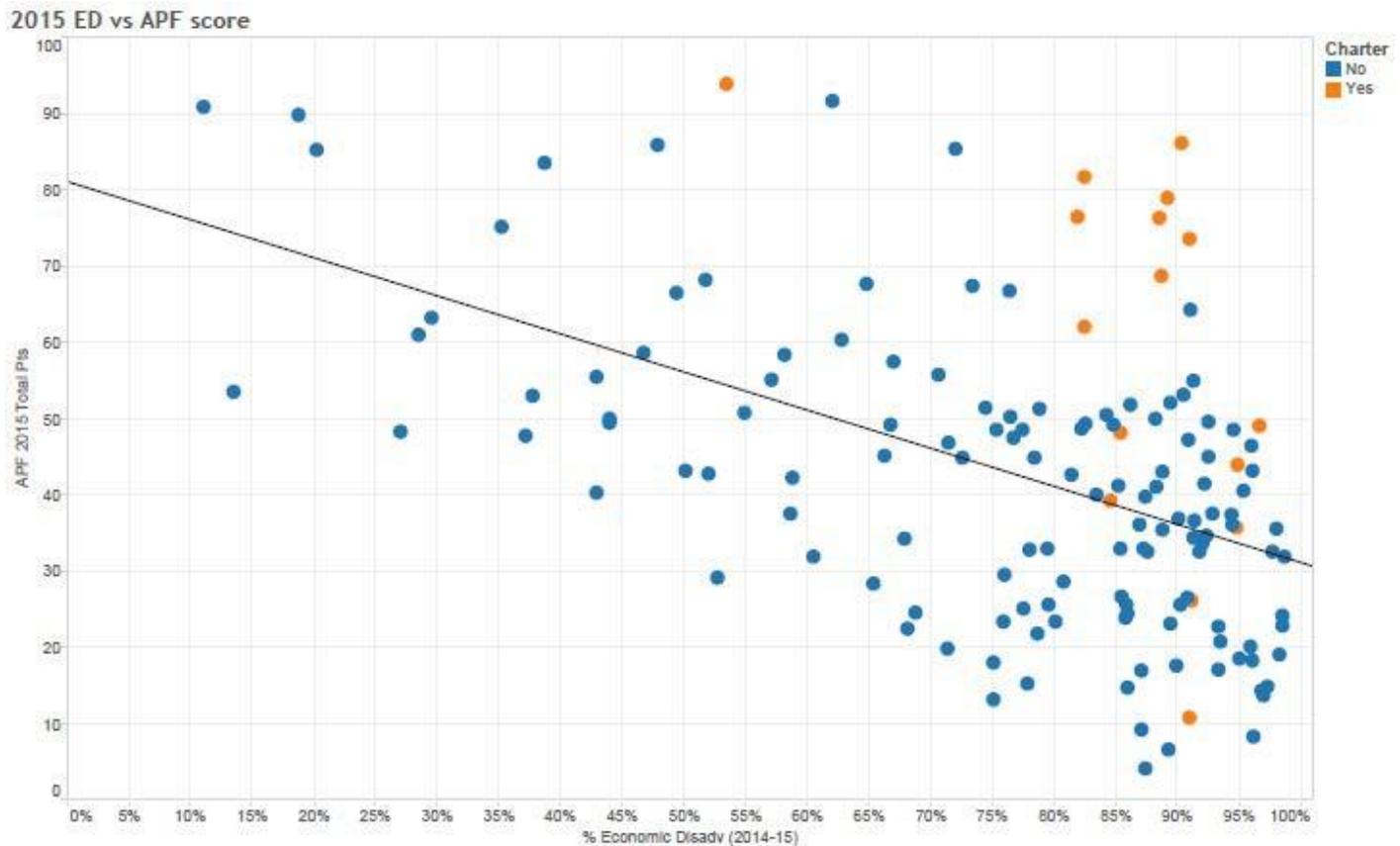
The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) identified three schools at each academic tier for recognition as finalists for the SCORE Prize which is awarded to the top school at each tier and the top district each year. KIPP Academy Nashville has been identified as a middle school finalist each of the past two years (2014 and 2015), and New Vision Academy was awarded the middle school SCORE Prize for 2015.



Breaking the Mold

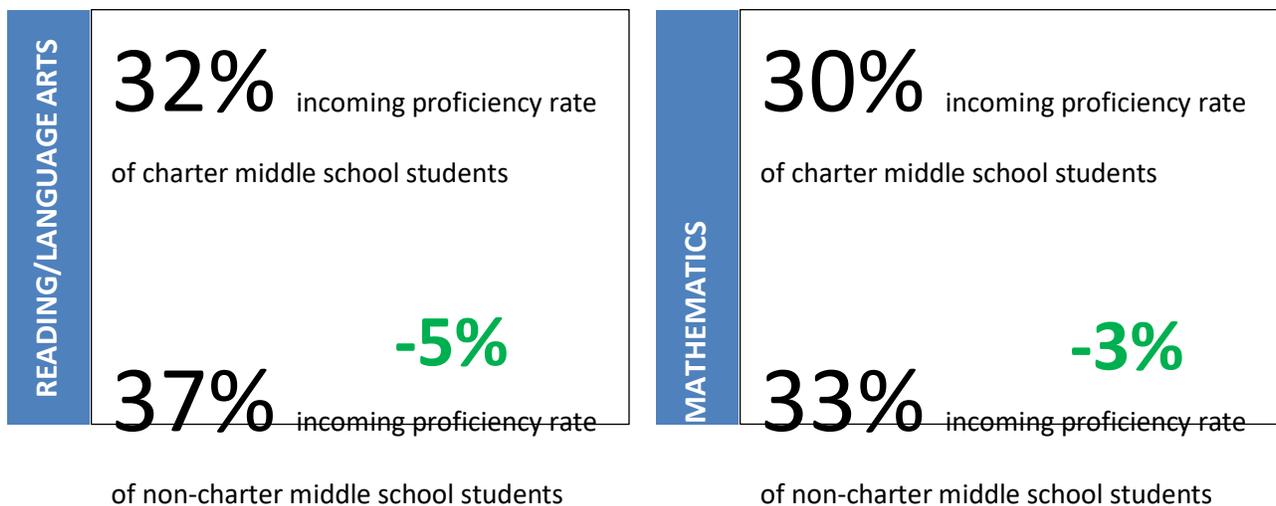
MNPS charter schools are contributing to what we know about successful urban education, and their results are showing promise for economically disadvantaged students. Mapping the Academic Performance of all K-8 schools in MNPS shows the all too common inverse relationship between concentrations of poverty and academic performance except for the collection of schools in the upper right hand corner of the chart. Those schools are demonstrating high academic performance despite high concentrations of poverty, and a large number of them are MNPS charter schools.

2015 MNPS Schools (K-8) Academic Performance by Poverty



Meeting Students Where They Are

MNPS charter schools serve a higher than average population of students in economic need. MNPS allocates resources to non-charter schools according to the needs of the students in each school, but it allocates resources to charter schools using the average of all allocated revenue. Because students enrolled in charter schools would otherwise be assigned disproportionately to schools on the higher end of the student need spectrum, charter school transfers serve to reduce costs when compared with transfers to the schools charter students would attend if there were no charter schools. Analysis below shows the comparative individual and net impact of the transfers to charter schools based on 2014-15 enrollment and individual school allocations.



MNPS charter schools have established a strong record of academic achievement for students and strong ratings on the Academic Performance Framework despite enrolling students who are further behind than their counterparts enrolled in non-charter schools. Charter school students begin middle school an average of 5 points behind their non-charter peers in Reading/Language Arts and 3 points behind their non-charter peers in Math.

Meeting Students Where They Are



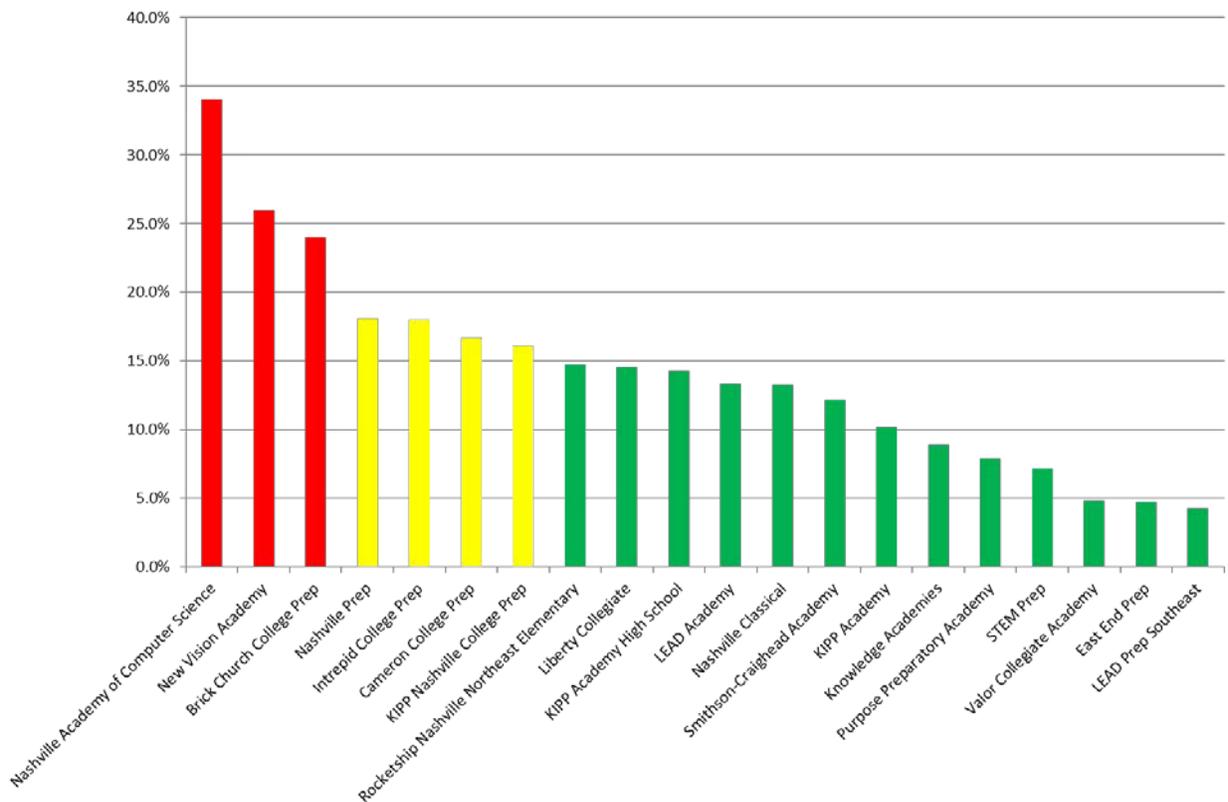
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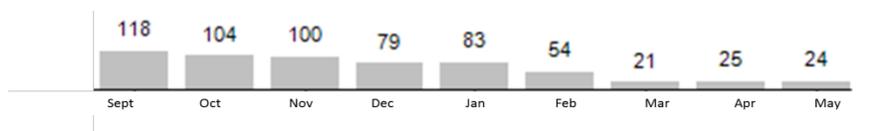
Keeping the Students We Serve

In MNPS, mobility is a challenge that effects students across school types. Reducing mobility is a goal that choice schools have chosen to tackle, and while the data suggests there is room to improve in this area, some common misconceptions regarding student attrition are challenged by the available data. In 2014-15, exits after day 11 occurred at a rate of 15.9% of enrollment across the MNPS charter school portfolio. The chart below shows the distributions of this rate across schools.

2014-15 Attrition Rate
(Exits after Day 11/Total Enrollment)



Distribution of withdrawals from charter schools for all reasons shows a steadily declining pattern as the year wears on.



***2014-15 across all charters**

Source: MNPS Data Warehouse



Promoting Diversity

MNPS considers diverse schools to be a central component of its mission, and charter schools are working hard to advance that goal. MNPS measures student diversity according to race, income, language, and disability and seeks broad diversity across these measures. The number of schools meeting the District's student diversity definition nearly doubled from 7 in 2014-15 to 13 in 2015-16. Over 43% of charter schools met the criteria for diverse schools within the District's Diversity Management Plan, and 90% met the component for income, language, and disability (ILD).

Diverse Schools

43%

Charter schools meeting the
MNPS Diversity
Management Plan's criteria
for student diversity



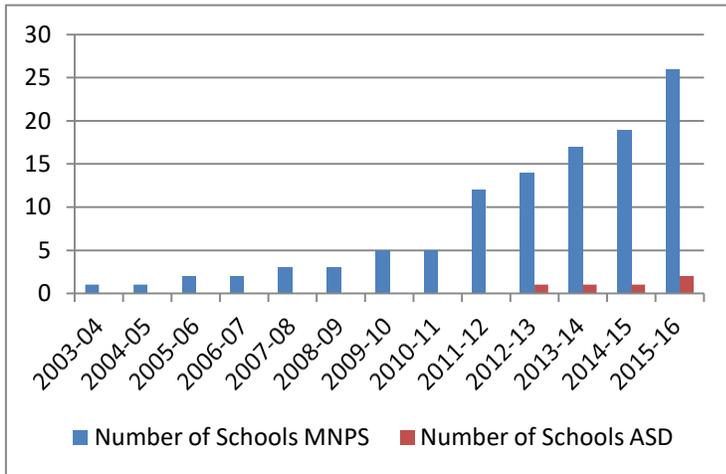
Income, language, and
disability diversity

90%

Charter
schools serving income,
language, and disability
diversity

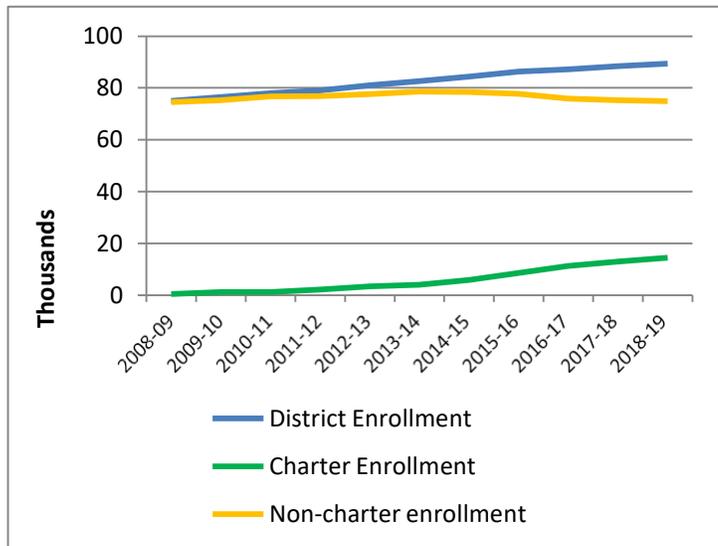


Our Schools



The Charter Schools Office has overseen strong growth in the number of charter schools operating in Nashville since its inception in 2009. Growing cautiously at first, Nashville’s charter sector now spans 26 schools serving over 8,000 students.

Enrollment in Nashville’s charter schools will continue to grow as new schools fill their initial grades. Because Davidson County student enrollment is growing rapidly, charter school growth helped the District provide seats in areas experiencing rapid growth, and through 2014-15, growth in charter enrollment did not result in declining enrollment in non-charter schools. The District is already preparing for the adjustments that will result from shifts in enrollment driven by the choices parents are



making. Exciting new work in modeling and managing the fiscal adjustments is already in progress.



School Name	2012-13 Grades	2013-14 Grades	2014-15 Grades	2015-16 Grades
<i>Cameron College Prep</i>	5	5-6	5-7	5-8
<i>Classical**</i>		K	K-1	K-2
<i>East End Prep**</i>	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4
<i>Explore Community School*</i>				K
<i>Intrepid**</i>		5	5-6	5-7
<i>KIPP Academy Nashville</i>	5-8	5-8	5-8	5-8
<i>KIPP HS**</i>			9	9-10
<i>KIPP Nashville College Prep ES*</i>				
<i>KIPP Academy Nashville ES @Kirkpatrick*</i>				K-1
<i>KIPP Nashville Collegiate Prep**</i>	5	5-6	5-7	5-8
<i>Knowledge Academy</i>	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-8
<i>Knowledge Academy High School*</i>				9
<i>LEAD</i>	5-11	5-12	5-12	5-12
<i>Lead Prep Southeast**</i>		5	5-6	5-7
<i>Liberty Collegiate Academy\RePublic High School**</i>	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-9
<i>Nashville Academy of Computer Science**</i>			5	5-6
<i>Nashville Prep</i>	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-8
<i>New Vision Academy</i>	5-7	5-8	5-8	5-8
<i>Purpose**</i>		K	K-1	K-2
<i>Rocketship Northeast **</i>			K-4	K-4
<i>Rocketship 2*</i>				K-4
<i>Smithson Craighead</i>	K-4	K-4	K-4	K-4
<i>STEM Prep</i>	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-8
<i>STEM Prep High School*</i>				9
<i>Strive Collegiate Academy*</i>				5
<i>Valor Collegiate**</i>			5	5-6
<i>Valor Collegiate SE*</i>				5-6
ASD Schools				
<i>Neely's Bend MS*</i>				5
<i>Brick Church College Prep (All Grades)**</i>	5	5-6	5-7	5-8

*New School 2015-16

**Adding grades 2015-16

This chart shows the grades served by each current charter school over time. As new schools mature, filling out their planned grades, the charter sector is producing strong schools designed to provide excellent opportunities for students well into the future.



Cameron College Prep

Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:

School Name: Cameron College Prep
Address: 1034 1st Avenue North

Nashville, TN 37210

Website: www.cameroncollegeprep.org
Phone: (615) 806-6320

Profile

Principal: Tait Danhausen

Opened:	2011			
Current Grades:	5-8			
Approved Grades:	5-8			
Enrollment:	604			
Academic	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term				
Current Ratio				
Unrestricted Days				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				

Debt Serv. Ratio

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

	Renewal Application Due:		April	2020
Full Renewal Review	5-year Review:		October	2016
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American	32%	28%	23%	25%
Hispanic	44%	31%	45%	52%
White	21%	21%	28%	22%
Asian	4%	3%	3%	1%
FARM:	99%	96%	95%	95%
SWD:	12%	12%	11%	11%
EL:	29%	29%	26%	40%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	96%	95%	94%	94%

KEY to Ratings	
Excelling	
Achieving	
Satisfactory	
Review	
Target	

East End Prep				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: East End Prep Address: 1460 McGavock Pike Nashville, TN 37216 Website: www.eastendprep.org Phone: (615) 630-7470				
Profile				
Principal: Jim Leckrone				
Opened: 2011				
Current Grades: K-4				
Approved Grades: K-8				
Enrollment:				
Academic				
				2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
		Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data
Three Year Average				
		Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data
Financial				
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrest. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/ Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt. Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)				
Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due: April 2019			
	5 Year Ewview		October	2016
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African-American:	88%	85%	82%	76%
Hispanic:	5%	6%	10%	14%
White:	5%	7% 7%	8% Asian:	3%
		2%	1%	1%
FARM:	96%	90%	84%	87%
SWD:	6%	5%	7%	7%
EL:	3%	3%	3%	6%
Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				
Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	93%	93%	95%	95%
KEY to Ratings				
Excelling				
Achieving				
Satisfactory				
Review				
Target				

Intrepid Prep				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Intrepid Prep				
Address: 5432 Bell Forge Lane East				
Antioch, TN 37013				
Website: www.intrepidcollegeprep.org				
Phone: (615) 810-8443				
Profile				
Principal: Mia Howard				
Opened: 2013				
Current Grades:	5-7			
Approved Grades:				
Enrollment:				
Academic		2013-14	2014-15	
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three-Year Average			Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data
Financial		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term				
Current Ratio				
Unrestricted Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-2015)

Simple Renewal

Renewal Application Due: April 2021
 5-year Review: October 2017

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Demographics				
African-American:			37%	25%
Hispanic:			47%	52%
White:			15%	21%
Asian:			1%	2%
FARM:			80%	83%
SWD:			15%	10%
EL:			18%	31%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data				
Attendance Rate			98%	98%

KEY To Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

KIPP Academy				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: KIPP Academy				
Address: 123 Douglas Avenue				
Nashville, TN 37207				
Website: www.kippnashville.org				
Phone: (615) 226-4484				
Profile				
Principal: Laura Miguez Howarth				
Opened: 2005				
Current Grades: 5-8				
Approved Grades:	5-8			
Enrollment:	375			
Academic	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)				
	Renewal Application Date			2015
Simple Renewal	5 Year Review			2009
	April			
	October			
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American	89%	87%	77%	68%
Hispanic	9%	19%	19%	28%
White	2%	4%	4%	4%
Asian	>1%	0%	0%	21%
FARM	89%	93%	91%	89%
SWD	15%	16%	15%	11%
EL	5%	3%	4%	10%
Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				
Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racia/Iethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	97%	97%	98%	96%
KEY to Ratings				
Excelling				
Achieving				
Satisfactory				
Review				
Target				

KIPP High School				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: KIPP High School				
Address: 123 Douglas Avenue				
Nashville, TN 37207				
Website: www.kippnashville.org				
Phone: (615) 226-4484				
Profile				
Principal: Jake Ramsey				
Opened: 2014-15				
Current Grades: 9-10				
Approved Grades: 9-12				
Enrollment:		198		
Academic				
				2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APE				
Three Year Average				Insuff. Data
Financial				
				2014-15
Near Term				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal

	Renewal Application Due	April	2020
	5 Year Review	October	2016

Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American				68%
Hispanic				25%
White				6%
Asian				0%
FARM				87%
SWD				10%
EL				7%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Attendance Rate			97%	

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

KIPP Nashville College Prep (KNCP)				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: KIPP Nashville College Prep				
Address: 3410 Knight Road Nashville, TN 37207				
Website: www.kippnashville.org				
Phone: (615) 584-6649				
Profile				
Principal: Nikki Miller				
Opened: 2013				
Current Grades: 5-7				
Approved Grades: 5-8				
Enrollment: 268				
Academic				
2013-14 2014-15				
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Insuff. Data Insuff. Data				
Financial				
2012-13 2013-14 2014-15				
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Full Renewal Review	Renewal Application Due	April	2021
	5 Year Review	October	2017

Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African Ameerican			84%	84%
Hispanic			9%	12%
White			7%	4%
Asian			0%	0%
FARM			84%	85%
SWD			20%	17%
EL			4%	5%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Rptng				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data			2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate			95%	95%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

Knowledge Academies

Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:

School Name: Knowledge Academies
Address: 5320 Hickory Hollow Pkwy

Antioch, TN 37013
Website: www.knowledgeacademies.org
Phone: (615) 810-8370

Profile

Principal: Ariel McCallum
Opened: 2012
Current Grades: 5-8
Approved Grades: 5-8
Enrollment: 300

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Academic				
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF		Insuff.		
Three Year Average		Data		
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2015-16
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Full Renewal Review	Renewal Application Due	April	2020
	5 Year Review	October	2016
Demographics	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American	48%	43%	44%
Hispanic	31%	34%	35%
White	21%	22%	20%
Asian	0%	0%	0%
FARM	79%	89%	66%
SWD	9%	11%	12%
EL	12%	10%	7%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Diversity				
Racia/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate		98%	97%	97%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

LEAD Academy High School				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: LEAD Academy High School				
Address: 1704 Heiman Street Nashville, TN 37208				
Website: www.leadacademy.org				
Phone: (615) 327-5422				
Profile				
Principal: LaVoe Mulgrew				
Opened: 2007				
Current Grades: 9-12				
Approved Grades:	5-12			
Enrollment:	303			
Academic				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Grad. Rate				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)				
Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due	April	2016	
	5 Year Review	October	2012	
Demographics				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American	91%	96%	89%	69%
Hispanic	3%	4%	5%	23%
White	5%	6%	5%	7%
Asian	1%	<1%	0%	2%
FARM	86%	83%	83%	82%
SWD	13%	16%	13%	13%
EL	1%	1%	0%	3%
Organization				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				
Diversity				
		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
Other Data				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	97%	97%	96%	96%
KEY to Ratings				
Excelling				
Achieving				
Satisfactory				
Review				
Target				

LEAD Academy Middle School				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: LEAD Academy Middle School				
Address: 2835 Brick Church Pike				
Nashville, TN 37207				
Website: www.leadacademy.org				
Phone: (615) 352-1253				
Profile				
Principal: Nic Frank				
Opened: 2007				
Current Grades: 5-8				
Approved Grades: 5-8				
Enrollment: 169				
Academic				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

School Closing May, 2016	Renewal Application Due 5 Year Review	April October	2016 2012
--------------------------	--	------------------	--------------

Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African-American:	87%	81%	75%	72%
Hispanic:	4%	10%	12%	15%
White:	7%	8%	10%	12%
Asian:	1%	2%	3%	2%
FARM:	85%	90%	92%	91%
SWD:	17%	16%	17%	12%
EL:	4%	5%	6%	9%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data				
Attendance Rate	2011-12	2013	2013-14	2014-15
	97%	97%	96%	96%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

LEAD PREP SE

Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is **on track to:**

School Name: LEAD Prep SE
 Address: 531 Metroplex Drive
 Nashville, TN 37211
 Website: www.leadpublicschools.org
 Phone: (615) 584-6649

Profile

Principal: Chris Elliott

Opened: 2013

Current Grades: 5-7

Approved Grades: 5-12

Enrollment: 389

Academic

Ach Increase

TVAAS (NCE)

TCAP (PA)

Ach. Gap

Teacher Survey

ACT (21+)

Overall APF

Three Year Average	Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data

Financial Near Term:	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Current Ratio			
Unrestr. Days Cash			
Enroll. Variance			
Default			

Enroll. Variance

Default

Sustainability:

Total Margin

Debt/Asset Ratio

Cash Flow

Debt Serv. Ratio

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal

Demographics	2013-14	2014-15
African-American	46%	32%
Hispanic	27%	30%
White	25%	35%
Asian	2%	3%
FARM:	77%	82%
SWD:	12%	6%
EL:	13%	23%

Educ. Program	
Fin. Management	
Governance/Reporting	
Students/Employees	
Environment	
Obligations	
Overall Organization	

Racial/Ethnic	
---------------	--

Other Data	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	96%	96%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

Liberty Collegiate Academy (RePublic Charter Schools) Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Liberty Collegiate Academy				
Address: 3515 Gallatin Road Nashville, TN 37206				
Website: www.libertycollegiateacademy.org				
Phone: (615) 564-1965				
Profile				
Principal: Annie Robison				
Opened: 2011				
Current Grades: 5-8				
Approved Grades: 5-12				
Enrollment: 465				
Academic				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Financial				
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due:		April	2019	
	5-year Review:		October	2015	
Demographics					
African-American:	72%	66%	60%	49%	48
Hispanic:	11%	21%	24%	35%	36
White:	16%	12%	15%	14%	15
Asian:	2%	1%	1%	1%	1
FARM:	91%	91%	86%	82%	89
SWD:	12%	8%	13%	11%	12
EL:	1%	4%	8%	8%	9

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015
Racial/Ethnic					
I/L/D					
Other Data					
Attendance Rate	97%	97%	97%	97%	

KEY to Ratings	
Excelling	
Achieving	
Satisfactory	
Review	
Target	

Nashville Academy of Computer Science				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Nashville Academy of Computer Science				
Address: 3230 Brick Church Pike				
Nashville, TN 37207				
Website: www.abc.org				
Phone: (615) 555-1234				
Profile				
Principal: Ali Deissler				
Opened: 2014				
Current Grades:	5-6			
Approved Grades:	5-6			
Enrollment:				
Academic				2014-15
Ach Increase				
TV AAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial				2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due: April 2022		
	5-year Review: October 2019		
Demographics			2014-15
African-American:			70%
Hispanic:			14%
White:			16%
Asian:			0%
FARM:			64%
SWD:			11%
EL:			4%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data				
Attendance Rate				97%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

Nashville Classical				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Nashville Classical				
Address: 217 South Tenth				
Nashville, TN 37206				
Website: www.nashvilleclassical.org				
Phone: (615) 724-0705				
Profile				
Principal: Charlie Friedman				
Opened: 2013				
Current Grades:	K-2			
Approved Grades:	K-8			
Enrollment:				
Academic		2013-14	2014-15	
Ach Increase				
FVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF			Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data
Three Year Average			Insuff. Data	Insuff. Data
Financial		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				
Overall Financial				

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due:	April	2021
	5-year Review:	October	2017
Demographics		2013-14	2014-15
African-American		85%	69%
Hispanic		1%	6%
White		14%	24%
Asian		0%	0%
FARM:		68%	68%
SWD:		0%	4%
EL:		1%	1%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic		

Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate			96%	96%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

Nashville Prep (RePublic Charter Schools)				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Nashville Prep				
Address: 1300 56th Avenue North Nashville, TN 37209				
Website: www.nashvilleprep.org				
Phone: (615) 921-8440				
Profile				
Principal: Matt Dempsey				
Opened: 2011				
Current Grades: 5-8				
Approved Grades: 5-8				
Enrollment: 430				
Academic				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Financial				
Near Term				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due:	April	2019
	5-year Review:	October	2015

Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
African-American:	89%	85%	82%	75%	71%
Hispanic:	4%	9%	9%	16%	16%
White:	6%	6%	8%	8%	11%
Asian:	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
FARM:	87%	83%	78%	67%	61%
SWD:	13%	15%	15%	16%	16%
EL:	1%	2%	3%	5%	5%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Rptng				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Racial					
I/L/D					
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Attendance Rate	99%	98%	96%	96%	

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

New Vision Academy

Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is **on track to:**

School Name: New Vision Academy
Address: 297 Plus Park Blvd

Nashville, TN 37217

Website: www.newvisiontn.org

Phone: (615) 360-1115

Profile

Principal: Tim Malone

Opened:	2010			
Current Grades:	5-8			
Approved Grades:	5-8			
Enrollment:	199			
Academic	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				

Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				

Debt Serv. Ratio

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal

Renewal Application Due: April 2018

	5-year Review:	October	2014
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Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African-American	77%	70%	60%	51%
Hispanic	16%	24%	34%	41%
White	6%	6%	5%	7%
Asian	0%	0%	1%	1%
FARM:	84%	88%	82%	90%
SWD:	13%	14%	8%	10%
EL:	4%	6%	5%	25%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	95%	95%	96%	96%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

Purpose Prep				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Purpose Prep				
Address: 220 Venture Circle				
Nashville, TN 37228				
Website: www.purposeprep.org				
Phone: (615) 724-0705				
Profile				
Principal: Lagra Newman				
Opened: 2013				
Current Grades: K-2				
Approved Grades: [Redacted]				
Enrollment: [Redacted]				
Academic				
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial				
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				
Overall Financial				

School Performance Summary (2011-15)				
Simple Renewal		Renewal Application Due:	April	2021
		5-year Review:	October	2017
Demographics				
African-American		2013-14	2014-15	
Hispanic		98%	93%	
White		2%	5%	
Asian		0%	2%	
		0%	0%	
FARM:		86%	86%	
SWD:		8%	6%	
EL:		0%	0%	
Organization				
Educ. Program		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				
Diversity		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Attendance Rate				96%
				97%
KEY to Ratings				
Excelling				
Achieving				
Satisfactory				
Target				
Review				

Smithson Craighead Academy				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Smithson Craighead Academy Address: 730 Neelys Bend Road				
Madison, TN 37115				
Website: www.smithsoncraighead.net				
Phone: (615) 228-9886				
Principal: Janelle Glover				
Opened: 2003				
Current Grades:	K-4			
Approved Grades:	K-4			
Enrollment:	231			
Academic	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				
Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				
Debt Serv. Ratio				

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

No Renewal	Renewal Application Due:		April	2017
	5-year Review:		October	2012
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African American	99%	99%	99%	71%
Hispanic	12%	1%	1%	24%
White	0%	0%	0%	3%
Asian	<1%	0%	0%	1%
FARM:	95%	97%	96%	91%
SWD:	13%	15%	13%	12%
EL:	0%	0%	0%	8%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	95%	95%	95%	92%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Review
Target

STEM Prep Academy

Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:

School Name: STEM Prep Academy
Address: 1162 Foster Avenue

Nashville, TN 37210

Website: www.stemprepacademy.org

Phone: (615) 921-2200

Profile

Principal: Kristin Wiens

Opened:	2011			
Current Grades:	5-8			
Approved Grades:	5-8			
Enrollment:	426			
Academic	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ach Increase				
TVAAS (NCE)				
TCAP (PA)				
Ach. Gap				
Teacher Survey				
ACT (21+)				

Overall APF				
Three Year Average				
Financial	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Near Term:				
Current Ratio				
Unrestr. Days Cash				
Enroll. Variance				
Default				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin				
Debt/Asset Ratio				
Cash Flow				

Debt Serv. Ratio

Overall Financial

School Performance Summary (2011-15)

Simple Renewal Renewal Application Due: April 2019

	5-year Review:	October	2015
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
African-American:	25%	21%	16%
Hispanic:	63%	67%	66%
White:	11%	11%	16%
Asian:	1%	1%	1%
FARM:	85%	93%	92%
SWD:	11%	9%	10%
EL:	18%	15%	16%

Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program				
Fin. Management				
Governance/Reporting				
Students/Employees				
Environment				
Obligations				
Overall Organization				

Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial/Ethnic				
I/L/D				
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	98%	97%	98%	98%

KEY to Ratings
Excelling
Achieving
Satisfactory
Target
Review

Valor Flagship Academy				
Based on the data accumulated to date, this school is on track to:				
School Name: Valor Flagship Academy Address: 4527 Nolensville Road				
Nashville, TN 37211				
Website: www.valorcollegiate.org Phone: (615) 823-7982				
Principal: Dr. Travis Commons				
Opened: 2014				
Current Grades: 5-6				
Approved Grades: [REDACTED]				
Enrollment: [REDACTED]				
Academic 2014-15				
Ach. Increase [REDACTED]				
TVAAS (NCE) [REDACTED]				
TCAP (PA) [REDACTED]				
Ach. Gap [REDACTED]				
Teacher Survey [REDACTED]				
ACT (21+) [REDACTED]				
Overall APF [REDACTED]				
3 Year Status [REDACTED] Insuff. Data				
Financial 2014-15				
Near Term:				
Current Ratio [REDACTED]				
Unrestr. Days Cash [REDACTED]				
Enroll. Variation [REDACTED]				
Default [REDACTED]				
Sustainability:				
Total Margin [REDACTED]				
Debt/Asset Ratio [REDACTED]				
Cash Flow [REDACTED]				
Debt Serv. Ratio [REDACTED]				
Overall Financial [REDACTED]				

School Performance Summary (2011-15)				
Simple Renewal	Renewal Application Due:	April	2022	
	5-year Review:	October	2018	
Demographics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
African-American	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	15%
Hispanic	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	16%
White	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	63%
Asian	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	5%
FARM	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	53%
SWD	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	7%
EL	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	15%
Organization	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Educ. Program	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Fin. Management	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Governance/Rptng	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Students/Employees	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Environment	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Obligations	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Overall Organization	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Diversity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Racial	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
I/L/D	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Other Data	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Attendance Rate	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	96%
KEY to Ratings				
Excelling				
Achieving				
Satisfactory				
Target				
Review				



The MNPS Office of Charter Schools
2601 Bransford Avenue, Suite C-404
Nashville, TN 37204

(615)259-8624

www.mnps.org/pages/mnps/Academics/InnovationOffice



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Si usted necesita información adicional o si usted tiene alguna pregunta, por favor llame o contacte al director de su escuela.

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Special Education

IN TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOLS



Introduction

This information is relevant to students and families of students who have been deemed eligible for special education services. If you have a concern that a student who is not currently receiving special education services might have a disability that would qualify the student for those services, please contact the appropriate school district or State office using the contact information at the end of this brochure. Citations to the applicable federal or state law are included throughout the brochure.

What is Special Education?

Special education is defined in Federal law as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability provided at no cost to the parents. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.39. Federal and state constitutions and laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), give parents of students with qualifying disabilities the right to determine the educational path for their children. Although the law places some limits on that determination, parents are afforded the right to participate in all stages of the special education process and are given the means to enforce the rights guaranteed by the IDEA and other laws. See 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et. seq.

What is Child Find?

Child Find is the LEA's duty to identify, locate, and evaluate children who need special education and related services. 34 C.F.R. § 300.111(a)(1). When a child is suspected of having a disability under IDEA, the school must evaluate the child to determine whether he or she qualifies for special education services. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.111 (c).

WHAT ARE THE BASIC SPECIAL EDUCATION RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES?

Public school students in Tennessee who qualify for special education services are afforded certain rights. While special education law is lengthy and complex, there are three main things guaranteed to all special education students:

1. A Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
2. An Individualized Education Program (IEP)
3. Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

The purpose of the IDEA is to provide children with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. See 20 U.S.C. § 1400(d)(1)(A); 34 C.F.R § 300.101; Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-09-.09(b). A FAPE entitles a student with a disability to special education and related services that are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP). 20 U.S.C. § 1401(9). An IEP is the agreement between all members of the students IEP team as to the educational goals of the individual child and the services and supports that will be utilized to help the child reach those goals. An IEP must confer a meaningful educational benefit gauged in relation to the potential of the child. Deal v. Hamilton County Bd. of Ed, 392 F.3d 840, 862 (6th Cir. 2004). Furthermore, the IDEA requires that special education services and supports be provided to the child in the least restrictive environment in which the child is capable of making meaningful progress on his or her specific goals. The presumed placement for a child with a disability, absent evidence to the contrary, is the general education setting, with the student’s non-disabled peers. However, school systems are required to offer a continuum of placements so that all students may be served in the appropriate environment for their specific needs. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.114, § 300.115.

INCLUSIVE MODEL-CONTINUUM OF SERVICES



West Tennessee RISE Project, 2007

What are Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Accommodations and Modifications?

Related Services: Transportation and other developmental, corrective and supportive services required to allow a child to benefit from special education services. Examples: speech/language pathology services, interpreter services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, school health services. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.34.

Supplementary Aids and Services: Aids, services and other supports provided in school and extracurricular settings that enable students with disabilities to be educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.42.

Accommodations: Changes in the timing, formatting, setting, scheduling, response and/or presentation of an assignment or test, to allow a student with a disability to complete the same assignment or test as non-disabled students. Example: Braille version of a test given to a student with a visual impairment.

Modifications: Adjustments to an assignment or test that alter the standard taught or tested or otherwise alter what the assignment or test measures. Example: Alternative state assessments; shorter homework assignments.

What Must Be in an IEP?

An IEP (individualized education program) must be developed for each child eligible for special education services. An IEP must contain the following:

1. A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance;
2. A statement of how the child's disability affects his or her involvement in the general education curriculum;
3. A statement of measurable annual goals, academic and functional, designed to meet the specific educational needs of the child, including meeting needs to enable him or her to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum [Note: for students who take alternative assessments, benchmark or short-term objectives are also required];
4. An explanation of how the child's progress towards the goals will be measured;
5. A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services and program modifications that will be provided to the student;
6. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled students in the general education environment;
7. Beginning and ending dates for the services and supports; and
8. Transition services for students who will turn 16 years of age during the terms of the IEP.

See 34 C.F.R. § 300.320.

WHO PARTICIPATES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IEP?

Each child's IEP is developed by a team consisting of the child's parents, the child (when appropriate), both general education and special education teachers, a representative of the school district who is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and the availability of resources (usually a principal or vice principal), an interpreter of test results and any others who may have information or expertise related to the child. Parents are a critical part of the IEP team and have the power to bring others with them to support the development of the child's IEP. See 20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(B).

What Rights Do All Parents of Students Receiving Special Education Share?

Parents have significant rights when it comes to the development and implementation of their child's IEP. Some of those rights include:

Parent Participation – The school must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a student with a disability are present at each IEP team meeting or that parents are afforded the opportunity to participate, including:

- Notifying parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend
- Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place

The school must give parents notice of the IEP meeting that indicates the meeting's purpose, time, location and a list of expected attendees.

If the school is unable to convince the parents that they should attend, a meeting may be held without the parent in attendance. In such cases, the school must keep of a record of attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place, such as:

- Detailed records of phone calls or attempted calls and results of calls
- Copies of correspondence sent to parents and responses received
- Records of visits made to parent's home or place of employment and results of those visits

Alternative Means of Participation – When conducting IEP meetings and placement meetings, the parent of a child with a disability and the school may agree to use alternative means of participation, such as video conferences and conference calls. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.328.

The school must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceeding of the IEP team meeting, including providing an interpreter. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.322.

Educational Placements – The school must ensure that the parents of a child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions about the educational placement of their child. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.327.

Note: What is an educational placement? Placement is not necessarily where a child receives services. Rather, placement is a child's educational program: the package of special education and related services, including the amount of time a child spends with their non-disabled peers. A change in placement is a fundamental change in a child's educational program or elimination of a basic element of an educational program. For example, a reduction in special education services or an expulsion would constitute a change of placement.

Opportunity to Examine Records; Parent Participation in Meetings – The parents of a child with a disability must be afforded an opportunity to participate in meetings with respect to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child AND the provision of FAPE to the child.

Each school must provide notice to ensure that parents have the opportunity to participate in these meetings.

Each school must ensure that a parent is a member of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of the parent's child.

If neither parent can participate in a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the school must use other methods to ensure participation, including individual or conference telephone calls or videoconference.

A placement decision can be made without the involvement of the parent if the school is unable to obtain participation of the parent. In this case, the school must have a record of its attempt to ensure parental involvement. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.501.



What is a Public Charter School?

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent, non-profit governing bodies. Charter schools are opened after reaching an agreement

with the local school district, the Achievement School District, or the State Board of Education (the “authorizer”). Test scores and performance results from charter school students count toward the results of the school district they are a part of.

Authorizers of public charter schools ensure that only those charter schools open and remain open that are meeting the needs of their students. Authorizers do this through rigorous authorization processes, ongoing monitoring of the academic and financial performance of charter schools, and, when necessary, through the revocation or non-renewal of charters. Charter schools and authorizers agree on what they need to provide for students, and the schools determine how they will accomplish those goals.

Special Education in the Charter School Context

I’m considering a public charter school for my child. What do I need to know about special education in public charter schools?

Every child who attends a public school, including a public charter school, has the same right to access educational programs regardless of eligibility for special education services. Education oversight bodies such as school districts (sometimes called local education agencies or LEAs) may grant individual schools more control over their budgets and operations through chartering or policy changes. Such arrangements may include changed roles regarding special education. However, those changes do not affect a child’s right to access special education services, a parent’s right to participate in the arrangement of such services, or a local education agency’s responsibility to comply with relevant laws.

Though charter schools may not presently have the infrastructure or personnel to meet the needs of a child with a disability identified in the child’s individualized education program (IEPs), charter

schools are responsible for ensuring their students receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment.

When applications for admission to a charter school exceed capacity, charter schools are required to hold a lottery. Some traditional public schools may also use a lottery to determine acceptance when applications exceed capacity. In those situations, students with disabilities would be treated the same in the lottery as students without disabilities.

Like other public schools, charter schools must provide learning opportunities for students of all abilities, and may not charge tuition.

Charter schools may not refuse to enroll students because of their eligibility for special education services. T.C.A. § 49-13-111(b).

WHEN ENROLLING IN OR TRANSFERRING TO A DIFFERENT PUBLIC SCHOOL, INCLUDING A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, THE LAW REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING:

- If the amount or type of services to be provided will change from what was provided at the prior school, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team meeting is required. Changes must be based on data.
- The services outlined in the current IEP must be provided until the IEP changes following a meeting.

Regardless of the differences that may occur from school to school, all public school students in Tennessee who qualify for special education services are entitled to a FAPE, an IEP and all of the rights discussed above.

Special Education Procedures through RTI

Special Education Referral Process through RTI: The Tennessee Board of Education has approved Special Education Guidelines and Standards regarding Evaluations for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). This change in current standards from use of a discrepancy model of identification to a Response to Intervention (RTI) model became effective on July 1, 2014. This change requires all districts and schools to use RTI to determine eligibility of students to receive Special Education service in the category of Specific Learning Disability. Special Education referrals for other disabilities – such as Other Health Impairment, Speech Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, etc – will continue to be made through the previous Child Find process. These procedures apply at any public school, including public charter schools.

Before making a Special Education referral for a student suspected of a Specific Learning Disability, schools are required to provide tiered interventions, and provide data showing that the interventions were not successful in closing any academic gaps of the student. A student may be referred for Special Education during Tier III – the most intense intervention, but eligibility for Special Education will not be determined until interventions have been given time to show academic progress or a lack there

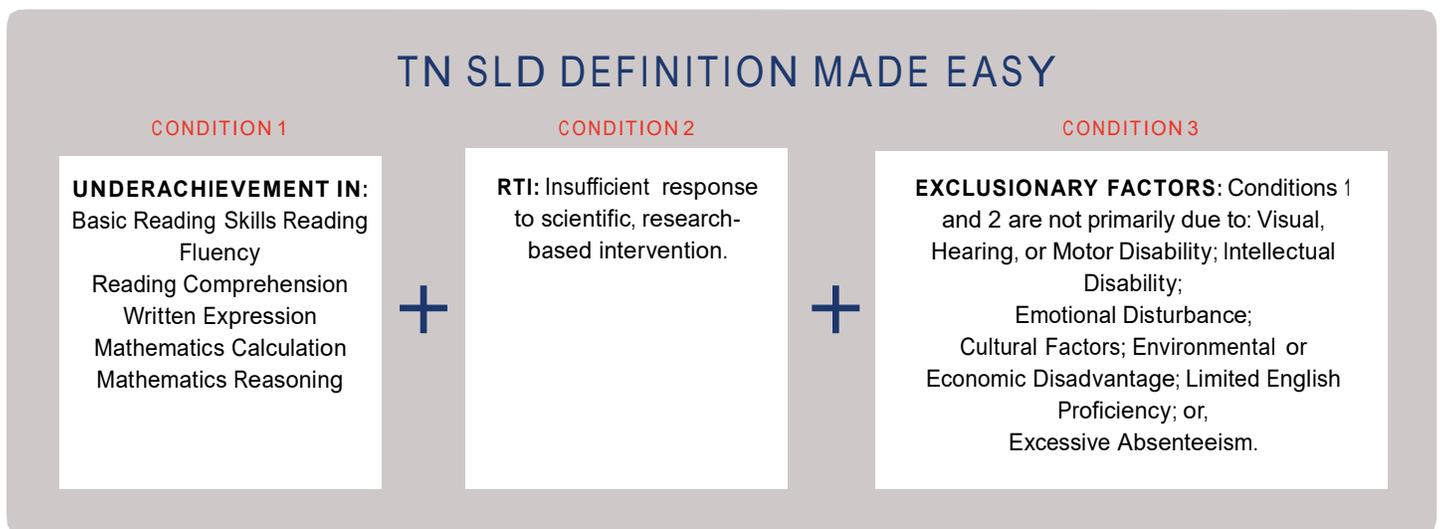
RTI is a part of the general education program. RTI is not the same as special education. Nor is it a process for referring students for support or interventions based on behavior. Instead, RTI is an organized, data-driven way to make every effort to keep students accessing education in the most inclusive setting (see the Inclusive Model - Continuum of Services pyramid earlier in this document).

of. Schools are required to make data-based decisions from the data collected in the interventions prior to moving student to more intense interventions OR referring for a Special Education evaluation. However, if at any point in the RTI process it is suspected that a child is a child with a disability, a special education referral should be made. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.11 (outlining Child Find). RTI cannot be used to delay or deny

an evaluation for Special Education. Interventions used by schools must have research supporting its use in remediating the area of suspected disability and will focus on specific academic needs. It is the LEA's responsibility to document that the student received intervention and data was collect throughout the intervention. For more about the RTI process for parents, teachers, and administrators, see the memos linked below.

Documentation already provided throughout tiered interventions will be important to the Special Education referral process. Additional forms will also be used to gather information during this process, including parent input, teacher input, and identifying the concerns with the student's academic performance. This information is reviewed at a team meeting with the student's parents prior to making a Special Education referral. Once a referral is made, parents will sign the consent for initial assessment form and will be provided a copy of their procedural safeguards and prior written notice. This documentation applies at any public school, including public charter schools.

Components of a Special Education Evaluation/Re-evaluation: The table below shows the three different conditions that need to be met for a student to qualify for a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) under Special Education. A student must meet at least one criterion from each condition to qualify for SLD.



Specific Learning Disabilities Eligibility Criteria: The term Specific Learning Disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may show in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, and that unfavorably affects a child's educational performance. Such term includes conditions such as perceptual disabilities (e.g., visual processing), brain injury that is not caused by an external physical force, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Specific Learning Disability does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of Visual Impairment; Hearing Impairment; Orthopedic Impairment; Intellectual Disability; Emotional Disturbance; Limited English Proficiency; or, Environmental or Cultural Disadvantage.

Additional information on RTI

Tenn. Dept. of Education Memo on RTI: <http://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/rti2.shtml>

U.S. Dept. of Education Memo on RTI: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdccltrs/osep11-07rtimemo.pdf>

Secondary Transition

Secondary Transition is a Process

Secondary Transition is the process of moving from high school to adult life and community living. It is a “bridge” between the structure schools provide, and the opportunities and risks of adult life. Students with disabilities need help during the Secondary Transition process. Families, educators, and the community play an important role in the student’s success. The Secondary Transition process should be based on outcomes. It begins with the learning about his/her preferences, interests, needs and strengths.

Begin by:

- Identify student preferences, interests, and needs - Dream!
- Develop a vision for the future;
- Develop the Secondary Transition Plan;
- Implement the plan, and
- Evaluate the results.

The Secondary Transition plan is the student’s plan in the IEP. It is flexible and focused on:

- Individual’s long-term life goals;
- Short term objectives;
- Student services and supports;
- Programs and personnel; and
- Actions to reach these goals.

Identify Needed Services and Supports

- Instruction;
- Accommodations;
- Course Selection;
- Training; and,
- Assistive Devices.

Develop a Written Plan

- Measurable Secondary Transition Goals;
- Action Statements; and,
- IEP Objectives.

When?

IDEIA requires the IEP Team begin Secondary Transition planning no later than a student’s sixteenth birthday, or earlier if needed. §300.320(b). Tennessee policy requires beginning no later than the student’s fourteenth birthday, Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-09-.02(4). The longer the journey, the longer it takes to get there, and the earlier planning should begin.

Who?

In Tennessee, the Secondary Transition Plan is developed by the IEP Team including (but is not limited to):

- The student;
- Parent(s) and/or other family members (should attend all IEP Team Meetings);
- Adult service providers (DIDD, etc.);
- Special Education Teacher(s) (should attend all IEP Team Meetings);
- General Education Teacher(s) (should attend all IEP Team Meetings);
- School Psychologist;
- LEA (Local Education Agency) Representative (should attend all IEP Team Meetings);
- Therapist(s)—related services;
- Peers, friends, and/or siblings;
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor; and
- Others who know the child or who may be helpful in some aspect of planning.

Parental rights transfer to the student at the age of majority, C.F.R. § 300.520(a), Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs 0520-01-09-.21, which is 18 in Tennessee. At this point the student has the right to sign for herself on all documents and to speak for herself in all situations.

Young adulthood is an exciting age. This is the time the IEP Team has the responsibility to focus on what the student wants and of helping the student reach for their own goals.

Behavioral intervention and discipline of students

In developing the IEP of a child with behavioral challenges, the IEP team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address the behavior. 34 C.F.R. §

When a child's disability affects their behavior at school, the law provides certain protections in the discipline process. In addition, it provides tools for helping a child make behavioral progress.

300.324. Special education services, including behavioral services, should be based upon peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable. See 34 § C.F.R 300.320(a)(4). The IEP should include present levels of performance related to the child's specific behavioral challenges and measurable goals to address those specific needs. See 34 § C.F.R. 300.320(a). A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) should also be considered. A Functional Behavioral Assessment is a method, based upon data collection, for determining the "function" or purpose of a child's behavior. For example, a child may be acting out in or trying to leave from a classroom to avoid difficult school work. For more information see: <http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/discipl.fab.starin.htm>. After an FBA is completed, a Behavior Intervention Plan is created to replace the problematic behavior by using intervention strategies that include positive behavioral supports.

Protections for Students with Disabilities in Discipline

The law requires that a school hold a manifestation meeting for a child with a disability when:

- A child is suspended for more than 10 days consecutively (i.e. expelled from school) C.F.R. § 300.536 (a)(1).
OR
- A child is suspended for more than 10 days total in a school year for a pattern of similar behavior.
See C.F.R. § 300.536 (a)(2).
OR
- The school files a truancy petition against a child with an IEP. T.C.A. § 49-10-1304(d)(3)(B)

Broadly put, the purpose of a manifestation meeting is to determine whether the behavior leading to disciplinary action is related to the child's disability. During the meeting, the team will consider two questions:

1. Did the child's disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct?
34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1)(i)
2. Was the conduct a direct result of the school's failure to implement the child's IEP?
34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1)(ii)

If the answer to either question is YES, then the behavior is considered to be a manifestation of the child's disability. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(2). The child may not be disciplined. Rather, the IEP team must conduct an FBA and implement a BIP (if one was not already in place) or review and modify an existing BIP to address the behavior. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530 (f). In addition, the IEP team should consider whether additional special education services or supports are necessary to enable the child to make behavioral progress.

However, a child who has been removed from school for more than 10 days in the same school year must continue to receive educational services to enable him or her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and make progress towards the

**If the answer to both questions is NO, the child may be disciplined just as a child without a disability would be disciplined.
34 C.F.R. § 300.530 (c).**

goals in his or her IEP. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530 (d)(1)(i). In addition, as appropriate, the child should receive an FBA/BIP to address the behavior so that it does not recur. C.F.R. § 300.530 (d)(1)(ii).

Who is involved in the decision?

The manifestation determination is made by the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team (as determined by the parent and the LEA.) 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1). It is best practice to include the school psychologist as a member of the team.

What must be considered?

The team must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1).

What is the timeline for a manifestation meeting?

The school may hold a meeting on as little as 24 hours of notice, Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs 0520-01-09-.15, but must complete the meeting within 10 school days of the decision to change the child's placement. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1). A parent has a right to participate in any decision regarding the educational placement of their child. See 34 C.F.R. § 300.327, 300.501(b)(1)(i). Therefore, if a parent is unable to participate in a manifestation meeting upon 24 hours of notice, but wishes to participate in the meeting at another time, the meeting should be rescheduled to enable parental participation.

Are manifestation meetings required for children who do not have an IEP?

Yes, if:

1. The child has a 504 plan and is being expelled or suspended for more than 10 days cumulatively in a school year. See <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/news/section-504.pdf>, pg 2.
2. The LEA "knew" that the child was a child with a disability. The LEA is held accountable for knowing that a child is a child with a disability when:
 - The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to administrators or supervisors of the LEA or to the child's teacher that the child is in need of special education services
 - The parent of the child requested an evaluation
 - The teacher of the child or other school personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to supervisory personnel of the LEASee 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(b)

What happens when a parent disagrees with the result of a manifestation determination meeting?

A parent may appeal the manifestation determination decision by filing for a due process hearing. The hearing will be expedited and occur within 20 school days after the complaint is filed. A hearing officer will make a decision within 10 school days of the hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.532 (a),(c). Hearing request forms are available here: http://www.tn.gov/education/legal/special_ed/dueprocessform.pdf

Public charter schools can have discipline policies that differ from the local school district if mutually agreed upon in the charter agreement. However, the school is not released from following any applicable State or Federal laws concerning students with disabilities. This includes holding a manifestation determination hearing and other procedures outlined in this memo from the department: http://tennessee.gov/education/student_support/eligibility/73112ideadisc.pdf

Special day school placements

A special day school is a separate school in which a child receives special education services for 100% of their day. Special day schools serve only students with IEPs. A special day school often has additional therapeutic, medical, behavioral, or academic resources and supports to meet the needs of students with disabilities whose needs cannot be met in their school of zone or school of choice.

For some students, placement in a special day school (operated by the school district or another public or private entity) is required to provide a free, appropriate public education. Students with disabilities are “to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent possible.” 34 C.F.R. § 300.42. “Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child [must be] educated in the school that he or she would attend if nondisabled.” 34 C.F.R. § 300.116(c).

Students placed in a special day school through their IEP have the same rights regarding access to education and transfers to other public schools when the special day school placement is no longer necessary for FAPE to be provided. Thus, a child placed in a special day school through the IEP may, upon leaving that special day school, attend either the school to which the child is geographically zoned, or an optional school (including any public charter schools) following the same procedure available to students without disabilities wishing to attend those optional schools.

Federal and State law provide room for schools and authorizers to determine the best way to handle placement of students returning to a charter school from a special day school.

Where Can I Get More Information?

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTACTS BY STATE AND DISTRICT:

Department of Education (615) 741-5158

http://www.tn.gov/education/student_support/special_education.shtml

Hamilton County Schools

(423) 209-8450

<http://hcde.org>

Knox County Schools

(865) 594-1540

<http://knoxcschools.org>

Metro Nashville Public Schools

(615) 259-4636

<http://mnps.org>

Shelby County Schools

(901) 416-5600

<http://scsk12.org>



Special Education in Tennessee Charter Schools

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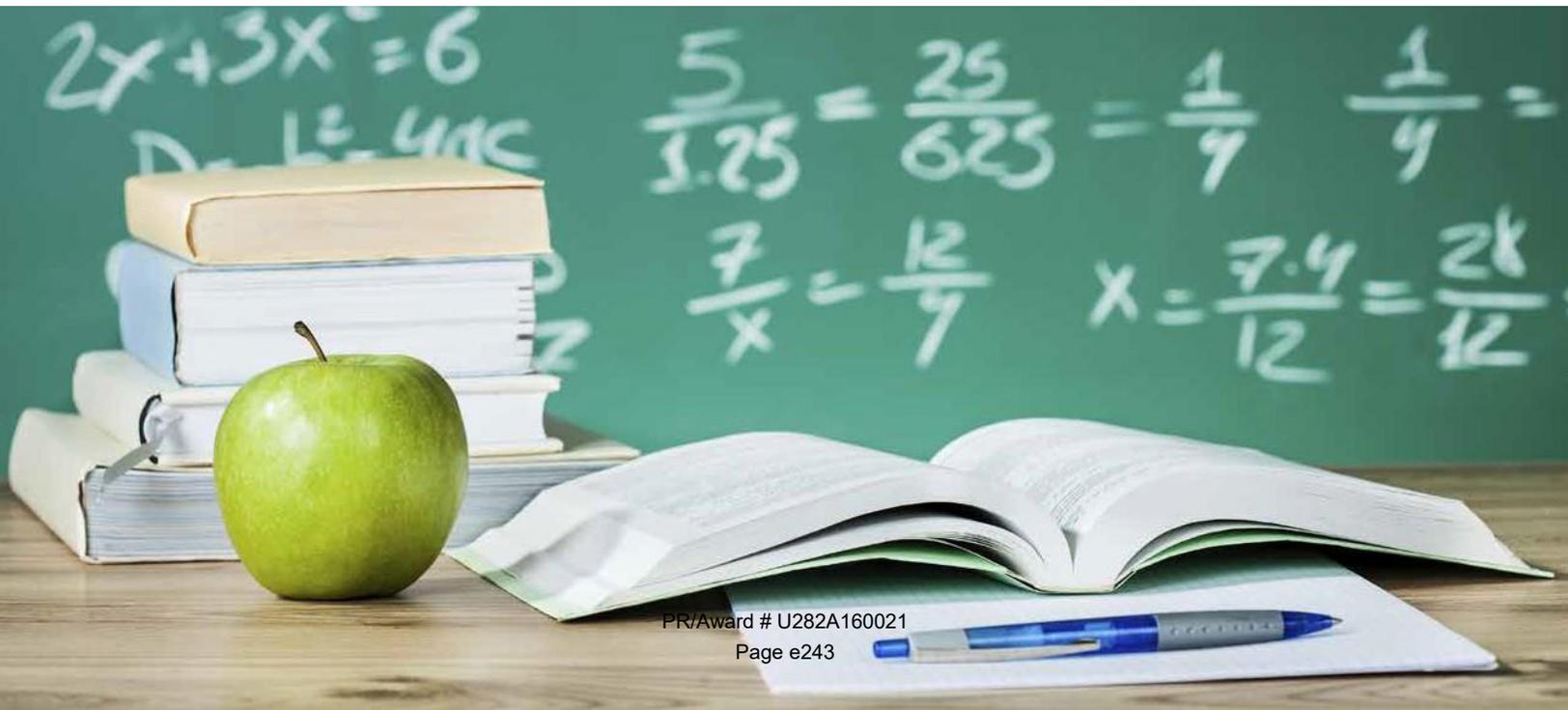
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TACSA Principles & Standards for Quality Authorizing January 2015

Introduction

In 2011 with the expansion of charter schools in Tennessee, the Tennessee Association of Charter School Authorizers (TACSA) was founded with the goal of ensuring quality charter authorization across the state. Tennessee has become a leader in education reform across the nation and has recognized that quality charter school authorizing is a powerful strategy for creating exceptional public schools and offering high quality educational opportunities for all students regardless of economic status, language barriers, or special needs. There is strength in collaboration, and all charter school authorizers in Tennessee working collectively will invariably result in excellent charter schools across the state that are authorized under the same high quality standards.

Purposes of the Tennessee Principles & Standards

The National Association of Charter Authorizers (NACSA) has given us a blueprint for effective authorizing. This blueprint helps charter school authorizers balance diverse and competing interests, regardless of the policies and laws of a given state. NACSA's defining publication, the *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, includes founding principles as well as basic and advanced standards for implementation and provides a critical roadmap to the very best and most promising practices in the industry.

Tennessee, like many other states, has its own unique challenges and opportunities when it comes to chartering schools. Our charter law, once the most restrictive in the country, has been revised to become one of the better laws in the nation, by combining tough, practical statutes for authorizing and oversight of charter schools with Tennessee wisdom and a collective belief that educational excellence is attainable and desirable.

This philosophy is attracting some of the best and most well-known national charter school operators to our state. Using NACSA's *Principles & Standards* as a guide, and with collaboration from authorizers, the Tennessee Department of Education, the Tennessee Charter School Center, the Achievement School District, and the Tennessee School Boards Association, this publication is the outcome of an unprecedented attempt to find common ground and to strive for high standards in the charter sector. Its goal is to recognize and share the same best practices reflected in NACSA's original document while meeting Tennessee's requirements and unique needs.

Three Core Authorizing Principles

A quality authorizer balances responsible oversight of charter schools by ensuring the autonomy to which they are entitled and the public accountability for which they are responsible. In Tennessee, every school district is a potential authorizer by law.

Quality authorizing is a choice.

There are three core principles that should guide all charter authorizing efforts, and authorizers should keep them at the forefront of all their work. Authorizers must:

- I. Maintain high standards for schools;
- II. Uphold school autonomy; and
- III. Protect student and public interests

In summary, authorizers should ensure quality oversight that fulfills the promise to stakeholders, families and students of excellent educational opportunities, maintains high operational standards, preserves school autonomy, and safeguards the public interests.

Principle I – Maintain High Standards

A quality authorizer:

- Approaches authorizing deliberately and thoughtfully with the intent to improve the quality of public school options
- Sets high standards for approving charter applicants that are fair, transparent and rigorous
- Maintains high standards for the schools it oversees
- Effectively promotes quality charter schools, serving as a catalyst for charter school development to satisfy unmet educational needs and at the same time recognizes and nurtures outstanding schools that may not fill a district need but will nevertheless offer high quality educational options for students
- Monitors charter schools that meet the performance standards and targets on a range of measures and metrics set forth in their charter contracts (see Box 1, Performance Standards)
- Closes schools that fail to meet standards set forth by Tennessee statutes and by charter school agreements.

Principle II – Uphold School Autonomy

A quality authorizer:

- Respects and preserves core autonomies crucial to school success including:
 - Governing board independence
 - Personnel

- School vision and culture
- Instructional programming, design, control of calendar, use of time
- Budgeting
- Strives for clarity, consistency, and transparency in developing and implementing policies and procedures
- Assumes responsibility only for holding schools accountable for their performance, not for the success of individual schools
- Minimizes administrative and compliance burdens on schools while holding them accountable for adhering to both state and federal requirements
- Ensures objective and verifiable measures of student achievement as the primary measure of school quality, holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than processes

Principal III – Protect Student and Public Interests:

A quality authorizer:

- Makes the well-being and interests of students the fundamental value informing all the authorizer’s actions and decisions
- Holds schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to all students as outlined in Tennessee law, which includes
 - Non-selective, non-discriminatory access to all eligible students
 - Fair treatment in admissions and enrollments, utilizing an impartial lottery system as outlined in law and statute if applications exceed contracted number of students
 - Appropriate services for all students including those with disabilities and English learners
 - Disciplinary actions that are fair and reasonable
- Holds schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental obligations to the public, which includes providing
 - Sound governance, management and stewardship of public funds
 - Public information and operational transparency
- Ensures in its own work:
 - Ethical conduct
 - Focus on the mission of authorizing high quality schools
 - Clarity, consistency and public transparency in authorizing policies, practices, and decisions
 - Effective and efficient public stewardship
 - Compliance with applicable state laws and regulations
- Supports parents and students by providing accurate, intelligible, performance based information about the schools within the authorizers portfolio

These Principles for Quality Charter School Authorizing establish the foundation for following the Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing that should guide authorizer practice day to day as they work to make high quality authorizing a

reality for students and families in their respective communities. These standards provide critical benchmarks and essential guidance for the unique professional practice of authorizers and their daily balancing act of recognizing the autonomy of charter schools while holding them accountable for high achievement, effective operational management, and keeping their promise to offer high quality educational opportunities for all students.

Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing

Standard 1 - Authorizer Commitment and Capacity

A quality authorizer engages in chartering as a means to foster excellent schools that meet identified needs, clearly prioritizes a commitment to excellence in education and in authorizing practices, and creates organizational structures and commits human and financial resources necessary to conduct its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

Planning and Commitment to Excellence

A quality authorizer:

- Supports and advances the purposes of Tennessee charter school law
- Ensures that the authorizing district's governing board, leadership, and staff understand and are committed to the three Core Principles of authorizing
- Defines external relationships and lines of authority as outlined in Tennessee charter law to protect its authorizing functions from conflicts of interest and political influence
- Implements policies, procedures, processes and practices that streamline its work toward stated goals, and executes its duties efficiently while minimizing administrative burdens on charter schools
 - Develops a strategic plan for authorizing and an annual reporting template reflecting these policies, procedures, processes and practices
- Strives to create a culture of communication, collaboration, and transparency with charter schools
- Evaluates its work regularly against both national and Tennessee state standards for quality authorizing and recognized effective practices, and develops and implements timely plans for improvement when it becomes necessary

Advanced Standards

- Articulates and implements a clear strategic vision and mission for quality authorizing, including clear priorities, goals and time frames for achievement
- Evaluates its work regularly against its chartering mission and strategic goals, and implements plans for improvement when necessary
- Provides an annual public report on the authorizer's progress and performance in meeting its strategic plan goals.

Human Resources

A quality authorizer:

- Enlists expertise and competent leadership pursuant to Tennessee statutes for all areas essential to charter school oversight including, but not limited to: education leadership, curriculum, instruction, assessment, special education, English Language Learners, performance management, accountability, law,

school and non-profit finance, facilities, and non-profit governance through staff, contractual relationships, and intra- or inter-agency collaborations

- Employs competent personnel at a staffing level appropriate and sufficient to carry out all authorizing responsibilities in accordance with national and Tennessee standards, and commensurate with the scale of the charter school portfolio within individual districts
- Seeks to employ leadership and staff who prioritize communication, collaboration, and cooperation between charter schools and the district sponsor
- Provides for regular professional development for the agency's leadership and staff to achieve and maintain high standards of professional authorizing practice and to enable continual agency improvement

Financial Resources

A quality authorizer:

- Determines financial needs of the authorizing office and devotes appropriate and sufficient resources to fulfill its authorizing responsibilities in accordance with national and Tennessee state standards and commensurate with the number and scale of the charter school portfolio of the district
- Structures funding in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest inducements, incentives, or disincentives that might compromise its judgment in charter approval and accountability decision making.
- Develops spending plan that effectively and efficiently deploys funds with the public's interest in mind.

Standard 2 – Application Process and Decision Making

A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; follows fair, transparent procedures and rigorous criteria; and grants charters only to applicants who demonstrate strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter school.

Proposal Information, Questions and Guidance

A quality authorizer:

- Issues a charter application information packet or request for proposals (RFP) that:
 - States any authorizing priorities the district may have established
 - Articulates comprehensive application questions to elicit the information needed for rigorous evaluation of applicants’ plans and capacities
 - Provides clear guidance and requirements regarding application content and format, articulating evaluation criteria and making available scoring rubrics
- Accepts and welcomes proposals from first-time charter applicants as well as existing school operators/replicators, accounting for past performance, experience, capacity and educational plans
- Supports and encourages expansion and replication of charter schools that have demonstrated success and capacity for growth over time, and a commitment to the community and stakeholders
- Considers diverse educational philosophies and approaches, expresses a commitment to serve students with diverse needs and demonstrates a desire to ensure a diverse population of students have access to high quality educational choices

Advanced Standards

- Publicizes the authorizer’s strategic vision and chartering priorities, incorporating them into the application packet in order to communicate those priorities to potential applicants, while at the same time not restricting or refusing to review applications that propose to fulfill other goals

Fair, Transparent, Quality-Focused Procedures

A quality authorizer:

- Implements a charter application process that is open, well-publicized, transparent, and organized around clear, realistic timelines, including the times for amending an application initially denied, and those that surround appeal to the State Board of Education, as outlined in Tennessee Charter Law
- Allows sufficient time for each stage of the application and school pre-opening process to be carried out with quality and integrity
- Explains how each stage of the application process is conducted and evaluated

- Communicates authorizing process, approval criteria, and final decisions clearly to the public
- Informs applicants of their rights and responsibilities and promptly notifies applicants of approval or denial, while explaining the factors that determined the decision

Rigorous Approval Criteria

A quality authorizer:

- Requires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a well-researched educational plan consistent with that mission, a solid business plan, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members who demonstrate capacity and expertise needed to plan, execute and sustain a high performing school, and clear evidence of the applicant's overall capability to execute its stated plans successfully
- Establishes distinct requirements and criteria for applicants who are existing school operators or replicators (see Box 2)
- Establishes distinct requirements and criteria for applicants proposing to contract with education service or management providers (see Box 3)

Rigorous Decision Making

A quality authorizer:

- Grants charters only to applicants who have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the school, consistent with the stated approval criteria
- Rigorously evaluates each application through thorough review of the written proposal, a substantive in-person, in-depth interview with the applicant group, and utilizes other due diligence as necessary to examine the applicant's experience and capacity, conducted by knowledgeable and competent evaluators
- Engages for both written application reviews and applicant interviews, highly competent teams of internal and external evaluators with relevant educational, organizational (governance and management), financial, and legal expertise as well as thorough understanding of the essential principles of charter school autonomy and accountability.
- Provides orientation or training to application evaluators, including interviewers, to ensure consistent evaluation standards and practices, observance of essential protocols, and fair treatment of applicants. Reviews training annually to ensure relevance, transparency, and adherence to established Tennessee charter law
- Ensures that the application review process and decision making are free of conflicts of interest, and requires full disclosure of any potential or perceived conflicts of interest between reviewers or decision makers and applicants.

Standard 3 – Performance Contracting

A quality authorizer executes contracts with charter schools that articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration, oversight, outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. The contract is an essential document, which is separate from the charter application, and that establishes the legally binding agreement and terms under which the school will operate and be held accountable.

Contract Term, Negotiation, and Execution

A quality authorizer:

- Executes a contract with a legally incorporated governing board independent of the authorizer
- Grants initial charter contracts for a term specified in Tennessee law
- Defines material terms of the contract
- Ensures appropriate discussions and debate of the charter contract and acceptance of the terms by the school’s governing board prior to authorization or charter granting by the authorizing board
- Requires contractual amendments for material changes to a school’s charter, but does not require amending the contract for non-material modifications

Rights and Responsibilities

A quality authorizer

- Executes charter contracts that clearly:
 - State the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer
 - State and respects the autonomies to which the schools are entitled based on statutes, waivers, or authorizer polices, including those relating to the school’s authority over educational programming, staffing, budgeting, and scheduling
 - Define performance standards, criteria, and conditions for renewal, intervention, termination, and non-renewal, while establishing the consequences for meeting or not meeting standards or conditions
 - State the statutory, regulatory, and procedural terms and conditions for the school’s operations
 - State reasonable pre-opening requirements or conditions for new schools to ensure that they meet all health, safety, and other legal requirements prior to opening and are prepared to open in a timely manner consistent with contract requirements and student needs
 - State the responsibilities and commitments of the school to adhere to essential public education obligations, including admitting and serving all eligible students so long as space is available, and not dismissing or

counseling out students except pursuant to the school's discipline policy as approved by the authorizer

- State the responsibilities of the school and the authorizer in the event of school closures
- Ensures that any fee-based services that the authorizer provides are set forth in a services agreement that respects charter school autonomy and treats the charter school equitably compared to other district schools, if applicable, and ensures that purchasing such services is explicitly not a condition of charter approval, continuation, or renewal
- If allowed by law, establishes and collects fees to cover costs of fulfilling authorizing obligations, and provides annual itemized accounting of its revenues and expenses, including the allocation of the authorizer fee. Such fees are not increased more often than once every two years.

Performance Standards

A quality authorizer

- Executes charter contracts that plainly:
 - Establish the performance standards under which schools will be evaluated, using objective and verifiable measures of student achievement as the primary measure of school quality
 - Define clear, measureable and attainable academic, financial, and organizational performance standards and targets that the school must meet as a condition of renewal, including but not limited to Tennessee and federal measures
 - Include expectations for appropriate access and education support services for students with disabilities
 - Define the sources of financial data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, grounded in professional standards for sound financial operations and sustainability
 - Define the sources of organizational data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, focusing on fulfillment of legal obligations, fiduciary duties, sound public stewardship, and ethical practices

Provisions for Education Service or Management Contract (if applicable)

- Provides additional contract provisions for any school that contracts with an external (third-party) provider for education design and operation or management to ensure rigorous, independent contract oversight by the charter school governing board and the school's financial independence from the external provider
- Reviews the proposed third-party contact as a condition of charter approval to ensure that it is consistent with applicable law, authorizer policy, and the public interest

Standard 4 - Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

A quality authorizer conducts contract oversight that competently evaluates performance and monitors compliance, insures schools' legally entitled autonomy; protects student rights; informs intervention, revocation, and renewal decisions, and provides annual public reports on school performance.

Performance Evaluation and Compliance Monitoring

A quality authorizer:

- Implements a comprehensive performance accountability and compliance monitoring system that is defined by the charter contract and provides the information necessary to make rigorous and standards-based renewal, revocation and intervention decisions
- Aligns with federal, state and local performance expectations and compliance requirements while protecting schools' legally entitled autonomy and minimizing schools' administrative and reporting burdens
- Defines and effectively communicates to schools the process, methods, and timing of gathering and reporting school performance and compliance data
- Conducts school visits as appropriate and necessary for collecting data that cannot be obtained otherwise and in accordance with the contract, while ensuring the frequency, purposes, and methods of such visits respect school autonomy and avoid operational interference to the extent possible
- Evaluates each school annually on its performance and progress toward meeting the standards and targets stated in the charter contract, including essential compliance requirements, and clearly communicates evaluation results to the school's governing board and leadership
- Requires and reviews annual financial audits of schools, conducted by a qualified independent auditor and in accordance with generally accepted audit standards in accordance with Tennessee charter law
- Communicates regularly with schools as needed, including both the school leaders and governing boards, and provides timely notice of contract violations or performance deficiencies
- Provides an annual written report to each school, summarizing its performance and compliance to date and identifying areas needing improvement
- Articulates and enforces stated consequences for failing to meet performance expectations or compliance requirements

Respecting School Autonomy

A quality authorizer:

- Respects the school's authority over its day-to-day operations
- Collects required information from the school in a manner that minimizes administrative burdens on the school while ensuring that performance and

compliance information is collected with sufficient detail and timeliness to protect student and public interests

- Periodically reviews compliance requirements and school autonomy based on flexibility in the law, demonstrated school performance, streamlining needs, or other considerations
- Refrains from directing or participating in educational decisions or choices that are appropriately within a school's purview under the charter law or contract

Protecting Student Rights

A quality authorizer

- Ensures that schools admit students through a random selection process that is open to all students, is publicly verifiable, and does not establish undue barriers to application that (such as mandatory information meetings, mandated volunteer service, or parent contracts) that exclude students based on socioeconomic, family, or language background, prior academic performance, special education status or parental involvement
- Ensures clarity in the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in serving students with disabilities through oversight of contractual provisions and compliance with state and federal laws
- Ensures that schools provide access to and appropriately serve other special populations of students such as English Language Learners, homeless students, and gifted students
- Ensures that schools' discipline policies and actions are legal and fair, foster stable student enrollment and retention and ensure that no student is dismissed outside these policies

Intervention

A quality authorizer:

- Establishes and clearly communicates to schools at the outset of an intervention policy that states the general conditions that may trigger intervention and the types of actions and consequences that may ensue
- Gives schools clear, adequate, evidence-based and timely notice of contract violation or performance deficiencies
- Allows schools reasonable time and opportunity for remediation in non-emergency situations
- Where intervention is needed, engages in intervention strategies that clearly preserve school autonomy and responsibility (identifying what the school must remedy without prescribing solutions)

Public Reporting

A quality authorizer:

- Produces an annual public report that provides clear, accurate performance data for the charter schools it oversees, reporting on individual school and overall

portfolio performance according to the framework set forth in the charter contract

Standard 5 – Revocation and Renewal Decision Making

A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions, and revokes charters when necessary to protect public interests.

Revocation

A quality authorizer:

- Revokes a charter during the charter term if there is clear evidence of extreme underperformance or violation of the law or the public trust that imperils students or public funds and in accordance with Tennessee Charter Law

Renewal Decisions Based on Merit and Inclusive Evidence

A quality authorizer:

- Bases the renewal process and renewal decisions on thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the performance framework in the charter contract
- Grants renewal only to schools that have achieved the standards and targets stated in the charter contract, are organizationally and fiscally viable, and have been faithful to the terms of the contract and applicable law
- Does not make renewal decisions, including granting probationary or short-term renewals, on the basis of political or community pressures or solely on promises of future improvement

Cumulative Report and Renewal Application

A quality authorizer:

- Provides to each school, in advance of the renewal decision, a cumulative performance report that:
 - Summarizes the school’s performance record over the charter term
 - States the authorizer’s summative findings concerning the school’s performance and its prospects for renewal
- Requires any school seeking renewal to apply for it through a renewal application, which provides the school a meaningful opportunity and reasonable time to respond to the cumulative report; to correct the record, if needed; and to present additional evidence regarding its performance

Fair, Transparent Process

A quality authorizer:

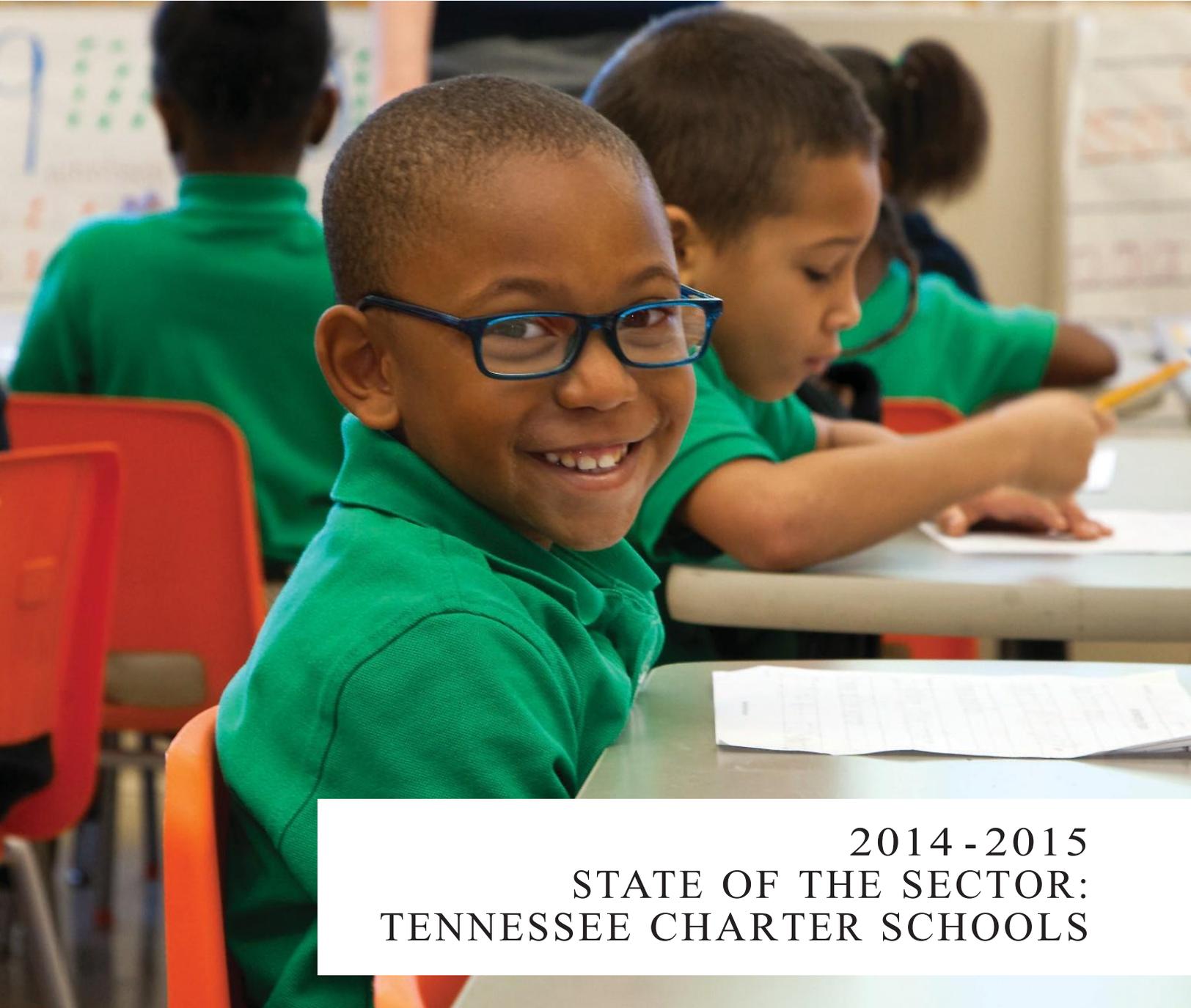
- Clearly communicates to schools the criteria for charter termination, renewal, and non-renewal decisions that are consistent with the charter contract
- Promptly notifies each school of its renewal (or, if applicable, revocation) decision, including written explanation of the reasons for the decision

- Promptly communicates renewal or revocation decisions to the school community and public within a time frame that allows parents and students to exercise choices for the coming school year
- Explains in writing any available rights of legal or administrative appeal through which a school may challenge the authorizer's decision
- Regularly updates and publishes the process for renewal decision making, including guidance regarding required content and format for renewal applications

Closure

A quality authorizer:

- In the event of a school closure, oversees and works with the school governing board and leadership in carrying out a detailed closure protocol that ensures timely notification to parents; orderly transition of students and student records to new schools; and disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with the law



2014 - 2015
STATE OF THE SECTOR:
TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOLS



Dear Partners:

The Tennessee Charter School Center is pleased to make this State of the Sector report available to offer a quick progress report on the public charter school movement that is helping to raise expectations and close achievement gaps in our state's public education system.

Tennessee's charter school sector is strong and growing -- in number, quality, the diversity of academic offerings, and in student enrollment and impact. More and more communities and parents across Tennessee are seeing the positive impact that public charter schools are having on student achievement and growth.

Today, 98 charter schools in Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville serve more than 29,000 students, or about 2.9% percent of all public school students in the state.

Demand for public charter schools is increasing at a fast pace because they:

- Represent some of the highest performing public schools in the state
- Offer more choices and innovative learning options to the students and families that need them most
- Educate students at a lower cost than traditional public schools

Over the past decade we've seen public charter schools become one of the most powerful and successful approaches to transforming educational opportunities and outcomes. Charter schools are held to a higher standard of accountability than traditional public schools. Charter schools must demonstrate they can meet rigorous fiscal and managerial standards as well as the student achievement goals established by their charter contracts. Like other traditional public schools, charter schools receive public per pupil funding for operations, must hire state licensed teachers, and are subject to state accountability standards for student academic performance.

Yet, with added autonomy that puts local school leaders and teachers in charge, charter schools can create a challenging and focused learning environment for students, encourage the use of innovative programs and teaching methods, and afford parents meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education.

And because charter schools are not allowed to turn away students for any reason, Tennessee's charter schools are providing learning opportunities for students of all backgrounds and abilities and achieving strong results with their full student populations—including special needs, gifted, low-income, and English Language Learners.

As you reflect on the year's progress, we hope you will agree that it is an exciting time for the public charter school sector in Tennessee. We look forward to working with each of you, including the State of Tennessee, local school districts and charter operators; communities and families; and other leaders and partners who remain dedicated to improving public education and transforming the lives of students in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maya Bugg'.

Maya Bugg, CEO

Tennessee Charter School Center
PR/Award # U282A160021

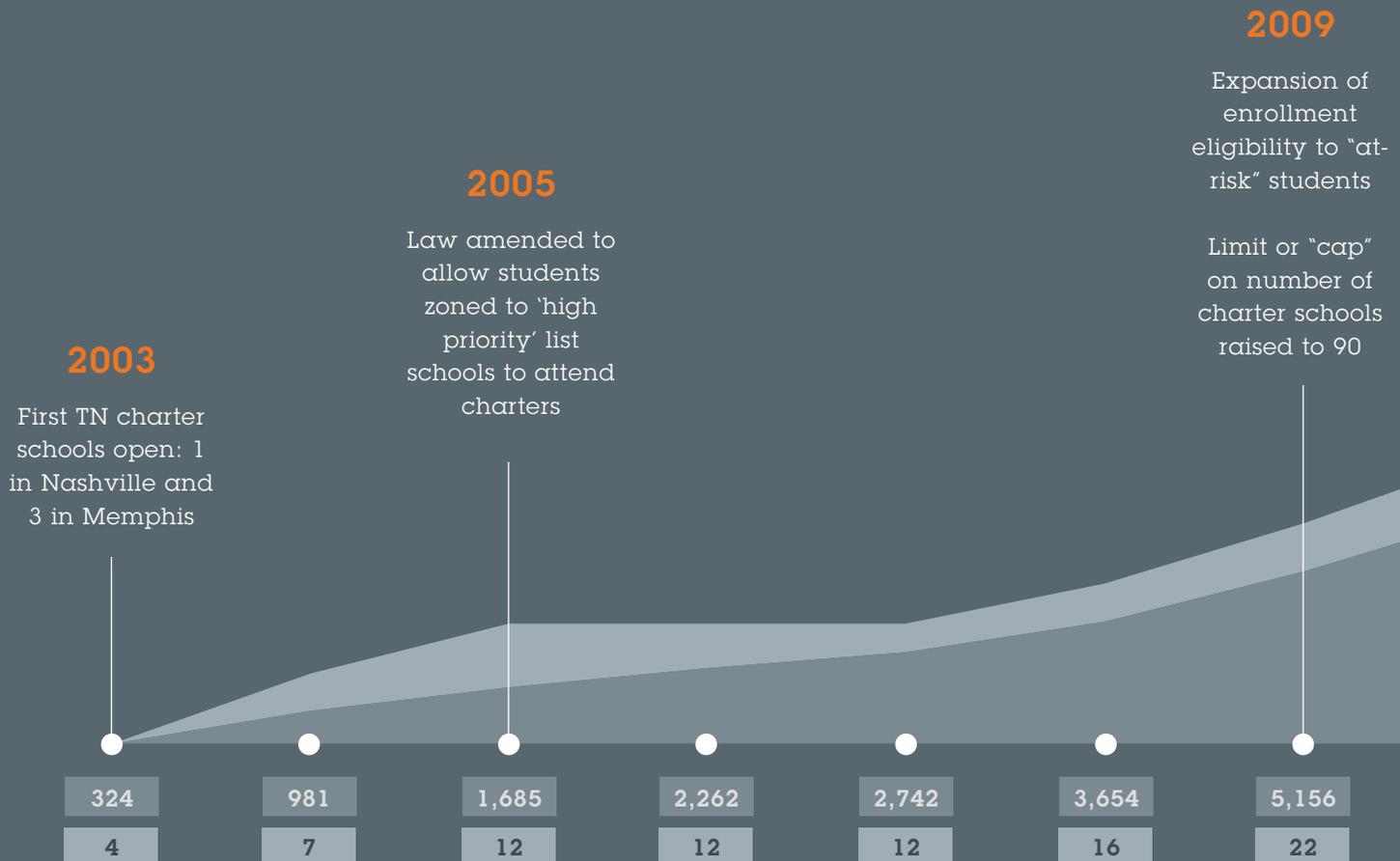


JUST THE FACTS

- 1 Charter schools in Tennessee are public schools.** Operating independently from the local district but governed by local community members, charter schools receive greater flexibility in their operations, but in return, a charter school is subject to greater accountability. It must demonstrate continued performance to its authorizer, often the local board of education. All test scores and performance results from public charter school students count toward the results of the school district to which the charter school belongs.
- 2 Charter schools are tuition-free.** As a public school, charters may not charge students tuition to attend. Charter schools are publicly funded schools that receive per pupil public funding through the state's Basic Education Program (BEP).
- 3 Tennessee charter schools are among the highest performing public schools in the state.** In both academic achievement and growth measures, Tennessee's public charter schools represent some of the state's highest performing public schools. Further, Tennessee's charter sector is one of the highest performing charter sectors in the nation.
- 4 The charter sector in Tennessee is serving the students and families who need them the most.** Charter schools are not allowed to restrict enrollment or turn away students based on ability or performance. The admissions process is open enrollment, and a certified lottery determines student enrollment when the number of applications exceeds available seats. Across Tennessee, charter schools are helping to close the opportunity and achievement gap and raise expectations for public
- 5 Tennessee's public charter schools are doing more with less.** The charter sector has shown strong academic performance despite receiving less public funding than traditional public schools, demonstrating they are good stewards of tax dollars by educating students at a lower cost.
- 6 Public charter schools are freed from some of the red tape and bureaucracy** that often diverts a school's energy and resources away from the students, teachers and the mission of the school. This enables teachers and schools to use innovative models and approaches to help improve student learning.
- 7 Charter operators in Tennessee are held highly accountable.** Public charter schools must demonstrate they can meet rigorous fiscal and managerial standards, and are evaluated on how well they meet the student achievement goals established by their charter contract. If a charter school does not perform according to the standards over time, it can be closed by the local charter authorizer. Additionally, if a charter school is designated as a bottom 5% State Priority School, state law ensures that it will be closed. This way, charter schools are accountable to both parents and taxpayers and low performing public charter schools do not continue to operate.
- 8 Parents want more public charter schools.** A 2015 Vanderbilt University poll of Nashville residents found that 63% of all respondents favored more charter schools, and that "a solid majority, 71% of parents with children in public schools, support the opening of more charter schools." Additional surveys conducted in Memphis and across the state show solid support among the electorate for more public charter schools, and even stronger support among

HISTORY & GROWTH

Since Tennessee's first charter schools opened in 2003, more and more families have pursued charter schools as the best public school option to provide a high quality education for their children.



2011

Open enrollment amendment passed to allow all students the option to attend a charter school

Removal of the "cap" on charter schools

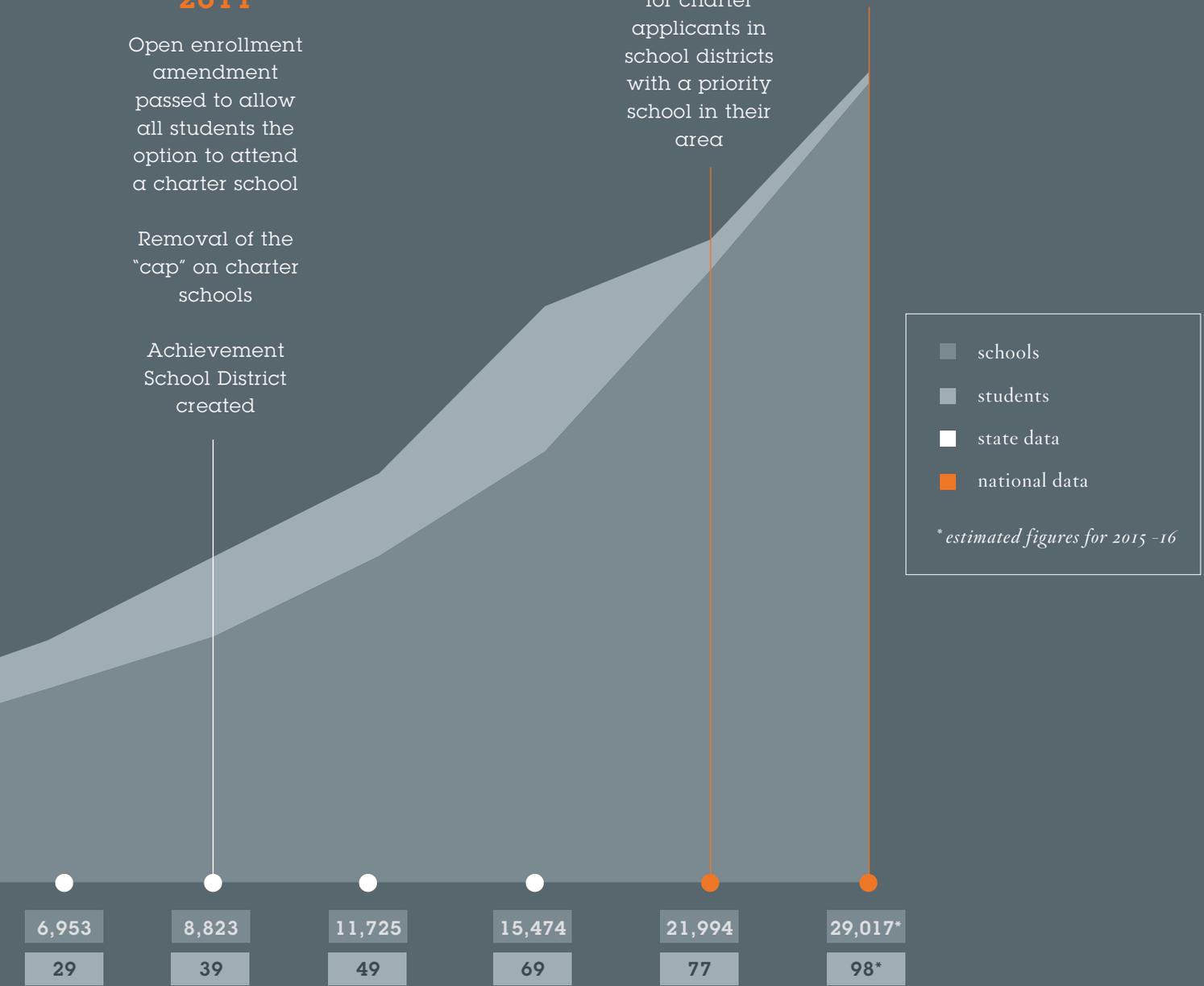
Achievement School District created

2014

Legislation passed to allow the State Board of Education to act as an authorizer upon appeal for charter applicants in school districts with a priority school in their area

2015

Over 6,700 charter schools nationwide serving 2.9 million students
44 states have passed charter school legislation



TENNESSEE CHARTER LANDSCAPE

All numbers are estimated for 2015-16.



Statewide



Students: 29,017



Memphis



Students: 19,864



Total charters: 64

ASD: 18 / LEA: 46

CMO: 45 / Non-CMO: 19



Schools

Elementary: 27

K-8: 2

Middle: 18

Middle high: 6

High: 10



Nashville



Students: 8,266



Total charters: 29

ASD: 2 / LEA: 27

CMO: 24 / Non-CMO: 5



Schools

Elementary: 7

K-8: 1

Middle: 15

Middle high: 2

High: 4



Total charters: 98

ASD: 20 / LEA: 78

CMO: 71 / Non-CMO: 27



Schools

Elementary: 35

K-8: 4

Middle: 34

Middle high: 19

High: 15



Chattanooga



Students: 761



Total charters: 4

ASD: 0 / LEA: 4

CMO: 2 / Non-CMO: 2



Schools

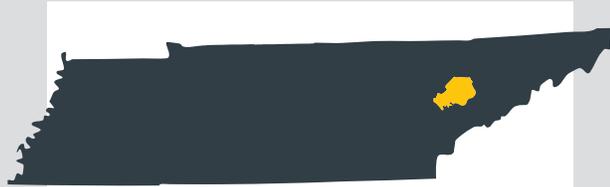
Elementary: 1

K-8: 0

Middle: 1

Middle high: 1

High: 1



Knoxville



Students: 126



Total charters: 1

ASD: 0 / LEA: 1

CMO: 0 / Non-CMO: 1



Schools

Elementary: 0

K-8: 1

Middle: 0

Middle high: 0

High: 0

TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOL IMPACT

Public Charter Schools Are Among The Highest-Performing Schools in the State

Tennessee's public charter schools represent some of the state's highest performing public schools, in both student achievement and growth.

In fact, while Tennessee's public charter schools accounted for just 5.4% percent of all public schools in the state during the 2014-15 school year – they account for 7.6% percent of all Reward Schools in the state.

Reward Schools are identified each year by the Tennessee Department of Education as being among the top five percent of all public schools in the state for student performance (as measured by overall student achievement levels) and/or top five percent in year-over-year student growth (as measured by TVAAS school-wide value-added data.)

Public Charter Schools Are Ensuring Students Graduate From High School and Attend College at Higher Rates

Tennessee public charter school students are graduating from high school and attending college at higher rates than those from traditional public schools in the state.

In 2015, thirteen of the state's public charter schools had graduating classes. Ten of these schools had higher graduation rates than their local district or state averages (one was the same as the district average).

Based on the latest available college going rates from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, charter school graduates pursued secondary studies at nearly a 20% higher rate than their peers attending traditional public schools in the same district.

After accounting for race and ethnicity, Tennessee public charter school students also outperformed their district school counterparts with similar demographics on the ACT.

Taken together, higher graduation rates, stronger college going rates, and ACT scores as an indicator of college readiness combine to offer public charter school graduates greater choices for college and career. This is a very important trend at a time when Tennessee is advancing the state's Drive to 55 initiative to ensure that more of our students are achieving postsecondary degrees or technical training certificates to help them succeed after high school.

Tennessee's Charter Schools Are Among Best in the Nation

Not only are public charter schools some of the highest performing public schools in the state, but Tennessee is also home to one of highest performing public charter school sectors in the nation.

In a 2013 national Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) study at Stanford University, Tennessee was found to be one of the top states in the nation for charter school reading and math gains (*see page 12*). Only Rhode Island and the District of Columbia showed similar

or greater gains than Tennessee in this national comparison of public charter school student growth among the states. Over the course of a year, Tennessee charter school students, in comparison to traditional public school peers, gain the equivalent of:

- 86 additional days of learning in reading
- 72 additional days of learning in mathematics

Learning gains in a given year for Tennessee charter school students are among the highest of all states studied.

Public Charter Schools Are Helping Those With The Highest Need – At Lower Cost

Tennessee's public charter schools are doing more with less – since they receive fewer public dollars per pupil than do traditional public schools. The main difference in funding is that public charter schools do not receive local funding for facilities and capital projects that traditional public schools and districts enjoy. Although public charter school parents are taxpayers too, their children receive an inequitable amount of funding from public education dollars for facilities, forcing public charter schools do more with less.

Public Charter Schools Are Providing Orderly and Structured Learning Environments for Students

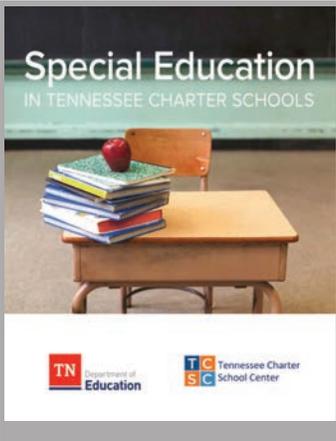
Tennessee’s public charter schools have high expectations for student behavior. In Memphis, Nashville, and Chattanooga, charter schools report lower rates of disciplinary incidents than district-run public schools (figure 1). Achievement School District (ASD) charters reported a higher rate of disciplinary incidents as compared to non-charters in the ASD. Tennessee charter schools are preparing students now to enable them to make

choices that will positively impact the education, training, or careers they wish to pursue in the future.

Public Charter Schools Are Helping Under-Served Students Succeed

Tennessee statewide achievement data continues to indicate a large gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers. Tennessee’s public charter schools serve a higher-percentage of low-income students and students of color than traditional public schools. Low-income students and students of color have historically under-performed their more

affluent peers in measures of academic achievement. To help these students succeed, Tennessee’s charter schools are demonstrating flexibility, innovation, and a laser-like focus on teaching and learning. Despite serving student bodies that are composed of more than 81% percent economically-disadvantaged students, many of Tennessee’s charters are “beating the odds” by showing significant student gains in TCAP achievement scores for students. For example, all of the 2015 State Reward Charter Schools serve a student body that is 70% or more Economically Disadvantaged (figure 2).

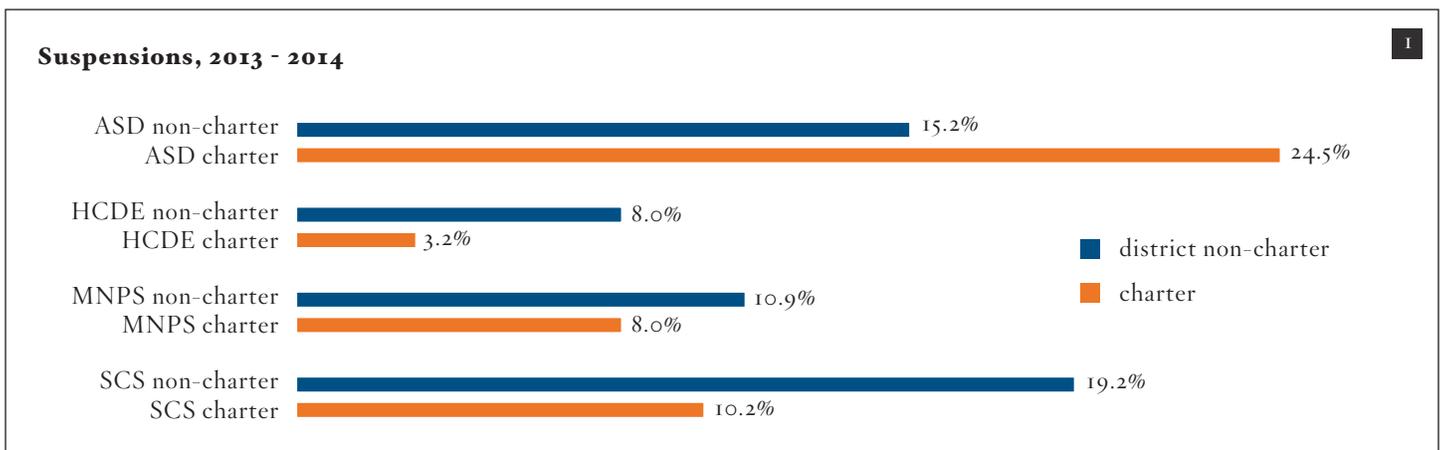


In 2015, the Tennessee Charter School Center released a new report to help provide information to families of children with special educational needs.

The report can be accessed on the Center’s website at tnchartercenter.org/data-research.

2015 Charter Reward Schools

	% Economically disadvantaged
Power Center Academy Middle	70.0%
Power Center Academy High School	70.0%
STAR Academy	81.9%
LEAD Prep Southeast	82.1%
Intrepid College Prep	82.7%
Liberty Collegiate Academy	85.1%
LEAD Academy	85.5%
KIPP Academy Nashville	88.3%
New Vision Academy	89.3%
KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	91.3%
Memphis Business Academy Elementary	95.1%
Memphis Business Academy High	98.2%
Memphis Business Academy Middle	98.7%



Sources: Fig. 1: Tennessee Department of Education, 2015; Fig. 2: Tennessee Incentive Award #U282A160021

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE LEADING AND INNOVATING

Through their local school districts and the state's Achievement School District, Tennessee's public charter schools have proven they can help turn around and begin to transform some of the lowest performing schools in the state.

Public charter schools use the autonomy granted to them in the charter structure to let school leaders and teachers try a variety of innovative teaching techniques and learning models to help students succeed.

Whether it is a new approach to the school curriculum or a way to maximize instructional time, Tennessee's public charter schools are consistently trying new things to boost student achievement.

Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy—Innovating through Mentorship

Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy (CGLA) was one of the first single-gender public schools in Tennessee, focusing on providing a college preparation curriculum centered on Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) to girls grades 6-12. While CGLA offers an accelerated remediation approach to move students to proficient and advanced levels within core academic subjects, as well as a range of integrated social supports that reflect girls' social development, its innovative mentorship programs continue to help set this charter apart.

Since 2009, CGLA has offered the annual Mustang Leadership Partners program

to provide students an opportunity to develop, practice, and improve relationship skills, responsibility, social accountability, self-awareness and self-confidence—through hands-on science experiences and equestrian training.

In 2013, the school launched the Empower Mentor Program to help connect students with caring adult advocates who will help provide encouragement and support in academics, college and career planning, life skills and leadership development. Mentors are expected to dedicate five hours per month to mentoring and connecting with the student on a weekly basis.

These two innovative mentorship programs provide students a unique opportunity to find personalized connections in their academic studies and are an excellent example of the huge personal impact charter schools can make. The unique ways charter schools can find to connect with, engage, and empower their students.

Power Center Academy High School- Innovating through Engagement

When it comes to effectively engaging students, Power Center Academy (PCA) leads the way in identifying innovative solutions to break down barriers with students and to empower them through meaningful connections with adults and teachers.

Power Center Academy High (PCA) is a public charter high school that was established in 2008 to turn

around chronic poor performance in impoverished south Memphis. Since its' founding, PCA has continued to be innovative, and recently set out to find an inexpensive way to provide more athletic opportunities for their students, as charter schools do not receive capital funding for sports fields, gymnasiums and athletic facilities. A football team was not financially viable for the school, so the PCA faculty set out to find a unique solution—and started a rugby team.

In the United States, rugby teams from the inner city comprised of economically disadvantaged youth are not typical. Yet, inexpensive to play and engaging for high school students, rugby at PCA has taken a strong hold among student athletes and the community at large. The sport has widened worldviews by introducing the students to a global sport, earned the school national and international recognition, and has provided a way for some of its players to earn college rugby scholarships.

East End Prep—Innovating through Professional Collaboration

East End Preparatory School places a high priority on hiring and developing great teachers. As the key to student learning, teachers are encouraged to set ambitious curriculum goals, use research-based teaching strategies, and hands-on technology to put their young scholars on a clear path to college. East End Prep teachers receive targeted coaching and support to further develop as professionals.

Because of this, East End Prep regularly receives praise and opens its doors to collaborate with other district and charter schools—free of charge. School leaders, teachers and faculty from schools across Tennessee, and some from out of state, have visited East End to learn about successful practices and innovative systems around teacher coaching, student and staff culture, curriculum and instruction.

Libertas School of Memphis— Innovating through Approach

Libertas School of Memphis is a new charter school that brings an innovative, yet proven learning model to a neighborhood with historically low performing schools.

Like any public school, Libertas is tuition-free and non-selective, but it has focused on providing students in the Frayser neighborhood of Memphis with a Montessori based school model.

Authorized by the state's Achievement School District, Libertas provides each child with an individualized work plan to advance at his or her own pace, offers support and training for teachers with respect to the Montessori method, and provides extra instructional support in most classrooms.

The classrooms are bright and cheerful, and offer numerous engaging learning stations for little scholars, as well as opportunities for self-directed learning and outdoor play. As a tool for turnaround, this new charter model has become an important public school option in the Frayser community. Thus far students are thriving and parents have expressed strong satisfaction with the school.



CHARTER SECTOR POLICY

Facilities Funding and Financing

Facility funding and financing represents a major challenge for Tennessee’s public charter schools, and is a top legislative priority for the Center. While facility funding is a challenge for all public schools, charter schools find themselves operating at an even greater deficit.

Public charter schools are not given a public school facility and do not receive access to locally allocated capital project dollars, the main source of facility funding for traditional Tennessee public schools. Charter schools must pay for facilities through their own operating funds, as well as any philanthropic donations, if any, they may receive.

These funding deficits can be large. In the 2015 Metro Nashville municipal budget, which allocated \$131 million for capital projects in district schools, only one Nashville charter school received funding of \$750,000 for a specialty partnership school.

Funding disparities become particularly impactful on charter schools as each year passes when charter schools fail to receive any capital outlay funds.

“The amount of money we have to pay on our facility loan each year is the equivalent of two teachers that we can’t hire and place in the classroom.”

-Charlie Friedman,
Nashville Classical
School Leader

Achievement School District

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The state’s Achievement School District (ASD) has made significant contributions to the growth demonstrated in Tennessee’s public education sector in recent years by enabling charter operators to pursue turnarounds in the state’s lowest performing schools.

When the ASD was created, only one in six students in the state’s Priority schools could read and do math on grade level. Less than 4 percent were considered college-ready.

But today, public charter school teachers and school leaders in the ASD—given the power and freedom to make their own decisions—are helping write a new narrative about what’s possible in Priority schools.

ASD students are growing faster in math and science than their peers across the state, and last year, second- and third-year ASD schools achieved the highest possible growth rates. This important turnaround work must be allowed to reach its full potential.

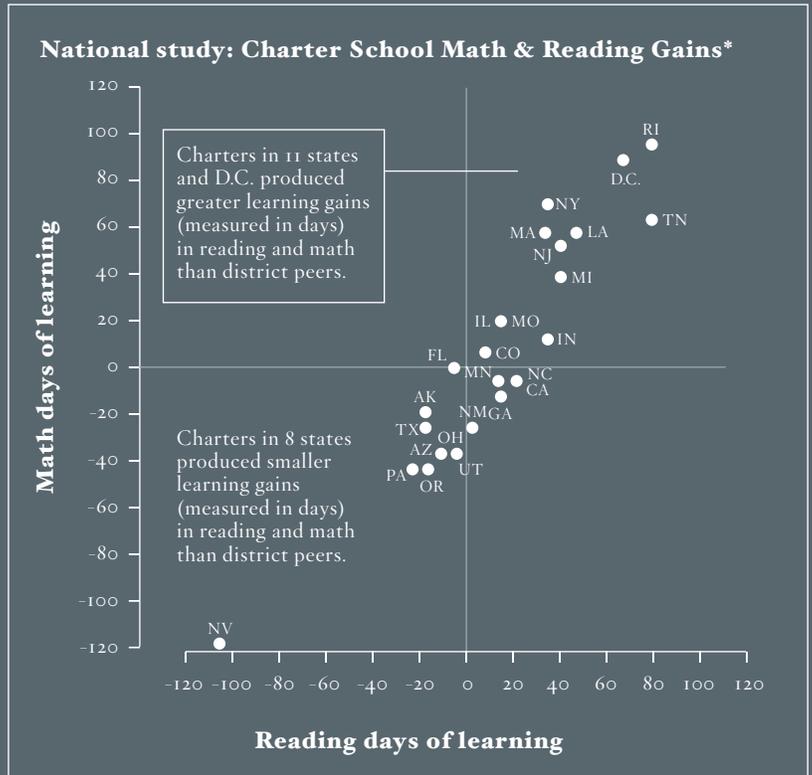
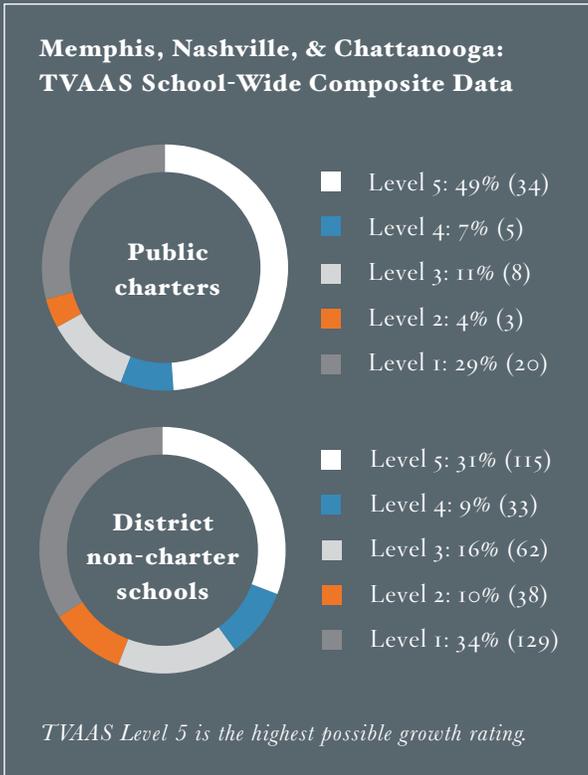
Basic Education Program

As the State of Tennessee considers funding challenges that face all public schools, as well as opportunities to strengthen the state's funding formula, the Center will advocate on behalf of public charter schools, and help ensure that the voices of charter school leaders and families are heard through these ongoing conversations.

A well-funded formula, structured appropriately to ensure equity, is in the best interest of all public school students, including those who attend the state's public charter schools.

TENNESSEE CHARTER PERFORMANCE

Since 2003, more and more Tennessee families want the option to choose charter schools. Here's why:



2014-15 Tennessee Charter State Reward Schools

KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	Memphis
Memphis Business Academy Elementary	Memphis
Memphis Business Academy Middle	Memphis
Memphis Business Academy High	Memphis
Power Center Academy Middle	Memphis
Power Center Academy High School	Memphis
STAR Academy	Memphis
<hr/>	
Intrepid College Prep	Nashville
KIPP Academy Nashville	Nashville
LEAD Academy	Nashville
LEAD Prep Southeast	Nashville
Liberty Collegiate Academy	Nashville
New Vision Academy	Nashville

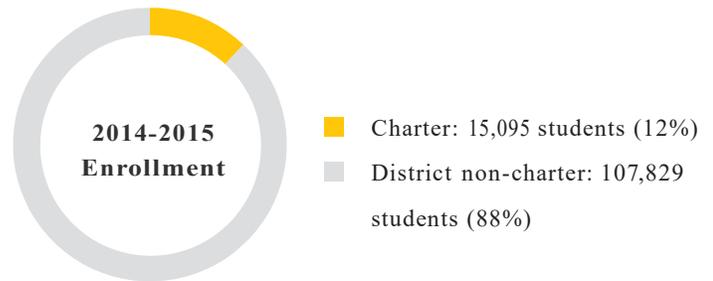
Memphis, Nashville and Chattanooga

	Public charter	District non-charter
Attendance Rate, K-12	95.2%	93.8%
Graduation Rate	All	79.5%
	Economically disadvantaged	78.4%
	Students with disabilities	61.5%
	Limited English proficient	68.2%

Analysis conducted on similar district schools (specialty special education district schools excluded for example)

MEMPHIS

As home to Tennessee's first charter schools, Memphis continues to host the largest public charter school sector in the state, with 64 public charter schools serving an estimated 19,800 students for the 2015-2016 school year. Overwhelming parent demand for high quality public school options has spurred this local growth of charter schools, and it is making a difference. Seven local public charter schools were identified as 2014-15 State Reward Schools for achieving top 5% in student growth and/or top 5% in student achievement.



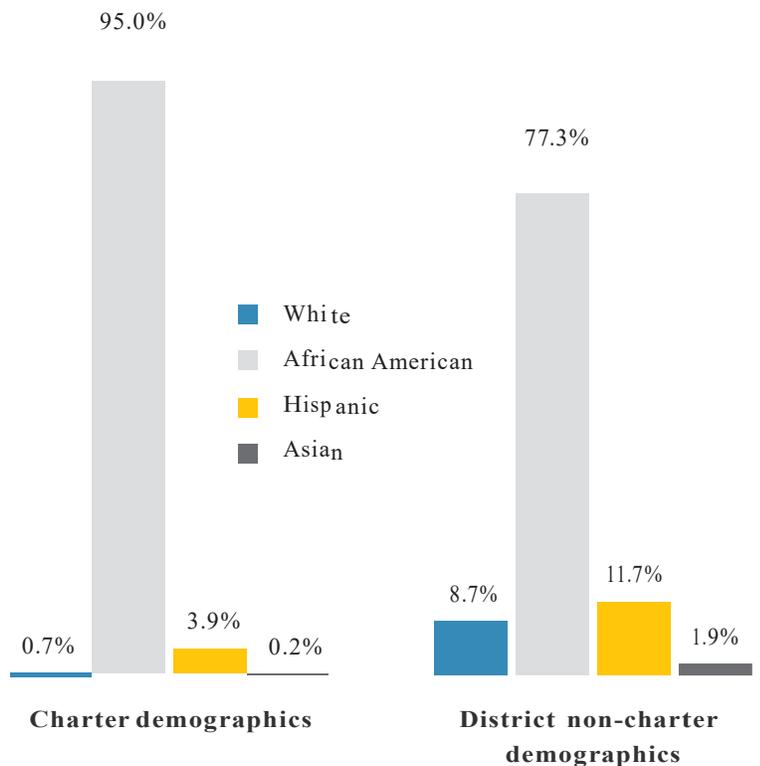
2014-2015 Charter enrollment: 15,095



2014-2015 District non-charter enrollment: 107,829



ED = Economically Disadvantaged
 SPED = Special Education
 LEP = Limited English Proficient



Note: Charter counts include both SCS and ASD charters, while District schools counts include SCS district schools and ASD direct run schools.

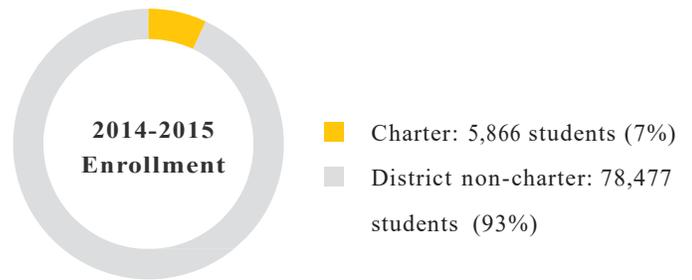
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District	Tier	School	TVAAS Composite	TVAAS Level	%ED*	%ELL	%SWD
Charter Reward Schools							
SCS	Middle	KIPP Memphis Middle Academy	6.93	5	91.3%	0.0%	13.4%
SCS	Elementary	Memphis Business Academy Elementary	5.95	5	95.1%	13.6%	3.0%
SCS	High	Memphis Business Academy High School	6.72	5	98.2%	3.7%	5.7%
SCS	Middle	Memphis Business Academy Middle	6.98	5	98.7%	12.4%	7.8%
SCS	High	Power Center High School	8.65	5	70.0%	0.0%	8.0%
SCS	Middle	Power Center Middle School	6.28	5	43.2%	4.4%	6.4%
SCS	Elementary	STAR Academy	4.49	5	62.4%	0.0%	5.1%
Charter Schools							
SCS	Elementary	Arrow Academy of Excellence	0.34	3	98.3%	0.0%	8.6%
ASD	Elementary	Aspire Coleman Elementary	-9.48	1	99.0%	0.0%	12.7%
ASD	Elementary	Aspire Hanley #1	4.01	5	99.7%	0.0%	12.3%
ASD	Elementary	Aspire Hanley #2	3.04	5	99.7%	0.0%	11.5%
SCS	Elementary	Aurora Collegiate Academy	3.91	5	93.7%	30.3%	9.1%
SCS	Elementary	Circles of Success Learning Academy	2.97	5	82.5%	0.0%	6.5%
SCS	Middle	City University Boys Prep	0.71	3	97.3%	0.0%	17.8%
SCS	Middle High	City University Girls Prep	0.72	3	91.7%	0.0%	13.3%
SCS	Elementary	City University School of Liberal Arts	1.99	4	53.4%	0.0%	7.9%
ASD	Middle/High	Cornerstone Prep Lester	1.32	4	98.2%	4.9%	11.7%
SCS	Elementary	Freedom Prep Academy	4.83	5	58.4%	0.0%	9.7%
ASD	High	Freedom Prep Westwood	-	-	99.4%	0.0%	7.2%
ASD	Middle	Green Dot Fairley High School	-1.30	2	92.5%	0.0%	11.0%
ASD	Elementary	Humes Prep	-5.24	1	94.4%	0.0%	19.9%
SCS	High	KIPP Collegiate Elementary	-8.92	1	92.4%	0.0%	7.4%
SCS	Middle	KIPP Collegiate High School	-1.15	2	72.3%	0.0%	14.2%
SCS	Elementary	KIPP Collegiate Middle School	-5.34	1	94.7%	0.0%	14.0%
ASD	Middle	KIPP Memphis Academy Elementary	-	-	93.4%	0.0%	6.6%
ASD	Middle	KIPP Memphis Prep Middle	1.76	4	95.4%	0.0%	16.6%
ASD	Elementary	KIPP Memphis University Middle	-4.66	1	86.7%	0.0%	15.7%
ASD	Middle	Klondike Prep Academy	-3.45	1	97.3%	0.0%	13.7%
ASD	High	Lester Prep	-0.38	3	100.0%	0.0%	14.8%
ASD	High	Martin Luther King Jr. Prep	-13.34	1	98.0%	1.0%	14.8%
SCS	Middle	Memphis Academy of Health Sciences High	3.71	5	74.0%	0.0%	8.7%
SCS	Middle/High	Memphis Academy of Health Sciences Middle	-1.95	2	76.6%	0.0%	9.2%
SCS	Elementary	Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering	-0.41	3	64.0%	0.0%	10.8%
SCS	Middle	Memphis College Prep	-2.51	1	89.2%	0.0%	9.4%
SCS	Middle/High	Memphis Grizzlies Prep	3.48	5	84.5%	0.0%	15.5%
SCS	Middle/High	Memphis Rise	6.72	5	74.7%	30.5%	13.7%
SCS	Middle/High	Memphis School of Excellence	1.95	4	94.5%	6.6%	2.2%
SCS	Elementary	New Consortium of Law and Business	-9.83	1	55.3%	0.0%	11.0%
SCS	Elementary	Promise Academy	1.53	4	97.5%	0.0%	9.1%
ASD	Middle/High	Promise Academy Spring Hill	-	-	97.2%	0.0%	9.2%
SCS	Elementary	Soulsville Charter School	11.01	5	86.1%	0.0%	12.0%
SCS	Middle	Southern Avenue Charter School	5.98	5	93.5%	0.0%	7.0%
SCS	Elementary	Veritas College Prep	3.66	5	84.9%	0.0%	17.1%
SCS	Elementary	Vision Prep	-	-	90.2%	0.0%	4.9%
SCS	Elementary	WEB Dubois Elementary School of Arts Technology	-9.76	1	79.8%	0.0%	9.6%
SCS	High	WEB Dubois Elementary School of Entrepreneurship	-2.88	1	58.5%	0.0%	3.8%
SCS	High	WEB Dubois High of Arts Technology	-5.74	1	66.4%	0.0%	12.5%
SCS	Middle	WEB Dubois High of Leadership Public Policy	-0.78	3	47.0%	0.0%	7.1%
SCS		WEB Dubois Middle of Leadership Public Policy	0.94	3	60.8%	0.0%	14.2%
SCS	Middle	WEB Dubois Middle School of Arts Technology	-5.23	1	82.2%	0.0%	18.6%
Charter Priority Schools							
SCS	Elementary	Omni Prep Academy - Lower School	-2.53	1	90.5%	8.5%	9.0%
SCS	Middle	Omni Prep Academy - Upper School	-0.01	3	86.8%	8.5%	17.1%

NASHVILLE

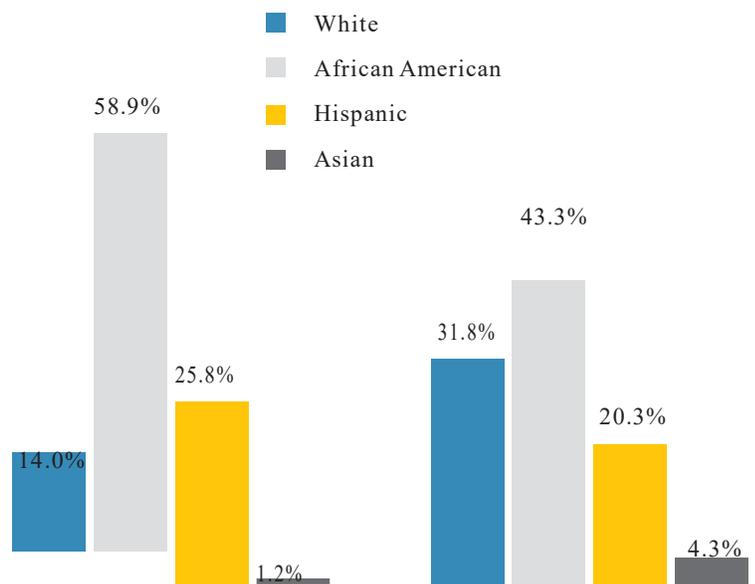
The city of Nashville has experienced a boom in population growth in recent years, and a growing sector of high quality public charter schools is helping serve its diverse urban school district. With an estimated enrollment this year of 8,200 students, the 29 public charter schools in Nashville are proving what is possible with public education and providing parents a new set of quality public school options.



2014-2015 Charter enrollment: 5,866



2014-2015 District non-charter enrollment: 78,477



ED = Economically Disadvantaged

SPED = Special Education

LEP = Limited English Proficient

Charter demographics

District non-charter demographics

Note: Charter counts include both MNPS and ASD charters, while District non-charter counts include MNPS district schools.

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District	Tier	School	TVAAS Composite	TVAAS Level	%ED*	%ELL	%SWD
Charter Reward Schools							
MNPS	Middle	Intrepid College Prep	9.03	5	82.7%	31.7%	13.3%
MNPS	Middle	KIPP Academy Nashville	9.20	5	88.3%	9.5%	12.9%
MNPS	Middle/High	LEAD Academy	10.37	5	85.5%	7.4%	13.6%
MNPS	Middle	Lead Prep Southeast	5.66	5	82.1%	21.7%	7.2%
MNPS	Middle	Liberty Collegiate	7.12	5	85.1%	8.4%	10.8%
MNPS	Middle	New Vision Academy	17.16	5	89.3%	21.3%	9.0%
Charter Schools							
MNPS	Middle	Cameron College Prep	2.89	5	92.6%	40.5%	10.6%
MNPS	Elementary	East End Prep	-	-	86.9%	5.7%	7.0%
MNPS	Middle	KIPP Nashville College Prep	2.69	5	83.8%	5.6%	19.6%
MNPS	High	KIPP Nashville Collegiate High	8.96	5	88.1%	0.0%	12.9%
MNPS	Middle	Knowledge Academy	-4.63	1	85.4%	17.3%	11.2%
MNPS	Middle	Nashville Academy of Computer Science	7.13	5	67.7%	0.0%	10.4%
MNPS	K-8	Nashville Classical	-	-	72.5%	0.0%	4.9%
MNPS	Middle	Nashville Prep	3.65	5	79.4%	5.7%	17.5%
MNPS	Elementary	Purpose Prep Academy	-	-	83.0%	0.0%	8.2%
MNPS	Elementary	Rocketship Northeast	3.31	5	95.0%	20.7%	11.4%
MNPS	Elementary	Smithson Craighead Academy	-5.16	5	92.2%	4.3%	10.9%
MNPS	Middle	STEM Prep	3.88	5	85.5%	28.6%	7.4%
MNPS	Middle	Valor Flagship Academy	13.12	5	47.7%	16.1%	7.4%

(no Charter Priority Schools)



CHATTANOOGA

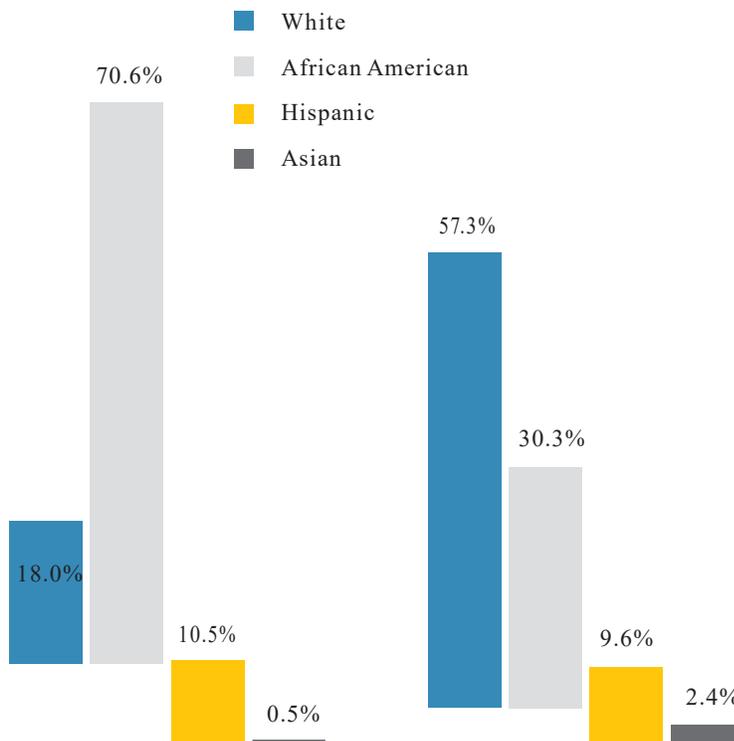
Although Chattanooga’s charter sector is small, Hamilton County is seeing a significant demand for more public school options, greater choices for parents, and new approaches to boost student achievement. While public charter school enrollment currently represents just 2% of local student enrollment, public charter schools represent an innovative and effective education governance model for the community.

2014-2015 Enrollment

Charter: 851 students (2%)
 District non-charter: 42,946 students (98%)



2014-2015 District non-charter enrollment: 42,946



Charter demographics

District non-charter demographics

ED = Economically Disadvantaged

SPED = Special Education

LEP = Limited English Proficient

Note: Charter counts include both SCS and ASD charters, while District non-charter counts include SCS district schools and ASD direct run schools.

District	Tier	School	TVAAS Composite	TVAAS Level	%ED*	%ELL	%SWD
HCDE	Elementary	Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence	3.10	5	66.1%	0.0%	4.6%
HCDE	Middle/High	Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy	2.09	5	69.9%	9.1%	7.1%
HCDE	High	Ivy Academy	-8.67	1	63.1%	0.0%	20.6%

KNOXVILLE

In 2015, Knoxville opened its first charter school with excitement as community leaders look to public charter schools to help expand options for more parents and neighborhoods.

Long dedicated to serving underserved youth in Knoxville, the Emerald Youth Foundation established the school because it saw a significant achievement gap between Knoxville's urban and suburban students. The school is dedicated to promoting a college going culture for students starting in Kindergarten.



The first charter school in Knoxville, Emerald Academy, opened in August of 2015. Since the first school opened grades K-1 and is growing out its grade configurations to K-8, the school will not have any state tested data until after the 2016-17 academic year, when it will have grades K-2 and grade 5.

Nashville office

209 10th Ave. South, Suite 416 Nashville, TN 37203

Phone: 615-401-7222

Memphis office

5050 Poplar Avenue, Suite 1714 Memphis, TN 38137



@tncharters

www.tnchartercenter.org

Budget Narrative File(s)

* **Mandatory Budget Narrative Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

[Delete Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

[View Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

To add more Budget Narrative attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

[Add Optional Budget Narrative](#)

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Budget Narrative

The Tennessee Department of Education requests **\$19,574,626** in CSP funds over the three year grant period. The following table provides a breakdown of amounts requested by budget category in years 1, 2, and 3 and a brief description of each cost estimate.

Budget Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Description of Costs
1. Personnel	██████	██████	██████	██████	Director of School Choice @ 0.5 FTE
	██████	██████	██████	██████	Grant Specialist and Admin Assistant @ 2.0 FTE
2. Fringe Benefits	██████	██████	██████	██████	Fringe Benefits for the above personnel calculated at 33%
3. Travel	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$39,000	Travel to CSP Directors Meeting, National Charter School Conferences, and in state travel for training and monitoring
4. Equipment	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	Computer equipment and other technology for new employees during first year
5. Supplies	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000	Office supplies and supplies for training/meeting events
6. Contractual	\$65,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$80,000	NACSA Authorizer Modules and training

Tennessee Department of Education – Budget Narrative

	\$17,000	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$30,000	Grant Management software
	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$15,000	Charter Schools Annual Report
	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	Research Study of Best Practices
7. Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	No funds will be spent on construction.
8. Other	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$18,000,000	PLIMP Subgrants
	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$600,000	Dissemination Subgrants
9. Total Direct Costs	\$6,548,607	\$6,480,607	\$6,470,607	\$19,499,821	
10. Indirect Costs	\$26,849	\$24,413	\$23,543	\$74,805	Indirect cost applied to budget categories 1 - 6, with only the first \$25,000 for each contract
11. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	No funds will be spent on training stipends.
12. Total Costs	\$6,575,456	\$6,505,020	\$6,494,150	\$19,574,626	

Personnel (Line 1):

Tennessee proposes to use CSP funds to provide half of the base salary and wages of the Director of School Choice who devotes 50 percent of time to charter schools. In addition, upon receipt of a new grant award, the program manager will seek to recruit and hire two new full-time employees in the Office of School Choice. A Grant Specialist will be hired and charged

with improving the grant award process to award based on preference points, providing information sessions and training to grantees and peer reviewers, conducting grant award cycles, and post-award monitoring of charter school grantees. An administrative assistant will be hired to assist with collection and compilation of accurate data on charter schools, logistical arrangements and registration for trainings, dissemination of information to subgrantees and interested parties, travel arrangements, purchasing, and data entry/report preparation for CSP project.

Fringe Benefits (Line 2):

Fringe benefits are calculated for 50 percent of the Director of School Choice’s salary and 100 percent of the grant specialist and administrative assistant’s salary. This amount is based on the rate of 33 percent of total salary.

Travel (Line 3):

Travel costs are calculated using the Director of School Choice’s average costs for travel over the last two years to required meetings, national conferences, and onsite charter school monitoring visits. Each amount reflects total estimated cost of travel for three people to the CSP Directors meeting in Washington D.C., one national charter school conference per year, and in-state mileage to charter schools. Costs for out of state travel include airfare, lodging, meals, parking, and if applicable, conference fees.

Equipment (Line 4):

Equipment costs are calculated only for year one when the new grant specialist and administrative assistant are hired. The year one amount reflects the cost for new computers, related hardware, and projector for training purposes.

Supplies (Line 5):

The proposed amount for supplies reflects the yearly average cost for consumable office supplies needed to run the CSP grant program as well as supplies needed for meeting/training purposes.

Contractual (Line 6):

Tennessee will contract with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to strengthen the quality of charter school authorizing practices throughout the state by developing a set Tennessee performance frameworks and providing authorizer training on best practices and new performance frameworks. The year one amount reflects the publication and dissemination of agreed upon deliverables and training. Years 2 and 3 reflect the proposed amount of funds needed for ongoing training.

Tennessee has additional plans to contract for new grant management software. Tennessee's current software for processing CSP disbursements is outdated. A new software program will be selected and purchased to enable grantees to input their unique budgets, invoices, and request for reimbursements while allowing the department to track and process grant disbursements more efficiently. The cost includes consultation, software creation, training, and ongoing technical support.

Tennessee will contract with an experienced researcher to conduct annual charter school studies and produce the annual report due each year to the General Assembly. This report provides information on charter school applications, their approvals and appeals, charter school characteristics and academic performance, as well as mobility of students out of charter schools.

Tennessee will contract with a research institution to produce a charter school study to gather the innovative models and best practices of high quality charter schools in Tennessee.

This study will be contracted during the second year of the grant period and results will be disseminated to all schools at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

Other (Line 8):

Tennessee has determined that approximately \$600,000 is needed in funding by a startup school during the planning and first two years of operation (with the largest portion of the amount provided during the planning year). TDOE will award 10 subgrants during each year of the grant period, at least two of which will be for replication of high quality charter schools.

Tennessee estimates \$600,000 per award to subgrantees to be divided out as follows: \$300,000 in year one (planning year), \$200,000 in year 2 (first year of operation), and \$100,000 in year 3 (second year of operation). In addition to the proposed planning and implementation grants, Tennessee will award at least two dissemination grants annually during the grant period in the amount of \$100,000 each.

Indirect Costs (Line 10):

Indirect costs are applied to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment less than \$5000, supplies, and the first \$25,000 of each contract. Indirect costs are calculated using Tennessee's indirect cost rate agreement of 8.7%. The indirect cost rate agreement is attached.

INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

Organization

Tennessee Department of Education
6th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower,
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243

Date: JUN 23 2015

Agreement No: 2015-188

Filing Reference: Replaces previous
Agreement No. 2014-133

Dated: 2/27/2015

The approved indirect cost rates herein are for use on grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. The rates are subject to the conditions included in Section II of this Agreement and issued by the U.S. Department of Education pursuant to the authority in Attachment A of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87.

Indirect rates for fiscal years that begin on or after December 26, 2014 are subject to 2 CFR Part 200.

Section I - Rates and Bases

<u>Type</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Applicable To</u>
Fixed	07/01/2014	06/30/2015	8.1%	MTDC	Unrestricted
Fixed	07/01/2014	06/30/2015	5.7%	MTDC	Restricted
Fixed	07/01/2015	06/30/2016	8.7%	MTDC	Unrestricted
Fixed	07/01/2015	06/30/2016	7.5%	MTDC	Restricted

Distribution Base:

MTDC Modified Total Direct Cost - Total direct costs excluding equipment, capital expenditures, participant support costs, pass-through funds and the portion of each subaward (subcontract or subgrant) above \$25,000 (each award; each year).

Applicable To:

Unrestricted Unrestricted rates apply to programs that do not require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

Restricted Restricted rates apply to programs that require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

Treatment of Fringe Benefits:

Fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as direct costs. Pursuant to OMB Circular A-87-Attachment B Paragraph 8.d.(3), unused leave costs for all employees will be allocated as an indirect cost except for those employee salaries designated as a direct cost for the restricted rate calculation.

Capitalization Policy: Items of equipment are capitalized and depreciated if the initial acquisition cost is equal to or greater than \$5,000.

Section III - Special Remarks

Alternative Reimbursement Methods: If any federal programs are reimbursing indirect costs by a methodology other than the approved rates in this agreement, such costs should be credited to the programs and the approved rates should be used to identify the maximum amount of indirect costs allocable.

Submission of Proposals: New indirect cost proposals are necessary to obtain approved indirect cost rates for future fiscal years. **The next indirect cost rate proposal is due six months prior to the expiration dates of the rates in this agreement.**

Section IV - Approvals

For the State Education Agency:

Tennessee Department of Education
6th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower,
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243



Signature

Candice McQueen
Name

Commissioner of Education
Title

6/30/15
Date

For the Federal Government:

U.S. Department of Education
OCFO / FIO / ICG
550 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4450



Signature

Frances Outland
Name

Director, Indirect Cost Group
Title

JUN 23 2015
Date

Negotiator: Andre Hylton
Telephone Number: (202) 245-7568

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
FOR THE SF-424**

1. Project Director:

Prefix:	First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:	Suffix:
	Marcy		Tidwell	

Address:

Street1:	9th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
Street2:	710 James Robertson Parkway
City:	Nashville
County:	Davidson
State:	TN: Tennessee
Zip Code:	37243
Country:	USA: UNITED STATES

Phone Number (give area code)	Fax Number (give area code)
6 [REDACTED]	615-532-4791

Email Address:

[REDACTED]

2. Novice Applicant:

Are you a novice applicant as defined in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 (and included in the definitions page in the attached instructions)?

Yes No Not applicable to this program

3. Human Subjects Research:

a. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed Project Period?

Yes No

b. Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

Yes Provide Exemption(s) #: 1 2 3 4 5 6

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

c. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to this form as indicated in the definitions page in the attached instructions.

[REDACTED]	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008
Expiration Date: 06/30/2017

Name of Institution/Organization

Tennessee Department of Education

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits	58,707.00	58,707.00	58,707.00			176,121.00
3. Travel	13,000.00	13,000.00	13,000.00			39,000.00
4. Equipment	10,000.00	0.00	0.00			10,000.00
5. Supplies	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00			6,000.00
6. Contractual	87,000.00	29,000.00	19,000.00			135,000.00
7. Construction	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
8. Other	6,200,000.00	6,200,000.00	6,200,000.00			18,600,000.00
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	6,548,607.00	6,480,607.00	6,470,607.00			19,499,821.00
10. Indirect Costs*	26,849.00	24,413.00	23,543.00			74,805.00
11. Training Stipends	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

***Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 07/01/2015 To: 06/30/2016 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify):

The Indirect Cost Rate is 8.70%.

(3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC? Yes No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

(4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?

Yes No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.

(5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is %.

PR/Award # U28?A160021

Name of Institution/Organization	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
Tennessee Department of Education		

**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)

ED 524