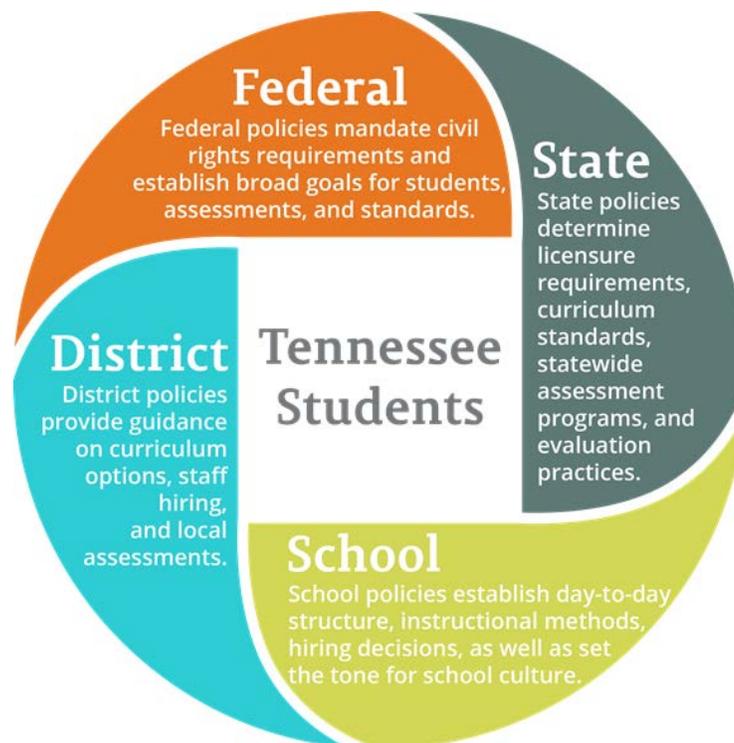# Accountability

Accountability

Tennessee recognizes and supports the principle that the federal department of education has an interest in ensuring that states implement effective accountability systems, so that all children have the opportunity to pursue their chosen path in life. Through Race to the Top, we created a framework and process for ensuring that all districts, schools and classrooms are focused on advancing student achievement for all children. Our current and proposed plan represents a system that is strong on top-line goals, supported by effective state policy and management, but driven by local innovation and execution.

Responsibilities

Tennessee's accountability and reporting system is rooted in the following beliefs about federal, state, and local responsibilities.

Federal
Federal policies mandate civil rights requirements and establish broad goals for students, assessments, and standards.

State
State policies determine licensure requirements, curriculum standards, statewide assessment programs, and evaluation practices.

District
District policies provide guidance on curriculum options, staff hiring, and local assessments.

Tennessee Students

School
School policies establish day-to-day structure, instructional methods, hiring decisions, as well as set the tone for school culture.

Federal

We believe that the USEd has the responsibility to require states to maintain rigorous state-established, top-line goals for both student achievement and for closing the gap between different groups of students. The USEd has the responsibility to monitor annual progress against these goals, and to report and highlight the progress of states against these goals.

State

We believe that the state has the responsibility to set all interim benchmark goals, to define our measurement system, and to report to the USEd. While the federal government can and should require states to maintain rigorous state-established top-line goals, it is the state's responsibility to determine the interim measures that will lead to achieving the top-line goals. The state also has the responsibility of defining the measurement tool, including how to measure growth in outcomes and reduce gaps in student achievement. Additionally, the state has the responsibility of signing off on district goals, measuring district and school-level progress every year (disaggregated by historically underserved student groups), and reporting district and school results publicly. Because the state is responsible for ensuring the attainment of state-level goals, the state also has the duty to support districts that are failing to make progress against goals, and to intervene in the lowest-performing schools.

District

We believe that districts should receive greater freedom and flexibility when they are successful, support when they demonstrate progress but are failing to reach ambitious goals, and intervention when their results regress or demonstrate growing gaps between groups of students. Districts are responsible for implementing the reforms needed to meet targets that are set by school and district accountability frameworks. Districts are responsible for managing their schools to ensure that they make progress against goals. When schools fail to make progress, districts have the obligation to work with the state to develop plans for improvement. When schools perform at the very bottom of the state performance curve, the state has the obligation to remove district oversight. In all other cases, though, the district has management responsibility, and maintains accountability for student growth and outcomes.

School

We believe that schools have significant influence and the ability to impact student learning. By establishing day-to-day processes and procedures that clearly demonstrate a commitment to learning, schools are uniquely positioned to be the primary driver for student achievement. In addition, having building leaders who are also instructional leaders is key, employing evidence-based instructional strategies, and differentiating instruction and supports for students.

Framework

Tennessee proposes an accountability framework focused on increasing student achievement at a consistent rate each year, and improving performance of students in historically underperforming student groups by a significant but realistic rate each year.

We establish our goals on growth against the current baseline. We believe that all students, courses, schools and districts should have equal capacity to improve against their current

baseline. As a result, our goals call for each district to have targets of advancing proficiency levels at an increasing and ambitious rate over the next eight years, and for all schools to do the same. This focus on growth against our current performance levels meets schools and districts where they are and creates accountability that is fair but rigorous.

The core elements of TDOE's accountability framework provides for the following:
- An accountability system requiring, in aggregate, significant growth in student achievement in core subjects and overall improvement in subgroup performance
- An accountability structure that recognizes the top-performing schools
- An accountability structure that creates meaningful, tailored interventions for the lowest 5 percent of schools in absolute performance not demonstrating growth
- An accountability structure that identifies and creates support for schools with underperforming subgroups.

Tennessee's Long Term Goals

Tennessee articulated four overarching goals under *Tennessee Succeeds*. As part of our ESSA state plan, we have defined long-term goals and interim targets for the next eight years: school year 2016-17 through school year 2024-25. In order to adequately and accurately determine the projected target for each subject and all students, Tennessee will use the 2016-17 assessment results to determine the baseline.

Tennessee Succeeds Goals	Interim Targets
1 Tennessee will rank in the **top half of states** on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2019. Tennessee's 2015 NAEP rank: • 25th on 4th grade math • 37th on 8th grade math • 36th on 4th grade reading • 30th on 8th grade reading • 19th on 4th grade science • 21st on 8th grade science	2017: • 25th on 4th grade math • 31th on 8th grade math • 27th on 4th grade reading • 28th on 8th grade reading 2019: • 25th on 4th grade math • 25th on 8th grade math • 25th on 4th grade reading • 25th on 8th grade reading
2 75 percent of Tennessee third graders will be **proficient in reading** by 2025. In 2015, Tennessee had 43 percent of third graders reading proficiently.	Baseline will need to be set after the assessments are aligned to revised standards are available for the 2016-17 school year.

Tennessee Succeeds Goals	Interim Targets
In 2015, Tennessee's average composite equaled 19.4 on ACT.	ACT average composite: • 2016 – 19.7[29] • 2017 – 20.0 • 2018 – 20.3 • 2019 – 20.6
Of spring 2015 graduates, 62 percent matriculated into postsecondary in fall 2015.	Five percent increase in matriculation each year, based on first year results of TN Promise: • 2016 – 67 percent • 2017 – 72 percent • 2018 – 77 percent
As of fall 2015, 24 percent of the class of 2008 earned a postsecondary credential within six years.	• 2–3 percent annual increase in students earning postsecondary credential within six years • Fall 2026 = 50 percent of class of 2020 earning credential

Due to the suspension of grades 3–8 testing in the spring of 2016 and a shift to a more rigorous and better-aligned assessment, the department will elect to submit updated data and annual goals after the successful testing program administered in spring 2017. The goals and targets detailed below are subject to change based on the data from 2016-17 in order to ensure these goals are ambitious and achievable.

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[29] Tennessee interim target for ACT average composite in 2016 was 19.7. The 2016 ACT average composite score was 19.9 [using "best of" scores].

Math Achievement Goal

By 2024-25, Tennessee will achieve a 50 percent reduction in the number of students not meeting the on track or mastered level on the state's annual assessment.

HS Math									
Subgroup	**2015-16 baseline**	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**
All students	20.8	25.8	30.7	35.7	40.6	45.6	50.5	55.5	60.4	65.4
Economically Disadvantaged	9.5	15.2	20.8	26.5	32.1	37.8	43.4	49.1	54.8	60.4
Children with Disabilities	3.4	9.4	15.5	21.5	27.6	33.6	39.6	45.7	51.7	57.7
English Learners	4.8	10.8	16.7	22.7	28.6	34.6	40.5	46.5	52.4	58.4
African American	7.4	13.2	19.0	24.8	30.6	36.3	42.1	47.9	53.7	59.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	19.4	24.4	29.5	34.5	39.6	44.6	49.6	54.7	59.7	64.7
Asian	45.4	48.8	52.2	55.6	59.1	62.5	65.9	69.3	72.7	76.1
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	33.1	37.3	41.5	45.6	49.8	54.0	58.2	62.4	66.6	70.7
Hispanic or Latino	13.9	19.3	24.7	30.0	35.4	40.8	46.2	51.6	57.0	62.3
White	25.4	30.1	34.7	39.4	44.1	48.7	53.4	58.0	62.7	67.4

Reading/ELA Achievement Goal

By 2024-25, Tennessee will achieve a 50 percent reduction in the number of students not meeting the on track or mastered level on the state's annual assessment.

HS Reading / ELA										
Subgroup	2015-16 baseline	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
All students	30.4	34.8	39.1	43.5	47.8	52.2	56.5	60.9	65.2	69.6
Economically Disadvantaged	16.7	21.9	27.1	32.3	37.5	42.7	47.9	53.1	58.4	63.6
Children with Disabilities	5.5	11.4	17.3	23.2	29.1	35.0	40.9	46.8	52.8	58.7
English Learners	3.4	9.4	15.5	21.5	27.6	33.6	39.6	45.7	51.7	57.7
African American	15.7	21.0	26.2	31.5	36.8	42.0	47.3	52.6	57.9	63.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	33.8	37.9	42.1	46.2	50.4	54.5	58.6	62.8	66.9	71.0
Asian	49.8	52.9	56.1	59.2	62.4	65.5	68.6	71.8	74.9	78.0
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	40.6	44.3	48.0	51.7	55.5	59.2	62.9	66.6	70.3	74.0
Hispanic or Latino	22.9	27.7	32.5	37.4	42.2	47.0	51.8	56.6	61.5	66.3
White	35.7	39.7	43.7	47.8	51.8	55.8	59.8	63.8	67.9	71.9

Science Achievement Goal

By 2024-25, Tennessee will achieve a 50 percent reduction in the number of students not meeting the on track or mastered level on the state's annual assessment.[30]

HS Science									
Subgroup	**2015-16 baseline**	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**
All students	48.9	52.1	55.3	58.5	61.7	64.9	68.1	71.3	74.5	77.6
Economically Disadvantaged	32.7	36.9	41.1	45.3	49.5	53.7	57.9	62.1	66.4	70.6
Children with Disabilities	16.2	21.4	26.7	31.9	37.2	42.4	47.6	52.9	58.1	63.3
English Learners	14	19.4	24.8	30.1	35.5	40.9	46.3	51.6	57.0	62.4
African American	27.8	32.3	36.8	41.3	45.9	50.4	54.9	59.4	63.9	68.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	56.1	58.8	61.6	64.3	67.1	69.8	72.6	75.3	78.1	80.8
Asian	69.6	71.5	73.4	75.3	77.2	79.1	81.0	82.9	84.8	86.7
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	62.4	64.8	67.1	69.5	71.8	74.2	76.5	78.9	81.2	83.6
Hispanic or Latino	39	42.8	46.6	50.4	54.3	58.1	61.9	65.7	69.5	73.3
White	56.5	59.2	61.9	64.7	67.4	70.1	72.8	75.5	78.3	81.0

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[30] Tennessee is currently updating its science assessment, which will result in a new baseline and review/revision of interim targets.

High School Graduation Rate Goal

By 2025, Tennessee will reach a 95 percent graduation rate for all students.

Graduation Rate									
Subgroup	2015-16 baseline	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
All Students	88.5	89.2	89.9	90.7	91.4	92.1	92.8	93.5	94.3	95.0
Economically Disadvantaged	85.5	86.4	87.3	88.2	89.1	90.0	90.9	91.8	92.8	93.7
Children with Disabilities	71.8	73.6	75.3	77.1	78.9	80.6	82.4	84.1	85.9	87.7
English Learners	75.6	77.1	78.7	80.2	81.7	83.2	84.8	86.3	87.8	89.3
African American	82.3	83.4	84.5	85.6	86.7	87.8	88.9	90.0	91.2	92.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	86.5	87.3	88.2	89.0	89.9	90.7	91.6	92.4	93.3	94.1
Asian or Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	92.9	93.3	93.8	94.2	94.7	95.1	95.6	96.0	96.5	96.9
Hispanic or Latino	83.7	84.7	85.7	86.8	87.8	88.8	89.8	90.8	91.9	92.9
White	91.3	91.8	92.4	92.9	93.5	94.0	94.6	95.1	95.7	96.2

English Language Proficiency Goal

By 2024-25, 75 percent of English Learners will meet the growth standard on WIDA ACCESS. The uniform growth standard is equal to .7 for each year, regardless of time in ESL program. The state expects that three of every four EL students will meet the growth standard of .7 by 2024-25.

English Language Proficiency									
Subgroup	2014-15 baseline	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
English Learners	51.3	53.9	56.6	59.2	61.8	64.6	67.1	69.7	72.3	75.0

State Report Card

The Tennessee state report card will reflect accountability metrics for all districts and schools and additional transparency metrics for all districts and schools. ESSA clearly outlines the requirements for the state report card in § 1111(h)(1)(C) and Tennessee will meet those requirements, as well as share additional information relevant to our parents, educators, students, school board members, legislators, and community members. Through our stakeholder engagement during the drafting process, we heard from thousands of Tennesseans about what is most important to them to better understand the successes and challenges within our public schools.

Tennessee proposes to incorporate the following metrics on the report card to provide additional information to parents, educators, students, and other stakeholders about all of our schools. These metrics will not be included in accountability, unless specifically noted in the following sections. For accountability measures, Tennessee will continue to use the minimum n-size of 30 students. For reporting purposes, Tennessee will reduce n-size to 10 students. These metrics will be disaggregated by Tennessee's accountability subgroups, and when available and applicable be disaggregated by all subgroups under ESSA. Unless otherwise noted, all metrics will begin to appear on the report card in December 2018, reflecting data from the 2017-18 school year.

Metric	Measure	Timeline	Level	Disaggregated by Subgroup
Postsecondary matriculation	Percent of graduates that matriculate into postsecondary program (4yr, 2yr, or credential) the fall following high school graduation	Tennessee currently collects this data	State, district, and school metric	Yes
Postsecondary completion	Percent of graduates that complete postsecondary program within six years of high school graduation	Tennessee currently collects this data and continues to refine the data practices	State, district, and school metric	Yes
Equitable access to highly-effective teachers	Percent of Below students with access to highly effective teachers compared to the percent of Mastered students with access	Tennessee currently collects this data and shares with districts through the human capital/equity reports to districts	State, district, and school metric	
Teacher retention	Percent of teachers retained/continuing to teach within the district and state	Tennessee currently collects this data	State and District metric	No
Teacher chronic absences	Percent of teachers missing 10% or more of the school year	Tennessee will begin collecting this data, engaging	Potential state, school, and district metric	No

Metric	Measure	Timeline	Level	Disaggregated by Subgroup
		stakeholders, and creating business rules for what is included in this metric and how it will be shared. Timeline TBD		
Types of EPSOs offered	Types of EPSOs offered	Tennessee is working to improve our data quality for this metric.	State, district, and school	No
Students earning ESPO credit	Percent of students earning EPSO credit	Tennessee is working to improve our data quality for this metric.	State, district and school	Yes
Students completing 1+ EPSO	Percent of students completing at least 1 EPSO	Tennessee currently collects this data	State, district, and school	Yes
Students complete 2+ EPSO and earning industry credential	Percent of students completing 2+ EPSO and earning industry credential	Tennessee is working to improve our data quality for this metric.	State, district, and school * included in "Ready Graduate" indicator	Yes
Students completing 4+ EPSO	Percent of students completing 4+ EPSO	Tennessee currently collects this data	District and school metric * included in "Ready Graduate" indicator	Yes
Students earning industry credential[31]	Percent of students earning industry credential	Tennessee is working to improve our data quality for this metric.	State, district, and school metric	Yes
Extended cohort graduation rate	Percent of students graduating in five years and a summer	At the earliest December 2019 (for 2018-19 school year)	State, district, and school metric	Yes
Exclusionary Discipline	Percent of students not in class due to all exclusionary disciplinary practices	December 2019 (for 2018-19 school year) Tennessee currently reports out of school suspension and expulsion data	State, district, and school	Yes
Student mobility	Number of students entering, reentering,	Tennessee currently collects this data	District and school level	Yes

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[31] See Appendix I

Metric	Measure	Timeline	Level	Disaggregated by Subgroup
	and withdrawing after the first day of school as a percent of total enrollment			
Students participating in at least one extracurricular activity	Percent of students participating in at least one extracurricular activity	Tennessee does not collect or monitor this information	Reported by schools on website	At district's discretion

Historically Underperforming Student Groups

Tennessee will hold districts and schools accountable for four primary subgroups: economically disadvantaged (ED), students with disabilities (SWD), English learners (EL), and Black/Hispanic/Native American (BHN). Further, in instances when schools do not meet the threshold n-count for any one of the four aforementioned subgroups, they will be accountable for student performance in that subgroup through the "super subgroup", which will include any student who is a member of any one of the four focus subgroups—ED, SWD, EL, and BHN.

In order to maintain statistical reliability, Tennessee's accountability model uses Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) targets. To increase confidence of the sample, Tennessee will continue to use 30 as its n-count threshold. This is also considered a best practice from a statistical basis to minimalize potential sampling errors.

For transparency purposes, Tennessee will be reporting at the level of individual racial and ethnic groups, as well as lowering n-count to 10 for the purposes of reporting. The state report card will include the progress of all subgroups, including each racial/ethnic subgroup, and data will be disaggregated including progress against subgroup AMO targets. We believe this addresses any concern that the performance of an individual racial or ethnic group could be masked by the performance of another in the aggregated group.

The spirit of the Every Student Succeeds Act, as well as the original and previous reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, has been to underscore the importance of achievement for all students, regardless of background. In order for students who identify as racial or ethnic minorities to be appropriately included in the accountability system, Tennessee uses the combined BHN subgroup. The BHN combined subgroup has been approved under Tennessee's waiver, and demonstrably increases incentives and pressure on schools and districts to target the performance of historically underserved subgroups of students, especially when coupled with disaggregated reporting at lower n-count to increase transparency around achievement for individual racial/ethnic groups.

For context, more than 1,000 schools (just over 60 percent) in Tennessee are eligible for a BHN subgroup. Of these schools, **every single one would not be eligible for at least one individual racial/ethnic subgroup** of the aggregated group (i.e., Black/African American and/or Hispanic/Latino and/or Native American). Of these 1,000-plus schools:

- All but one were eligible for a BHN subgroup and did not have enough Native American students to be considered eligible alone.
- Nearly 60 percent were eligible for a BHN subgroup and did not have enough Hispanic students to be considered eligible alone.
- Roughly one-quarter were eligible for a BHN subgroup and did not have enough Black students to be considered eligible alone.
- Nearly 15 percent were eligible for a BHN subgroup and did not have students in any individual subgroup to be considered eligible alone. One out of every seven schools eligible for a BHN subgroup would not be held accountable **at all** for the subgroup performance of historically underserved racial minorities, which seems to run counter to the spirit of equity championed in ESSA.
- At the student level:
  - More than 13,000 records for Black/African American students would be excluded
  - More than 26,000 records for Hispanic/Latino students would be excluded
  - More than 4,000 records for Native American students would be excluded

In addition, the use of a super subgroup under the proposed framework (i.e., when students are one of: BHN, Economically Disadvantaged, English Learner, or Students with Disabilities) **will be restricted to instances in which schools do not meet sufficient N-count thresholds in any of the individual subgroups mentioned above**. As such, these schools would receive no accountability incentives or rewards at all for targeting the performance of their subgroups.

Accountability for English Learners

Tennessee serves students from many languages and many countries. We have more than 150 languages and more than 100 countries represented in our English learner population. The department provides policy that sets minimum standards for Tennessee school districts and works to help ELs achieve success in and full access to all curriculum provided. In addition training is provided to general education and ESL teachers to provide accommodations and modifications to ensure the success of English learners.

Students enrolled prior to the beginning of a school year must be screened within 30 calendar days of the start of the school year. Students enrolled during the school year must be screened with 30 calendar days of enrollment. Upon determining that a student is an EL, the student must be scheduled for appropriate ESL services and those services must begin immediately.

As an EL reaches high levels of English proficiency, determining when they are ready to exit from ESL services becomes a necessary decision. It is imperative to ensure that these students have

attained a degree of English proficiency that will allow them to achieve academic success—without direct ESL support—at levels comparable to their native English-speaking peers.

TDOE defines long-term ELs (LTELs) as those having finished their sixth year of ESL instruction without qualifying for exit. All students beginning a seventh year of ESL instruction will be highlighted as LTELs. Technical assistance for working with this group of ELs will be offered through professional development (PD) beginning in summer 2017 to regional professional learning communities (PLCs).

TDOE defines recently arrived ELs (RAELs) as those having ELs who have not completed a full calendar year of ESL instruction. This group contains refugees, students with limited and interrupted formal education (SLIFEs), immigrants who have recently moved to the U.S. and others who are new to the program. This will not include the preschool and kindergarten students who were born in the U.S. or who have lived here for most of their lives. Tennessee proposes utilizing the option to assess and report the performance of each RAEL annually and exclude the RAEL's results on the assessment in accountability in year one.

One critical component of instruction for this group is acculturation. It is critical that they understand the expectations of the U.S. school culture and the community in which they live. This group also requires critical differentiation of instruction to meet the gaps in learning that they might have experienced. Technical assistance will also be offered for working with this group of students to regional PLCs beginning in summer 2017.

Students scoring fluent English proficient are exited from ESL services but will continue to be monitored academically for a four-year period. Student being monitored during the four transitional years are considered transitional former ELs. As with any student, all ELs and former ELs should receive services to be successful in academic classes. During those four years, transitional ELs may continue to receive necessary accommodations on state assessments. Students currently receiving ESL services, and transitional former ELs, are included in the English learner subgroup for Title I reporting and accountability purposes. After the four-year monitoring period, a student is considered a former EL and is no longer included in the subgroup.

Exiting from ESL service is based on a student's proficiency in all areas of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. WIDA ACCESS scores must support the decision to exit a student. English proficiency is based on attaining fluent English proficiency on the summative, spring WIDA ACCESS for ELs assessment. At a minimum, ELs must obtain both a composite and a literacy score of 5.0 on the WIDA ACCESS for ELs to exit ESL services. Additional exit criteria are currently being researched. Performance on an academic content assessment is not used in the exit criteria for EL students.

All districts, whether Title III funds are received or not, are responsible for ensuring that ELs are afforded the same opportunities as they would be with that funding. Districts may not exclude ELs from any program or extra-curricular activity based on national origin, minority status, or English proficiency.

Long-Term Goal for English Language Proficiency

Tennessee's long-term goal for English learners is by 2024-25, 75 percent of English Learners will meet the growth standard on WIDA ACCESS. Additionally, the majority of EL students will exit within a six year period from English language development programs. After exit, the ELs will begin the transition period. The field recognizes that it takes the average English learner between five to ten years to reach proficiency adequate to compete with native English speaking peers. The earlier the student begins the English language acquisition educational process in his or her career, the sooner he or she may exit from these services.

Tennessee will use the results from WIDA ACCESS for the ELP measure in its accountability framework, focusing on two areas:
1. Percentage of students scoring proficient (exiting) and setting expectations for that for schools and
2. Percentage of students meeting the growth standard of .7

Graduation Rates

Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

With the cohort graduating in the 2010-11 school year, Tennessee began calculating a four-year adjusted cohort graduation, disaggregated by all subgroups, at the school, district, and state levels. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years and a summer with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.[32]

From the beginning of ninth grade, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently "adjusted" by adding any students who transfer into the cohort later during the ninth grade and the next three years and subtracting any students who transfer out during that same period.

The four-year graduation rate counts a student who graduates with a regular high school diploma within four years and a summer as a high school graduate in his or her original cohort—that is, the cohort with which he or she started ninth grade. For example, a student who enters the ninth grade for the first time in the 2011-12 school year and graduates in three years would be included in the cohort of students expected to graduate in the 2014-15 school year, even though that student would receive his or her diploma in the 2013-14 school year. The student who graduates in less than four years is included only in the graduation rate calculated for the cohort of students who started ninth grade in 2011-12. Effectively, the student's graduation information is "banked" for a year until his or her cohort graduates in 2014-15.

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[32] U.S. Department of Education. High School Graduation Rate. Non-regulatory Guidance. (22 December, 2008). Web.

Any student who graduates in more than four years is counted as a non-graduate in the four-year graduation rate. Students graduating in more than four years and a summer, are included in the denominator of the four-year graduation rate and are not included in the numerator because the students did not graduate in four years or less with a regular high school diploma.

The student who graduates in more than four years and a summer is not removed from the cohort or assigned to a different cohort when calculating the four-year graduation rate. A student with a disability who does not graduate with a regular high school diploma—or an alternate academic diploma obtained within the time period for which the state ensures the availability of a free appropriate public education under § 612(a)(1) of the IDEA—but instead receives special education diploma, certificate of completion, or any other degree or certificate that is not fully aligned with a state's academic content standards is not be counted as graduating in calculating either the four-year or extended-year graduation rate.

Extended-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

While most students graduate within the expected four years and a summer, some students require additional time to earn a diploma. The current analysis and discussion has focused almost solely on the four-year rates that treats all students who have not earned a diploma within four years as non-graduates.[33] The TDOE believes that the vast majority of students can complete the high school diploma within the allotted time of four years and a summer. In the most recent school year, 88.5 percent of students completed their high school diploma within this timeframe. As such, the district and school accountability frameworks include the typical four-year graduation rate to evaluate school and district performance.

However, the TDOE recognizes that some students do succeed in completing high school with additional years of schooling. In order to provide incentives to schools and districts to continue to serve those students who require extra time to earn a diploma, the TDOE's district accountability framework includes a metric that measures the reduction in district drop-out rates. This metric recognizes districts for decreasing the percent of students classified as drop-outs. A drop-out is any student who does not continue to attempt to earn a high school diploma. This means the district will receive credit for continuing to serve those student who do not complete with four years and a summer.

Additionally, beginning with class of the 2018, Tennessee will calculate and report an extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate which includes students who graduate with a regular high school diploma in up to five years for reporting purposes. (34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(1)(v)). This metric will be included on the state's annual report card. Tennessee's transparent reporting of this data will highlight the progress made with subgroups that may need more time to earn their high

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[33] Everyone Graduates Center at the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University. *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenge in Raising High School Graduation Rates*. (2016) (pg. 42) Web.

school diploma. For example, EL student who enroll in a U.S. school for the first time in high school are likely to require additional supports and more time to earn a diploma. The reporting of the extended graduation rate by subgroup will bring focus to progress with students who persist toward a diploma beyond four years.

Tennessee is among the states with the highest four-year graduation rate. This is a point of pride, and we will continue to introduce strategies that maintain this achievement. We have introduced initiatives to appropriately remediate in high school, as well as intervening in earlier grades such that students arrive in high school on-track for graduation in four years. Moreover, the department is striving to improve the percentage of "ready" graduates, who demonstrate the necessary skills for postsecondary and workforce readiness. A ready graduate will not only receive a high school diploma but will also have acquired early postsecondary experiences, earned industry certification, and/or met college-readiness benchmarks on ACT or SAT. The TDOE will steadily improve the quality and meaningfulness of a high school diploma toward reaching our goal of a majority of graduates going on to earn a postsecondary credential.

District Accountability

Tennessee's approach to accountability is based on a theory of action that the state's primary role is to manage district outcomes (rather than school outcomes), both by evaluating current performance, and by providing supports that promote equity, excellence, and continuous improvement. This system is designed to accelerate growth for all students and especially for those who are farthest behind. The state sets district level targets for state assessments and graduation, measuring overall improvement and achievement gaps for the neediest students. Districts are then expected to manage school performance within the framework provided by the state.

Given the new requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act to annually differentiate all schools, TDOE will create a framework for school accountability that aligns with our state goals and priorities. Moreover, the school accountability framework will build on the district model, where possible, as well as meet the provisions of new legislation in our state which requires an A–F grade for all schools. Due to provisions in ESSA that require additional indicators of student success and/or school quality in school accountability, new metrics will be introduced in the district accountability framework to align with the school accountability framework. The district framework approved under the 2015 waiver includes metrics that capture student performance in math, English language arts, ACT/SAT, and graduation rate. The TDOE intends to add metrics that capture the *Opportunity to Learn* and *Readiness* indicators in school accountability, as well as make additional methodological changes to align district and school accountability as much as possible.

The TDOE's theory of action, integrated with the feedback we received around the strengths and weaknesses of our system of district accountability originally proposed in our 2011 flexibility waiver application, suggests the following principles be used to develop our revised district accountability framework:

- The accountability system should identify districts struggling to meet their students' needs, such that those districts may receive customized support and additional resources towards improvement.
- Absolute achievement alone is not sufficient. We are focused on growth for all students and faster growth for the lowest achieving students.
- When a student progresses from below to approaching, this is a meaningful move in achievement and should be acknowledged.
- All growth should be recognized. Binary achievement targets that districts are able to only meet or miss can hide meaningful improvement.
- Growth is a minimum expectation. Ideally, the rate of growth will be sufficient to place all students on a life trajectory that will result in college and/or career readiness.
- All means all. Meeting the needs of all students is a priority. If a district is failing to make any progress with its lowest achieving students, it is in need of improvement.
- The accountability framework should have a stable design, such that districts are not expected to understand and adapt to a new system every year.

Given these principles, Tennessee developed a district accountability system that:
- Recognizes the hard work districts do to make incremental gains by awarding partial credit for improving but not meeting targets
- Recognizes districts that greatly exceed their targets or expected growth/performance
- Will work every year moving forward, with certain elements phased in as data become available
- Includes many pathways to Exemplary, the highest district performance determination

The proposed accountability system includes four steps that lead to a final district determination, with determinations awarded annually. In the first step, districts are evaluated according to a "minimum performance goal" that identifies districts that are not showing even minimal evidence of meaningful student progress. These districts are categorized as *In Need of Improvement*. After the initial minimum performance goal, districts receive an "achievement status" determined by their progress with all students and a "subgroup status" determined by their progress with four historically underperforming student subgroups. The overall "final district determination" status, *Progressing*, *Achieving*, or *Exemplary*, is determined by the combination of district performance on the achievement and subgroup performance elements of the system.

Districts will be assessed on student performance in math, English language arts, science, graduation rate, ACT, and metrics that align with the school accountability framework, such as

chronic absenteeism and student readiness. In addition, to maintain a focus on historically underperforming student groups, district performance will be assessed for the following student groups:

- All students
- Black/Hispanic/Native American students (BHN)
- English learners (EL)
- Students with disabilities (SWD)
- Economically disadvantaged students (ED)
- Super subgroup

1. Minimum Performance Goal

At the minimum performance goal, a district must show some improvement in the following three areas:

- Overall student achievement as measured by change in the percentage of students scoring On Track/Mastered or demonstrating success across content measures
- Overall value-added scores as measured by the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) across content measures
- "Super" subgroup performance as measured by reduction in below percentages across content measures for all students that fall within one of the four subgroups listed above (Super subgroup refers to BHN, EL, SWD, and ED as a combined group, counting any student only once.)

If a district fails to show improvement in any of the above areas, it will receive the *In Need of Improvement* determination. The graphic below provides a *sample* heat map showing progress across measures for a district that would receive an *In Need of Improvement* determination. Note that additional content areas will be added to reflect alignment with the school accountability framework.

Sample Minimum Performance Goals

Content Area	Achievement Key	TVAAS Key	Subgroup Performance
3–5 Math	✓	✓	X
3–5 RLA	X	✓	X
6–8 Math	X	✓	X
6–8 RLA	✓	✓	X
HS Math	✓	✓	X
HS RLA	X	✓	✓
Graduation Rate	✓	N/A	X
ACT	X	✓	X
Key Status:	MET	MET	MISS

2. Achievement Status Determination

A district's achievement status is determined by the growth that a district shows in each of its grade-content areas for all students. The status will be based on three pathways that include:
- Overall student achievement as measured by change in the percent of students scoring On Track/Mastered or demonstrating success
- Overall value-added scores, as measured by TVAAS, which is a true cohort growth measure at the individual student level
- A relative performance metric that compares a district's percentile rank with respect to all other districts in the state in the current year to its percentile rank in the previous year

An overall score will be factored for each content area. Scores will then be averaged across grade-content areas to create a final achievement status according to the following scale:
- **Progressing:** (>0 to <2.00) District is improving on average but falling short of growth expectation
- **Achieving:** (2.00 to <3.00) District is meeting growth expectation on average
- **Exemplary:** (3.00 and above)District is exceeding growth expectation on average

A *sample* achievement status heat map appears below. Note that additional content areas will be added to reflect alignment with the school accountability framework.

Sample Achievement Status Heat Map

Content Area	AMO Targets	Relative Performance	TVAAS
3-5 Math	1	3	0
3-5 RLA	0	1	0
6-8 Math	1	1	1
6-8 RLA	1	1	2
HS Math	2	0	4
HS RLA	3	4	2
Graduation Rate	0	0	N/A
ACT	1	1	4

3. Subgroup Status Determination

A district's subgroup status is determined by the growth that a district shows in each of its grade-content areas for the four historically underperforming student subgroups. Districts can demonstrate improvement through each of the following pathways:
- Subgroup student achievement as measured by change in the percent of students scoring On Track/Mastered or demonstrating success
- Subgroup value-added scores, as measured by TVAAS, which is a true cohort growth measure at the individual student level

- Reduction in the percentage of students scoring Below (the lowest performance level). For the graduation rate metric, this pathway is based on the reduction in the drop-out rate for students in subgroups.

Unlike determining achievement status, there is no relative pathway on the subgroup performance. This reflects the design principle that "all means all" and equity standards should not be relative.

As with achievement status, districts are awarded a rating using the same scale as previously noted. A *sample* achievement status heat map appears below. Note that additional content areas will be added to reflect alignment with the school accountability framework.

Sample Subgroup Status Heat Map for the BHN

BHN Content Area	AMO Target	Reduce Below	TVAAS
3-5 Math	2	1	0
3-5 RLA	0	0	0
6-8 Math	1	1	2
6-8 RLA	1	2	2
HS Math	1	0	4
HS RLA	2	3	2
Grad Rate	0	N/A	N/A
ACT	TBD	N/A	TBD

Because the system considers each subgroup individually, the process described above results in four sets of scores for each of the major student subgroups. These scores are averaged to create a final subgroup status as shown in the *sample* heat map below. Note that additional content areas will be added to reflect alignment with the school accountability framework.

Sample Subgroup Status Heat Map for All Subgroups

Content Area	BHN	ED	ELL	SWD
3-5 Math	2	2	1	2
3-5 RLA	0	0	0	1
6-8 Math	1	1	.	1
6-8 RLA	2	2	.	2
HS Math	1	2	.	2
HS RLA	3	3	.	1
Grad Rate	0	0	.	0
ACT	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

4. Final District Determination

Final district determinations are calculated by averaging a district's scores on the achievement and subgroup performance status and then using the scale detailed in step 2 to assign a final determination. In essence, this means that all student and subgroup performance will be equally weighted—each accounting for 50 percent of the overall determination for the district. The table below illustrates the final determination for a district based on previous examples.

- Districts that exceed expectations for both achievement and subgroup performance in given year would be commended to an *Exemplary* districts list, relieved of some state reporting requirements for that year, and, where possible, granted increased latitude in funding flexibility.
- Districts meet expectations in achievement and subgroup performance would be recognized on the *Achieving* districts list and adhere to regular strategic planning and reporting requirements for that year.
- Districts that improve but do not meet expectations in achievement and subgroup performance would be named on the *Progressing* districts list and be required to submit a detailed analysis of the results along with plans for the coming year to achieve goals, subject to TDOE discussion and approval. This process will be developed by TDOE.

Sample **Final Determination Heat Map**

Status	Average	Determination	Average Score	Final Determination
Achievement	2.38	ACHIEVING	1.76	PROGRESSING
Subgroup	1.13	PROGRESSING		

On average, the district is **making progress** but **not meeting expectations** when considering both **achievement for all students** and **subgroup performance**. Though the district is typically meeting achievement targets, it is typically falling short of subgroup targets. Subgroup performance should be an area of heightened focus.

Distribution of District Determinations

The table below details the distribution of results for the proposed system based on 2014-15 data. As you can see, the results create a distribution of districts based on the notion of continuous improvement. Approximately 20 percent of districts are *In Need of Improvement* and eligible for additional supports, while approximately 30 percent of districts achieve the highest recognition of *Exemplary*.

District Determination (Based on 2015 Data)	Number of Districts
Exemplary	40
Achieving	71
Progressing	6
In Need of Improvement	28

We believe that the most important state function with regard to district performance is to ensure that districts set appropriate goals, provide public, state-level reporting of progress against goals, and provide support to districts as they manage their progress locally. Districts will be measured through the following basic system:

- The state will publish the goals for each district, and for schools within the district.
- The state will report on progress against those goals.
- When districts earn the designation of *Achieving* or *Exemplary*, the state will continue to support them and provide flexibility where possible to innovate.
- When districts earn the designation of *In Need of Improvement* or *Progressing*, the state will provide differentiated levels of intervention, depending on the districts progress.
  - Districts that are making progress, designated as *Progressing*, but at a slower rate of growth than desired, will have a lower tier of intervention.
  - Districts that are not making sufficient progress in achievement, value-added growth, or subgroup performance will have a higher level of intervention, including public identification on the list of districts in need of improvement, with increased state engagement and decreased districts flexibility.
- Regarding subgroup performance expectations specifically:
  - When districts meet expectations for subgroup performance, the state will continue to support them and provide flexibility where possible.
  - When districts fail to meet expectations for subgroup performance, the state will provide differentiated levels of intervention.
    - Districts that are demonstrating increased student achievement, but are failing to meet expectations for subgroup performance, will have a lower tier of intervention.
    - Districts that fail to meet minimum performance standards for subgroup improvement as defined in the accountability framework will have a higher level of intervention, including public identification on the list of districts in need of improvement, with increased state engagement and decreased districts flexibility.

School Accountability

ESSA requires states to meaningfully differentiate public schools on an annual basis. Tennessee will include all public schools within this framework, excluding schools that only serve K–2 students, or adult high schools, or schools that only serve students with special needs and/or disabilities, or alternative schools, or CTE schools.

This differentiation shall include:
- **Proficiency** on annual assessments
- **Growth** measure on annual assessments
- **Graduation** rates
- Consequences for failing to meet **95 percent participation rate** requirement
- Additional indicator of **school quality and student success**

- Progress in achieving **English language proficiency** (ELPA)

Last year, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a law requiring the annual state report card to include an A–F grading system for all schools. This new summative grade will give parents, educators, and stakeholders a summative overview of their schools and a baseline comparison across schools and districts. Beginning in the 2017-18 school year every school will receive a summative letter grade that is aligned to the Tennessee accountability framework, under ESSA.

The TDOE has endeavored to create a school accountability framework that encompasses the following goals and purposes, meeting both federal and state requirements:
- **Annual differentiation** of all schools (ESSA)
- Identification of **comprehensive** and **targeted support** schools (ESSA)
  - **Comprehensive:** Bottom five percent of Title I schools, schools with graduation rates below 67 percent, and Focus schools that are consistently underperforming
  - **Targeted:** Schools with underperforming subgroups *each year*
- **A–F grade** assigned to all schools (Tennessee law)

This proposal for school accountability incorporates feedback from multiple stakeholder groups, beginning with the state's directors of schools (superintendents). The model will include elements from the current school framework such as the historical methodology for Priority (comprehensive support) school identification, with the addition of a safe harbor based on TVAAS results that exceed the state growth standard. In addition, the school accountability framework continues the same focus on both overall achievement and subgroup performance as is the case with district accountability. This proposal also leverages the metrics used in district accountability, while including additional measures center on chronic absenteeism and early postsecondary opportunities.
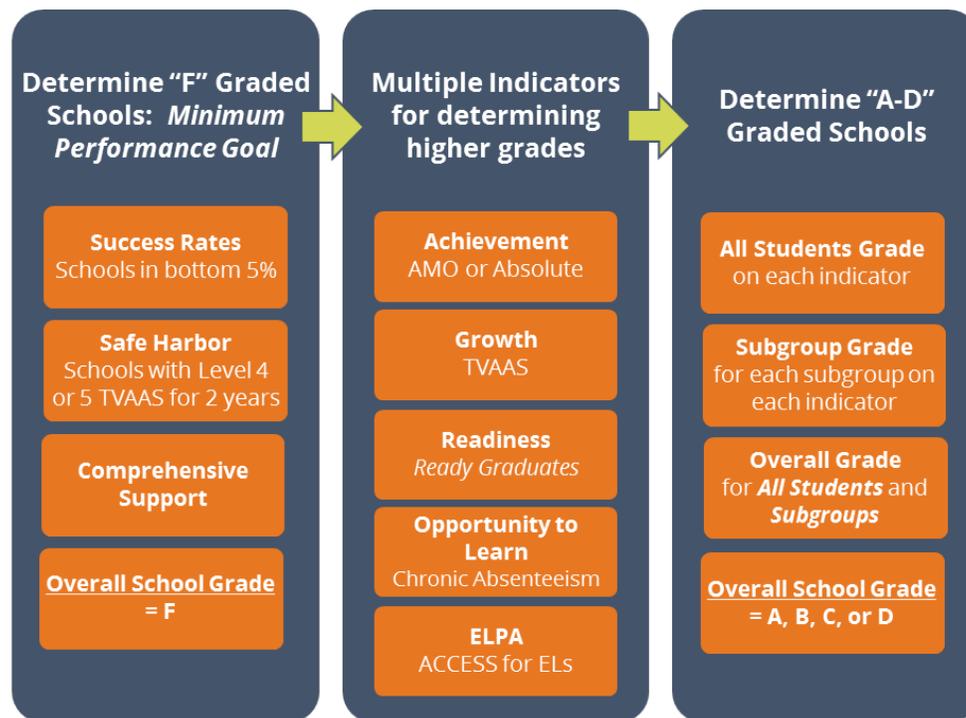
The following principles undergird the design of school accountability framework:
- **Poverty is not Destiny:** All schools should be able to achieve an A if high performing (and meeting growth expectations) or if making strong growth for all students.
- **All Means All:** Each indicator should be graded by subgroup.
- **All Growth Matters:** Each indicator should have multiple levels performance (A–F) that differentiate and reward a school's progress (both achievement and TVAAS). High achievement with low growth is not rewarded.
- **Alignment:** Model should allow for weighting of indicators according to state goals and priorities, as well addressing ESSA annual school identification requirements.
- **Transparency:** Each school should receive a grade on multiple indicators (e.g., achievement, growth, additional Indicator).

Design Overview

The A–F school accountability framework follows a similar logic as that of district accountability, with a "minimum performance goal" applied to all schools which will identify those needing comprehensive support (earning a grade of F). Those schools who exceed the criteria for

comprehensive support, will then earn grades of A–F based on their performance across up to five metrics (as applicable). The graphic below is an overview of the accountability framework.

Determine "F" Graded Schools: *Minimum Performance Goal*	Multiple Indicators for determining higher grades	Determine "A-D" Graded Schools
Success Rates Schools in bottom 5%	**Achievement** AMO or Absolute	**All Students Grade** on each indicator
Safe Harbor Schools with Level 4 or 5 TVAAS for 2 years	**Growth** TVAAS	**Subgroup Grade** for each subgroup on each indicator
Comprehensive Support	**Readiness** *Ready Graduates*	**Overall Grade** for *All Students* and *Subgroups*
Overall School Grade = F	**Opportunity to Learn** Chronic Absenteeism	**Overall School Grade = A, B, C, or D**
	ELPA ACCESS for ELs	

The *Minimum Performance Goal* determines those schools that will earn an overall grade of F and receive comprehensive support. These schools, which in Tennessee will continue to be referred to Priority schools, will be identified once every three years, but will have the ability to exit this status on an annual basis by meeting or exceeding exit criteria for comprehensive support schools. Schools that fail this minimum performance goal are those:
- earning a success rate (combined absolute achievement) in lowest five percent <u>and</u> do not achieve a level 4 or 5 TVAAS in **two** consecutive years, <u>or</u>
- have a graduation rate below 67 percent, <u>or</u>
- a Focus school that is consistently underperforming.

The success rate is defined as the combined achievement for English language arts, math and science based on the percentage of students scoring at On Track or Mastered versus the total number of valid test takers.

A maximum of approximately five percent of schools will earn an F grade. However, as schools earn safe harbor based on TVAAS performance, additional schools will be added among those on the "cusp" of the fifth percentile. This means that schools who have success rates at the sixth or seventh percentile, for example, could be identified as comprehensive support schools if they do not meet the TVAAS safe harbor.

All other schools that exceed the minimum performance goal will earn an overall letter grade of A–D by assigning sub-grades to accountability indicators for all students and each subgroup. Once

grades are calculated for each indicator for each subgroup, those grades will be averaged for a subgroup grade for that indicator. The subgroup grades for each indicator will be combined to create the all subgroup average. The all student grade for each indicator will be combined to create the overall all student average. Combining all students and all subgroup averages will determine the final overall school grade (A–D).

The following indicators will be used to determine A–F grade by providing a letter grade for each measure for all students and overall subgroup performance:

- **Achievement:** percent of students performing at On Track or Mastered
  - Two pathways:
    - absolute achievement (relative to other schools) or
    - performance on AMO targets (growth in achievement)
- **Growth:** TVAAS growth for all students and progress on all achievement levels for subgroups
- **Readiness:** percent of Ready Graduates (who demonstrate the necessary skills for postsecondary and workforce readiness) meeting either ACT or EPSO (early postsecondary opportunities) criteria
- **Opportunity to Learn:** percent of students who are chronically absent (missing 10 percent or more of school year)
  - Two pathways:
    - absolute achievement (relative to other schools) or
    - performance on AMO targets (reduction in percent of chronically-absent students)
- **ELPA:** progress toward English language proficiency
  - Tennessee proposes to equally weight proficiency in English language and progress towards proficiency, as determined by the WIDA ACCESS. The progress towards proficiency is determined by the growth standard of 0.7.

Indicator	All Students Metric	Subgroup Metric
Achievement (Progress toward On Track+)	Absolute proficiency or AMO Targets (targets set to increase the percent of students scoring at or above On Track/on grade level)	Absolute proficiency or AMO Targets (targets set to increase the percent of students scoring at or above On Track/on grade level)
Growth (Progress toward Approaching, On Track, Mastered)	TVAAS (student level growth measure across achievement continuum)	Advancement of students to the next performance level
Readiness	Graduation Rate x [% of graduates scoring 21+ on ACT or EPSO/Industry Cert Achievement] (Absolute or Targets)	Graduation Rate x [% of graduates scoring 21+ on ACT or EPSO/Industry Cert Achievement] (Absolute or Targets)

Indicator	All Students Metric	Subgroup Metric
Opportunity to Learn	Chronic Absenteeism (Absolute or Targets)	Chronic Absenteeism (Absolute or Targets)
ELPA		Performance on WIDA ACCESS (50% proficiency, 50% progress towards proficiency)

The final accountability reporting for each school will result in a summary as noted in each of the following examples:

K-8 School Example

Indicator	All Students		Subgroup	
	Grade	Weight	**Grade**	Weight
Achievement	**A**	40%	**B**	35%
Growth	**A**	40%	**C**	35%
Opportunity to Learn	**D**	20%	**B**	20%
ELPA*			**B**	10%
Weighted Average	**B**	100%	**B**	100%
All Students Grade	**B**	60%		
Subgroup Grade	**B**	40%		
Overall School Grade	**B**	100%		

HS School Example

Indicator	All Students		Subgroup	
	Grade	Weight	**Grade**	Weight
Achievement	**A**	35%	**B**	30%
Growth	**A**	35%	**C**	30%
Opportunity to Learn	**D**	10%	**B**	10%
Readiness	**D**	20%	**B**	20%
ELPA*			**B**	10%
Weighted Average	**B**	100%	**B**	100%
All Students Grade	**B**	60%		
Subgroup Grade	**B**	40%		
Overall School Grade	B	**100%**		

* For schools that do not have an English learner subgroup, no weighting will be applied to ELPA. Thus, the weighting for All Students and Subgroup averages will be the same.

Indicator of School Quality & Student Success

In developing Tennessee's new measure, we want to balance priorities and ensure it is aligned to our strategic plan goals, address opportunity and inequities, and highlight success and areas for growth within and across schools and districts. The majority of stakeholders strongly agree that multiple measures should be included to represent the measure of school quality and student success. It is equally important that this metric, and each component, can be understood by all stakeholders. This indicator must reflect Tennessee's long-term goals and priority areas within the strategic plan.

While input to date on this metric has been varied, current input on the new measure can be categorized under two primary purposes: **opportunity** and **readiness**. The metrics described below will be incorporated into two indicators that represent these purposes—*Opportunity to Learn* and *Ready Graduate*—and represent additional measures of school quality and student success.

1. Ready Graduate (for high schools):
    a. Graduation Rate multiplied by the % of students –
        i. scoring 21or higher on ACT OR
        ii. completing 4 EPSOs OR

        iii.   completing 2 EPSOs + earning industry certification (on a CTE pathway leading to a credential)
- b. This metric defines three "checks" for evidence that graduates have demonstrated postsecondary and workforce readiness.

2. Opportunity to Learn
   a. 2017-18 school year will use chronic absenteeism
   b. The TDOE will continue to research other metrics to include within this metric based on data quality, evidence-base, and stakeholder support.

The Ready Graduate indicator will drive a statewide focus on readiness for postsecondary and the workforce. The TDOE believes that students may demonstrate college and/or career readiness through three pathways. One of those is meeting the eligibility criteria for our HOPE scholarship and admissions to our university system—which means earning a composite score of 21 on the ACT. In addition, we have researched to identify additional rigorous criteria for meeting college and/or career readiness.

Based on our 2015 graduating cohort, the TDOE determined that student who completed at least four early post-secondary opportunities had a 50% chance of scoring at least a 21 on the ACT. However, less than 17% of students in that cohort had earned four or more EPSO credits. In fact, less than 40% had earned even one or more EPSOs. Therefore, this requirement will initially be focused on increasing access to EPSO. The criteria will be based on student participation and completion of both the course and any accompanying qualifying exam, as applicable. Over the first few years of the new accountability framework, the department will evaluate moving to a performance-based criteria, which requires that the credit be awarded and/or minimum score on the qualifying exam. However, we believe that our initial strategic focus must be ensuring that all students are engaged in rigorous coursework that prepares them for post-secondary.

The TDOE supports a robust offering of EPSOs ranging across the full spectrum of student interests and aspirations. For students who have a specific career focus in mind, our Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, culminating in industry certification, is the third readiness pathway. The industry certification pathway requires that the student actually earn the credential that reflects the professional standards of the awarding body. We believe that students who participate in at least two EPSOs and earn the industry credential have demonstrated evidence of workforce readiness at the completion of high school.

The ready graduates criteria reflects research that student participation in Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement programs is positively correlated with higher college GPA and higher college graduation rates.[34] Similar findings have been supported for International Baccalaureate programs[35] regarding increased rates of matriculation and persistence in postsecondary. Thus, this choice for the additional indicator has sufficient evidence of influence on student outcomes.

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[34] An, 2012; Speroni, 2011; Hargove, Godin, et. al, 2008

[35] Coca, Johnson, et. al, 2012

The Opportunity to Learn Indicator is intended to measure the amount of class time a student has with his or her teacher of record. In the first year, we will use chronic absenteeism as the metric in this indicator in the initial implementation of our accountability framework in 2017-18. Given the feedback we have received from stakeholders, as well as other data considerations, we are exploring exclusionary discipline and teacher absenteeism metrics to determine whether they are appropriate for inclusion in the *Opportunity to Learn* indicator in future years. In the first year, this will be referred to as "chronic absenteeism" on the school accountability dashboard. The department will create greater visibility on discipline practices and improve the collection of teacher absenteeism through updated reporting and transparency metrics. After we have collected at least three years of data: (1) student days missed due to discipline and (2) teacher attendance then—with stakeholder input—additional metrics can be added to the indicator.

Ultimately, there is strong evidence that all of these indicators (student absenteeism, teacher absenteeism, and exclusionary discipline) have a profound influence on student academic outcomes. Student absences reduce academic achievement, increase risk for future truancy, and increase probability of dropping out of school.[36] Moreover, absences have a larger negative impact on students with low achievement.[37] Reducing chronic absenteeism will help improve life outcomes for students in Tennessee. Exclusionary discipline incidents remove students from the classroom or from school. This results in students missing significant instruction time. Data show that historically underserved student groups are disproportionately impacted by exclusionary practices.[38] Teacher attendance matters for student achievement. Extensive rigorous research has been conducted showing teacher absences reduce student achievement.[39] When teachers are absent 10 days, the decrease in student achievement is equivalent to the different between having a brand new teacher and one with two or three years more experience. Negative impacts can be both academic and emotional for students.

Identification of Schools for Comprehensive Support

In alignment with the extensive work Tennessee has done in Accountability, as well as in the *All Means All* strategic priority, Tennessee has demonstrated a strong commitment to its lowest performing schools. Tennessee will continue to categorize our lowest performing five percent of all schools as "Priority schools" identified for comprehensive support. With these schools, the state is committed to empowering districts and schools by providing support measurement, public accounting, and targeting financial and planning resources to support improvement. Details about each category are summarized below and detailed in subsequent sections.

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[36] Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997

[37] Gottfried, 2009

[38] Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). Morris, E. W., & B. L. Perry, (2016). Rausch, M. Karega & R. J. Skiba. (2005).

[39] Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2009). Miller, R. T., Murnane, R. J., & Willett, J. B. (2008).

Priority schools will be identified every three years based on an evaluation of all schools' (expanding beyond just Title I schools) three-year achievement data. Schools must have a minimum of two years of data (i.e., they must have been in operation for two years) to be considered. These schools will also earn an overall grade of F in the school accountability framework.

In order to identify the bottom five percent of schools in overall achievement, Tennessee will consider the performance of all students on the following state assessments—defined as the overall success rate. However, schools earning a level 4 or 5 for overall school composite TVAAS will meet the safe harbor requirements to exclude them from the Priority/comprehensive support designation.

- High schools will be assessed based on a weighted composite of:
  - Graduation rates
  - End of Course exams in English Language Arts, math, and science (biology and chemistry)
- Elementary/Middle schools will be assessed based on a TCAP aggregate, which includes and equally weights:
  - Math (On Track or Mastered)
  - English Language Arts (On Track or Mastered)
  - Science (On Track or Mastered)
- Schools that serve some portion of both high school grades and elementary/middle grades, will be assessed as both school types.

Additionally, a Focus school (as described below) that continues to underperform, would be designated as a Priority school after three consecutive years on the Focus school list, and be subject to the tracks of intervention as described in the Continuum section below.

Identification of Schools for Targeted Support

In addition to comprehensive support schools, states must also identify schools for targeted support and improvement. In Tennessee, we will to refer to these schools identified for targeted support as "Focus schools." This designation includes schools in which one or more subgroup(s) are determined to be consistently underperforming based on the accountability indicators noted above.

The Focus school list will be determined by reviewing the data for each of the four accountability subgroups—students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, students in racial/ethnic groups currently performing below the state average (Black/Hispanic/Native American student), and English learners—across all schools meeting the minimum n size. In order for Focus schools to represent historically underserved student groups across all eligible schools, the Focus school list will be comprised from each subgroup proportionally. The department will review each school's subgroup average from the A-F framework indicators.

Focus schools will be identified annually. The first identification will occur in 2018. The Focus list will utilize the new methodology and be released following completion of the 2017-18 school year. Once identified, districts must put forth plans describing the supports to Focus schools. This would include strategies and interventions with other ESSA funds, as well as additional state and local resources. Schools will exit Focus school status if the school is not identified on the next Focus school list in the following year. Should the subgroups within a Focus school continue to underperform, it will be designated as a Priority school (for comprehensive support) after three consecutive years on the Focus school list, and be subject to the tracks of intervention as described in the Continuum section below.

District plans, which are submitted annually, must describe how it will support its Focus schools. This would include strategies and interventions with federal, state, and local funds. Timely assistance and support will be offered to Focus schools through the state's CORE offices. This support will include professional development opportunities, data support, and assistance through RLA and Math consultants. In addition, the consolidated planning and monitoring (CPM) division will work with districts through its monitoring framework to include Focus schools in its monitoring and support. The ESSA-required resource allocation review for Focus schools identified for targeted support will also be part of the consolidated funding application (CFA) within applicable titles. This process will be aligned with that of Priority schools.

Improving Our Lowest Performing Schools

Tennessee appreciates and understand that improving schools is challenging work and requires additional capacity, funding, and opportunity to innovate. Tennessee has implemented school improvement grants for many years, and while there has been marked success in some districts, others have not enjoyed such gains.

We know districts and schools have unique needs and barriers to implementation. To this end, Tennessee plans to empower district and school leaders to craft solutions tailored to their local context, guided by evidence-based strategies that impact achievement and are key levers in school turnaround and can be adapted to meet the specific needs of our Priority schools:
- School plan development
- Strong leadership
- Effective instruction
- Supportive framework for learning

With ESSA affording more decision-making to both the state and district levels, Tennessee expects to maximize this authority by empowering districts to lead turnaround in its low-performing schools. Tennessee's school improvement continuum and intervention strategies provide meaningful guidance and structure for Priority schools and the districts serving those schools, while also providing districts with key decision-making authority in how they intervene in their schools.

Theory of Action

If Tennessee creates:
- A culture of high expectations and belief in continuous improvement through evidence-based practice
- A framework for earned autonomy and choice in intervention
- Resources to support continuous improvement and capacity building
- An Achievement School District that serves as our most rigorous intervention and lever of change

Then:
- Districts will be charged and empowered to serve the schools identified as Priority schools by:
    - Ensuring that every school has a results-oriented, community-competent leader
    - Recruiting and retaining effective teachers with the will and skill to teach students in high-needs schools
    - Training and supporting effective teachers in the depth and knowledge of instructional practice
    - Providing support and wraparound services that engage students, parents, community partners, and other stakeholders

Then:
- Schools will provide effective and engaging instruction within a supportive culture, resulting in academically-prepared and socially-responsible students who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.
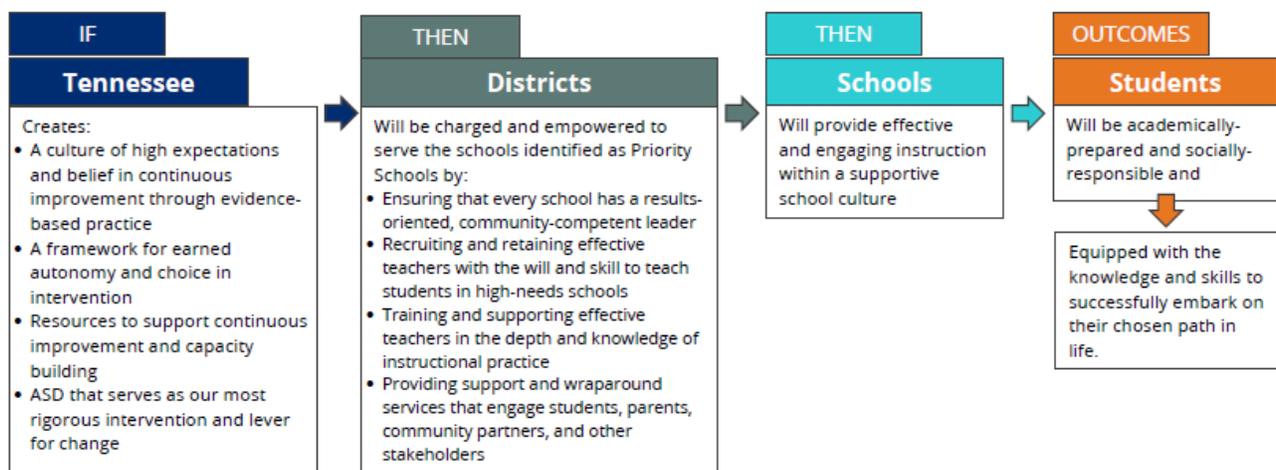
Priority Schools

Tennessee will provide support to its Priority schools through continuation of current policies, expansion of processes and projects with demonstrated effectiveness, and new opportunities for

innovation. With increased autonomy to states and districts, under ESSA, Tennessee has opted to continue three interventions that were in existence through the state's ESEA Waiver:

- **Achievement School District:** The state-level intervention is a statewide district, which was created to grow the bottom five percent to be the most improved schools in the state, and return these schools to local districts with sustained capacity and achievement. By 2025, the ASD will close the opportunity gaps in Priority schools. Through partnerships with charter school operators and increased autonomy at the school level, the ASD will continue to improve educational opportunities and academic achievement for students in Priority schools.
- **District-led Interventions:** The intent of district-led interventions is to provide districts with flexible funds to support multiple priority schools with evidence-based strategies. One example would be an Innovation Zone (iZone) model, which operates as a district within a district. A successful and sustainable iZone is able to accelerate school turnaround in the state's Priority schools by providing opportunity for innovation and increased autonomy to principals and teachers through the exemption from specific district-level policies and procedures.
- **School-level Grants:** All Priority schools will be eligible for school-level grants to support school improvement and turnaround, funded under § 1003. Districts will apply for grants on behalf of some or all eligible schools. The competitive application process will support the eligible school for a period of three years: one year of planning and two years of implementation. The school plan for implementation will be aligned with the needs assessment and addresses the three focus areas: leadership, effective instruction, and the framework of support for students.

School Improvement Opportunities & Grants

Tennessee will award school improvement funds to districts both by formula and competitive processes to support its lowest performing schools. Rubrics will be developed to score competitive submissions, ensuring that evidence-based interventions are identified in the areas of leadership, effective instruction, and supports for students.

School-level: Priority Schools Planning Grants

All Priority schools will receive a year one planning grant. The grant award amount will be equal for all schools, based on total number of Priority schools identified. These planning grants will support all Priority schools prior to full implementation of a school improvement plan. In partnership with the department and in consultation with the school district and stakeholders, a comprehensive needs assessment will be conducted to identify the needs of each school and inform the comprehensive plan for school improvement.

School-level: Priority Schools Implementation Grants

Upon completion of one year of school-level planning, the department will initiate a competitive grant application process for funds to support identified needs in the areas cited below:
- Strong Leadership
- Effective instruction
- Supportive framework for learning

Districts will apply for school improvement funding on behalf of some or all of its schools to implement its school improvement plan informed by the needs assessment of each school.

District-level: Zone Grants

Districts with four or more Priority schools will be eligible to apply for annual funding for a three-year period in School Improvement funds. These funds will provide new opportunity for districts to better serve schools at a larger-scale, or as a district within a district, versus single-school grants. Grants will be awarded to districts based on the number of schools being served. It is expected that districts will grant autonomy of state and local funds for Zone support. Allowable uses of funds may include:
- Recruitment and retention of school leaders and educators
- Zone staffing positions
- Evidence-based strategies proposed in the plan and approved by the state

Innovation Zones: A successful district Innovation Zone (iZone) can represent a powerful mechanism to engage in meaningful turnaround of Priority Schools. This grant will empower districts to prioritize Priority schools, through the following: continuation of a currently effective iZone or an updated iZone model to address specific challenges identified under previous grant(s).

State-level: Achievement School District

Tennessee will continue to utilize the Achievement School District (ASD) as the most rigorous intervention for Priority schools. The ASD will apply on behalf of its schools for applicable school improvement funding. The ASD uses a blended model of direct-run and charter operated schools. The department will ensure that there are clear entry and exit criteria for the ASD. Entry into ASD will be determined by the department with a year of planning in partnership with the ASD and the district, in order to best serve the students and families at the school. Our goal is to significantly improve the performance these schools and return schools (after a period of no more than 10 years) to home districts. Schools will be better equipped to serve all students, continue what has worked well, and share best practices.

Resource Allocation Review

Tennessee will commit to the periodic review of resource allocations to ensure sufficient support for school improvement in each district serving a significant number of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement and/or those districts serving a significant number of schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans, as cited in § 1111(d)(3)(A)(ii) of ESSA and § 200.23(a).

To ensure that districts are prioritizing schools identified for comprehensive support, the periodic resource allocation review will be integrated into existing state processes. The TDOE will conduct an initial review of state, local, and federal funds annually. The CPM division will embed the resource allocation review in the consolidated funding application review process. In this process, there are explicit questions with regard to Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and Title V to address resource needs for schools identified for comprehensive support. In addition, as a requirement in the application for § 1003 school improvement dollars, districts will be required to demonstrate their funding rationale, including a requirement for the annual renewal of funds. During the planning process, TDOE will provide technical assistance on weighted funding models in districts serving a significant number of schools identified for comprehensive and/or targeted support.

In addition, the TDOE will examine district human capital resources to ensure that all students enrolled in Priority schools have access to effective teachers, specifically those performing at levels 4 or 5 as determined by TVAAS. Emphasis will be placed on Priority schools' students' access to high quality pre-school programs and advanced coursework including advanced placement and dual credit courses and programs of study that result in an industry certification.

Support for School Improvement

Tennessee's School Improvement Continuum

Tennessee will continue to identify the bottom five percent of schools as Priority schools. Under ESSA, these schools are identified for comprehensive support. Based on input from stakeholders who voiced the need for consistency, Tennessee will continue to refer to schools identified for comprehensive support as Priority schools. Tennessee first identified Priority schools in 2012, and again in 2014. ESSA requires that districts with Priority Schools have a period of time not to exceed four years to develop and implement a plan to intervene in its Priority Schools. If the intervention is unsuccessful, the state must apply a more rigorous intervention. To address this requirement, Tennessee has developed an intervention track for schools to be supported through a district-led/state partnership or by the ASD.

To this end, Tennessee has developed its School Improvement Continuum that proposes three intervention tracks for its Priority Schools identified for comprehensive support based on multiple factors including: (1) previous identification as a Priority school (2) overall TVAAS composite, (3) one-year success rate across all tested subjects, (4) length of time in current intervention, (5)

feeder pattern, (6) graduation rate, and other relevant indicators. Threshold for the success rate will be based on the most recent accountability data and determined by the office of accountability, with approval from the Commissioner and the office of school improvement.

All Priority schools will be annually evaluated through the school accountability framework, as described above, and through monitoring and evaluation of the school's implementation of its school improvement plan. Based on the annual evaluation a school may exit priority status. Any Priority school that is not effectively implementing its school improvement plan and/or not making progress on leading indicators may face additional requirements and potential loss of grant funding.

ESSA Priority School Improvement Continuum
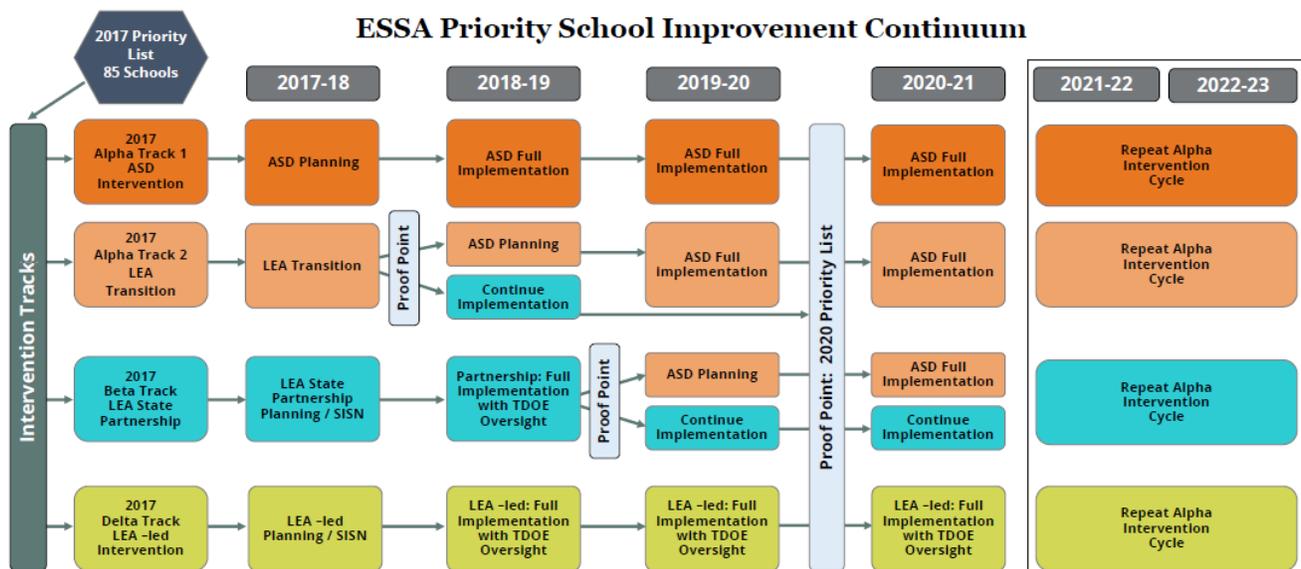
When Tennessee's Priority list is run in 2017, it will be differentiated by the following criteria to ensure every school on the Priority list will receive an intervention categorized as Alpha (track 1 or track 2), Beta, or Delta. The cycle for intervening in Priority schools is illustrated in the graphic and represents a cycle which repeats as new Priority lists are generated every three years. This cycle allows for TDOE to differentiate support to schools —through districts—utilizing the School Improvement Support Network (SISN).

First, TDOE will identify schools that are new to the Priority list, which are schools that were not identified in 2012 or 2014. Those schools will be on the Delta track. Next, TDOE will review the repeating schools on either of the two preceding Priority lists (2012 or 2014). Repeating schools with a TVAAS of 4 or 5 will be placed on the Beta track. Schools with a success rate from the preceding year at or above the specified percent (which will be determined once the list is run), or schools receiving two or fewer years within an intervention will be placed on the Beta track. Schools on the Alpha track are repeating schools with a TVAAS less than or equal to 3 and three or more years of an intervention.

Schools on Alpha track are Priority schools that have been identified on the 2017 Priority list and on the 2012 or 2014 Priority list, and have earned a composite TVAAS score of 3 or less. These schools are eligible for the state-led intervention by the Achievement School District.

Schools on Alpha Track 1 are the 2017 Priority schools that will be immediately placed in the ASD. These schools will begin a planning year 2017-18 for entry into the ASD, and will operate under the ASD beginning in the 2018-19 year. Schools in the Alpha track will be reviewed based on feeder pattern, success rank/rate, graduation rate, and other relevant indicators to determine whether the best track is Alpha 1 or Alpha 2. The Commissioner will ultimately determine which schools are on Alpha Track 1 or immediately ASD eligible based on the comprehensive review of all relevant indicators.

Schools on Alpha Track 2 are Priority schools meeting the same criteria as Alpha Track 1; however, these schools have an additional year, a transition year, to demonstrate progress and take the steps necessary to implement new plan in the 2018-19 school year. Schools will have an opportunity to move to the Beta intervention track, at the 2018 proof point if these schools earn a composite TVAAS of 4 or 5, or a success rate exceeding a specified threshold. If a school has earned a composite TVAAS score of 3 or less, or a success rate below a specified threshold, the school will begin its planning year with the ASD.

During this transition year on Alpha Track 2, the district <u>must</u> implement one of the following evidence-based interventions in the chart below. Each intervention has an associated proof point by which the school will be monitored and evaluated. A school that does not meet its proof point will begin its transition to the ASD. The office of school improvement, with approval from the Commissioner, will determine whether a school is eligible to continue implementation of evidence-based interventions for one additional year.

Alpha 2 District Options	Description	Proof Point at end of 2017-18 school year
1. Close School	Create a plan for absorption of the student population into a higher-achieving school in proximity to the closed school	Submit a plan to the TDOE by Spring 2018 with articulated plan for closing the school and identification of school(s) for those students to attend beginning in 2018-19.
2. Initiate a district-led charter conversion	District shall partner with an eligible charter operator with a record of effectiveness to operate the school	Submit application according to state processes and deadlines. District must execute charter agreement by July 2018.
3. Develop transition plan with ASD	District will commit to partnering with ASD to begin transition and plan for conversion in 2019-2020.	District and ASD will have a formalized agreement by January 2018.
4. Continue current intervention	Submit plan to TDOE for approval of evidence-based interventions	A school that does not achieve a TVAAS of 4 or 5 overall in SY 2017-18 will begin ASD planning in 2018-19

In this additional year, schools must demonstrate success—through TVAAS and success rate – during the current school year in order to continue district-led intervention. If the school does not achieve a composite TVAAS of 4 or 5, then the school will begin the ASD planning year in subsequent year.

Schools on Beta Track are Priority schools that have been identified on the 2017 Priority list and on the 2012 or 2014 list. These schools are not immediately eligible for the ASD and will work in partnership with TDOE to ensure that the plan for intervention is appropriate based on identified need and level of evidence.

- School has been identified on 2017 and on the 2012 and/or 2014 list; **and**
- earned composite TVAAS of 4 or 5; **or**
- undergone two or fewer years in previous interventions; **or**
- earned a success rate that meets or exceeds designated threshold (threshold will be determined once the list is run in 2017 and TDOE can determine an appropriate metric).

The Beta track will allow districts to continue the effective practices and strategies in these Priority schools, since they are demonstrating a certain level of success and growth. The TDOE expects a continued, positive trajectory for schools implementing Beta intervention. If at the 2020 proof point that is not the case, then these schools would transition to the Alpha track and would be eligible for ASD intervention.

Schools on Delta Track are Priority schools that are newly identified on 2017 Priority list, and were not identified in 2012 or 2014.

Schools on the Delta track will undergo a rigorous school improvement planning process, including a readiness review led by TDOE leadership and will implement new, district-led, evidence-based interventions with support from the SISN. These schools are not immediately eligible for the ASD.

Exit Criteria: Priority Schools Identified for Comprehensive Support

Schools will exit Priority status in one of several ways:
- not identified on the next Priority school list (2020) will exit priority status; or
- meets or exceeds its achievement AMOs targets for two consecutive years; or
- achieves level 4 or 5 TVAAS performance in all subject/grade content areas for two consecutive years; or
- school exceeds the 15th percentile in the state using a one-year success rate.

However, Priority schools that enter Alpha (1 or 2), Beta, or Delta interventions will be required to fulfill the entire length of the intervention:
- **Alpha 1:** six-year minimum requirement for ASD (see ASD section below for full exit criteria description).

- **Alpha 2:** one-year to continue currently successful intervention and meeting the TVAAS proof point, or other proof points associated with Alpha 2 intervention choice.
- **Beta:** district-led intervention, with a proof point after one year of planning and two years of implementation. If a Schools in the Beta intervention meets the first proof point in the third year, the school will continue on this track. After no more than five years, the school will either exit the priority list or be ASD eligible, based on overall achievement and/or TVAAS.
- **Delta:** district-led intervention for no more than three years. If a school on the Delta track is identified on the next Priority list, then it would be eligible for more rigorous intervention.

Achievement School District (ASD)

The Achievement School District is Tennessee's statewide school district that was established by state law in 2010, and serves as our most rigorous intervention in Priority school. Currently, the ASD is in its fourth year of operation and serves 33 schools (31 in Memphis, 2 in Nashville) under 15 charter operators and five directly-managed schools.

ASD Performance Framework

The ASD ensures that schools are meeting the targets necessary to run a quality school in Tennessee through its rigorous performance framework. All ASD schools receive an annual performance rating, per the framework described below. The annual rating is determined by a school's performance on each of the three indicators: financial, legal compliance, and academic.

Finance **+** Legal Compliance **+** Academic Performance **=** SPF Score

The finance indicator includes metrics to ensure operators are financially responsible and viable. Failure to demonstrate adequate financial performance would result in a "Does Not Meet" for the school. The legal compliance accountability metrics include assurances that a school complies with all legal obligations. The academic composite of a schools includes performance and progress metrics to determine whether or not a school is on track to meet or exceed expectations for all students.

School Performance Framework (SPF) annual ratings:
- Exceeding
- Meeting
- Approaching
- Does not meet

A school is awarded ratings for each of the three areas and the overall SPF annual rating, which is determined by the lowest rating of the individual indicators. The ASD makes replication and revocation decisions based on these performance indicators. For example, a school in its first three years that earns a "Does Not Meet" rating in years 2 and 3 of operation will be replaced. A school operating after year three of operation will be replaced if it averages a "Does Not Meet" rating after three more years of operation. A charter can be replaced and revoked in any year based on performance, financial malfeasance, and/or failure to comply with legal obligations.

ASD Exit Criteria

A Priority school that has been removed from the district and placed in the ASD will remain in the ASD until the school is no longer identified as a Priority school for two consecutive cycles beginning with the 2017 priority school list; provided, however, that no school shall remain in the ASD for more than a ten-year period. After a school has demonstrated sufficient student performance and progress that the school is no longer identified as a priority school for two consecutive cycles, the Commissioner, in consultation with the district, will develop and approve a transition plan for the school's return to the district.

The ASD shall remain the chartering authority through the duration of the charter agreement and the school shall remain under the authority of the ASD. Upon expiration of the charter agreement, the school will return to the district and the terms of the charter agreement may be renewed upon submission of a renewal application by the governing body of the charter school to the district. Additionally, state law grants authority to the Commissioner to remove a school from the jurisdiction of the ASD at any time (49-1-614).

Per state law, a charter agreement must be revoked or denied renewal if the department identifies the charter school as a Priority school, and must close the school in the school year immediately following the year in which the school was identified as a Priority school. For an ASD authorized charter school, the charter would be revoked if the school was identified on two consecutive Priority lists.

Tennessee School Improvement Support Network

Tennessee's system of performance management for district and school plans will operate through the newly created School Improvement Continuum. The state will provide support to districts with Priority Schools through the processes outlined in the continuum. Tennessee commits to making the state's lowest performing schools, and the improvement of these schools, a priority.

The department will create the School Improvement Support Network (SISN) that engages the office of school improvement, Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) and consolidated planning and monitoring (CPM) regional consultants to support all priority schools at varying levels. The SISN will work directly with districts and Priority schools on assessing the needs, conducting a readiness review, developing a plan for improvement, and supporting and monitoring of progress.

Office of School Improvement (OSI)

The OSI will expand to include four to five school improvement facilitators, with the educational and cultural competencies to support districts and school in turnaround. Each of the facilitators will assigned to a subset of the state's Priority schools based on need, track of intervention, and other factors including demographics and geographic location. Working directly with school leaders, facilitators will be the first and consistent point of contact with the department, to provide differentiated technical assistance to schools. This will enable the department to address the urgency of school improvement, providing a direct line to the SISN and differentiated support that other divisions within the TDOE can provide. In addition to the work of the School Improvement facilitators, the OSI will oversee the allocation of School Improvement funds, competitive applications and budgets. The OSI will monitor districts' and schools' progress in plan implementation and its outcomes. The OSI will provide training specific to school improvement and opportunities for collaboration and sharing of promising practices based on data through multiple convenings of district and school leaders.

Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE)

It has been the practice of large urban districts with Priority schools to develop district plans for improvement in-house without assistance from the department. However, these districts have become recently more accepting of state support. In light of this, the department will increase its support through the CORE regional offices, focusing on the development of district plans primarily in areas of data analysis, comprehensive needs assessment, goal setting, strategy and action step development, and alignment of goals with district needs and state strategic goals.

Consolidated Planning and Monitoring (CPM) Regional Consultants

The CPM regional consultants will be charged with the responsibility of review and approval of district plans using a standardized process. Using information gleaned from the district plans, these same consultants, in collaboration with the School Improvement facilitators, will engage with Priority schools in the development of a comprehensive plan for improvement that is aligned with the district plan.

Additional support will be provided through other divisions of TDOE and communicated to districts and schools through the assigned School Improvement Facilitators. This support will also include potential partnerships with other state agencies and other stakeholder groups. Facilitators will provide differentiated support to include but is not limited to consultation,

training, differentiated technical assistance, and professional development, which will be facilitated by the SISN to ensure alignment of need and strategies. These additional services will equip schools to improve practice and will consist of representatives from the following:

- College and Career and Technical Education
- Content and Assessment Design
- Early Childhood
- Safe and Supportive Schools
- Special Populations and Student Support
- Teachers and Leaders
- Other state and local organizations

School Plan Development

The SISN will align its efforts with the department's strategic plan priorities to enable districts to develop a comprehensive plan for improvement for all Priority schools.

Districts must provide assurances for how Focus schools will be included within school improvement activities. A district may elect to include Focus school(s) in its district-led or state partnered initiatives to improve priority schools on the beta and/or delta tracks, per the continuum below.

The school plan development process will consist of the following:

1. **SISN:** The SISN will partner with an external entity to conduct a multi-day training on a needs assessment and root cause analysis to identify and analyze major areas of deficit. Training will be provided to TDOE personnel including CORE data analysts, CPM regional consultants, as well as impacted district teams.
2. **School and district:** All Priority schools—regardless of intervention track—will complete a comprehensive needs assessment, including a root cause analysis, with the identification of major areas of deficit with the greatest potential to impact change within the three focus areas: strong leadership, effective instruction, including equitable access to effective teachers, and framework for student support. The needs assessment will inform each school's improvement plan. Plans will be developed in partnership with stakeholders with early involvement and input from school leaders, teachers, and parents.
3. **School Readiness Review:** All schools on the Delta track (newly identified to the Priority list) will receive on-site school visits by a TDOE team. Delta schools (estimate 35–40 schools) are schools that have not been on a prior list and will be developing a more rigorous school improvement plan, and will benefit from additional support and oversight. These on-site visits will include exploratory conversations with school personnel and other stakeholders, resulting in a summative report prepared for districts with heat maps of all priority schools identifying key deficit areas. This report will also address a school's level of readiness for turnaround. We expect that with limited funding for school-level grants, districts may only apply on behalf of a subset of schools (serving remaining Priority schools with a broad, "umbrella" model). The summative reports are to provide districts with a more objective report to inform and to assist in this decision-making process.

State Application Process

The state application process for district's serving Priority Schools will focus on the three key levers, citation of evidence-based strategies, demonstration of capacity and commitment, and clear planning for implementation by the district. Using the evidence-based framework provided below, the state will require districts to identify and implement strategies and interventions within the appropriate levels of evidence addressing the state's three key levers of strong leadership, effective instruction, and supportive frameworks. The department believes that providing districts with an evidence-based framework and then requiring districts to identify the appropriate, district-specific strategies and actions aligns with the spirit of ESSA and genuinely allows districts to turn around its schools with district-led models before more rigorous interventions are enacted.

To facilitate this process the TDOE will develop clear guidance, materials, and training pertinent to the evidence-based required under ESSA for all districts serving Priority schools. This will include an examination of the overall body of evidence relevant to the three key levers, as well as creating resources for districts and schools use in selection of evidence-based interventions. Districts and schools will be directed to the information readily available in clearinghouse, including but not limited to the What Works Clearinghouse, Results First Clearinghouse database, and Best Evidence Encyclopedia.

Through the development of a robust needs assessment and root-cause analysis described in previous sections of this plan, districts will engage with stakeholders including school leaders, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders. This involvement will provide a valuable perspective to allow districts to weigh the evidence within the local context and its capacity to implement the intervention. Considerations for context and capacity include alignment with school setting, available funding, staff resources and skills and support available. While the evidence of a particular intervention may be well-researched, it may not be well suited to achieve the desired outcomes in the given school.

Evidence-based Interventions

Tennessee has identified three key evidence-based levers that districts and Priority schools will use in their comprehensive plans for improvement.
- **Strong leadership:** leadership development, training, and support
- **Effective instruction:** selecting, retaining, and supporting highly effective teachers and the development of high quality evidence-based curriculum and materials
- **Student support:** strong family engagement, safe and secure school and learning environment, student physical and mental health, and community support.

Tennessee will require a strong evidence-base within district applications and school plans. Districts will put forward an integrated approach, with a coherent theory of action, versus a series of disconnected activities. Instead of prioritizing specific evidence-based activities, the TDOE is

building capacity through school plan development and broadening the use of evidence-based strategies that align with and apply to the needs of a given school. The department will continue to review and evaluate the best partners for the state and districts to utilize for support, technical assistance, and best practices.

This approach allows districts to utilize different types of studies, as outlined in the ESSA evidence-use provisions, and does not require the state to create an "approved program lists" that may not align or benefit a given school. It is our belief that by empowering districts to actively engage in the decision-making process and greater autonomy in selection, development, and implementation of evidence-based practices then students, schools, and districts will see results.

As required under ESSA, interventions that are supported with Title I funds will meet one of the top three tiers of evidence: strong, moderate, or promising. Districts may propose other interventions from the fourth tier of evidence within turnaround plans, but these interventions must be funded outside Title I. In order to meet Tier 4 evidence, a rationale based on high-quality research, results of an existing evaluation, and applicability to the given school. It is the state's belief that the fourth level of evidence fosters innovation and furthers opportunity for action research at the school and district level.

TN Support for Evidence-Based § 8101 (23)	Tier I Strong	Tier 2 Moderate	Tier 3 Promising	Tier 4 (not funded through § 1003 but part of school turnaround plan)
Type of research	strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study	moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study	promising evidence from at least one well designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias	demonstrates a rationale based on high quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes
Source	Studies available through clearinghouse—including What Works Clearinghouse, Results First Clearinghouse database, Best Evidence Encyclopedia			Promising practice from state, within district, or other models
Research findings and relevance	District application for school-level grants must cite research, demonstrate the validity of findings from research, and explain the applicability and relevance to meet the needs of their school(s) and students.			District application must demonstrate results and evaluations from strategies without research study evidence, and articulate when/how of implementation and expected results for school(s) and student outcomes.
District implementation	Application will articulate the steps of implementation. District will examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention and determine success.			Application will articulate the steps of implementation. District will examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention through action research
State Rubric	Offices of CPM and school improvement will review and evaluate the application, school plan, and implementation, as well as the applicability based on root-cause analysis. TDOE will give			

TN Support for Evidence-Based § 8101 (23)	Tier I Strong	Tier 2 Moderate	Tier 3 Promising	Tier 4 (not funded through § 1003 but part of school turnaround plan)
	competitive priority to schools demonstrating clear applicability to valid research from Tier 1, 2, or 3 for implementation.			
State Monitoring and TA	Review and evaluate outcomes for students within district and/or school implementing strategy.			Review and evaluate action research and outcomes for students within district and/or school
	TDOE will partner with Regional Education Laboratories, the Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Center, and Tennessee Education Research Alliance. TERA will support state efforts to build and improve research-base, especially in Tier 4.			

The TDOE will partner with the Regional Education Laboratories (RELs), the Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Center, and Tennessee Education Research Alliance (TERA) for technical support and assistance for expanding Tennessee research base and support evidence-based practices at the district level.

As part of the quarterly monitoring of school plans described in this document, the TDOE will examine school level leading and lagging indicator data specific to the intervention. In addition, school improvement facilitators will engage in constructive dialogue with teachers and leadership to determine impressions of the impact of interventions on student outcomes and the root cause of successes and challenges. If student data does not evince positive outcomes after a reasonable time, the district will be advised to discontinue the intervention.

Timeline

Tennessee is submitting its updated list of Priority schools for implementation beginning in the 2017-18 school year and will share a timeline with districts that delineates deadlines and process for technical assistance.

Date	Activity	Details	Notes
2017 Spring and Summer	Communication to Districts re: SI, iZones, Planning grant	- iZone grant timeline - Plan for priority list	Annual spring meeting of iZone and SI district leadership with follow-up through iZone application webinars May 2017 - OSI
June 15, 2017	Initial iZone application submissions due	District will submit an iZone application, which includes a plan, abstract, projected budget, and other criteria	Posted as Word doc in ePlan LEA Document Library See supporting document on iZone
July 1, 2017	District iZone interviews w TDOE	Department will conduct interviews to evaluate capacity for iZone and clarify questions within the plan and application	TDOE leadership participates in interview and approves application for final submission

Date	Activity	Details	Notes
July 15, 2017	Final iZone applications due	Final applications and budgets will be submitted in provided template in ePlan.	Final applications will be based on the input from TDOE interview on plan and application draft. Draft will be removed from ePlan Document Library.
July 15–26, 2017	iZone application evaluation	Application and budget review	OSI and TDOE staff will review applications and budgets for completeness and whether were adequately recommendations were addressed, as well as fulfilling requirements under Title I.
Aug. 1, 2017	iZone grants awarded to districts		
Aug. 2017	TDOE training by external partner – needs assessment and root cause analysis	TDOE division and program leads (20-25) that will manage teams to deliver "Readiness Review" through needs assessment and root cause analysis of Priority Schools	External partner will conduct training for TDOE leads
Aug. 2017	External partner training for Districts on root cause analysis	TDOE staff Districts with Priority schools required to attend training	
Aug. 2017	All Schools conduct needs assessment in ePlan	Statewide, all schools are due in ePlan by September 1. Window: May 1 - Sept. 1	Deadline part of spring training with CPM
Sept. / Oct. 2017	Priority List released		
Sept. / Oct. 2017	Priority school intervention tracks determined	– Alpha 1 – Alpha 2 – Beta – Delta	See decision tree and continuum documents
Sept. / Oct. 2017	Communication to Districts on Priority List and timeline for school plan development	– Timeline for school plan development – Announce application deadline and requirements for Planning Grant	
Oct. / Nov. 2017	Districts submit planning grant applications		

Date	Activity	Details	Notes
Oct. 30, 2017	Award Priority School Planning Grant	Each of the approx. 85 schools receive planning grant funds	
Oct.–Nov. 2017	Department conducts Readiness Review of all Priority Schools	– Department teams visit all priority schools on Delta track, in order to support plan development for districts – Readiness Review will result in district report of all priority schools. Report will share data in form of heat map across SISN three focus areas: 1. Strong Leadership 2. Instruction 3. Support Framework	
Nov.–Dec. 2017	Department provides SI technical support through the deployment of 3-4 School Improvement Facilitators assigned to a subset of Priority schools	– Technical Assistance to Districts for school-level plan development for Priority schools – Support districts in determining schools for which they will apply – Support for coordinating Title I spending across Priority and Focus Schools	
December 2017	State report card released	Districts and schools update plans based on newly-released data	
Feb. 15, 2018	SI District Applications Due	Submitted via ePlan	Reviewed by TDOE and external reviewers
March 15, 2018	Award SI District grants	– Team of application reviewers identified – Grants awarded on per pupil basis	
March–April 2018	Consolidated Planning by Districts	Consolidated Funding Applications in which other ESSA funds are coordinated with school improvement dollars	
July 2018	Consolidated Funding Applications		

Date	Activity	Details	Notes
	approved (ESSA and IDEA)		
Aug. 2018	Year 1 of implementation	Ongoing support through School Improvement Facilitators and CORE	

Review & Approval of Plans

Tennessee will ensure that each district can demonstrate how it will prioritize its support to schools identified for Priority and how it will provide adequate resources and related support to each school.

The needs assessment, including a root cause analysis, will identify major areas of deficit with the greatest potential to impact change within the state's three areas of focus—strong leadership, effective instruction, and non-academic student support. The TDOE will develop and provide training to each district and school leadership team on identification of needs and plan development that includes appropriately-matched, evidence-based interventions.

Collection & Use of Data

Strategy	Timeline
In tested grades, 3–8, the TDOE will review formative assessment data in reading/ELA, mathematics, and science or social studies. In grades 9–12, English I, II, II, IV, Algebra I and II, and Biology.	Baseline (Sept.); mid-year (Jan.) and June
To continually assess the school climate, leading indicator school culture data will be collected. This collection will include student attendance, chronic absenteeism, teacher attendance, student mobility, and student suspensions and expulsions.	Baseline (Sept.); mid-year (Jan.) and June
Annual educator survey	Annual collection

Oversight & Monitoring

Approve: Using the completed needs assessment and plan as a guide, the TDOE will conduct a readiness review of each school that will result in a report provided to districts identifying key areas of deficit. The TDOE will collaborate with the district to ensure that deficit areas are adequately addressed in the school plans and budget.

Monitor: The office of school improvement within TDOE works within a cycle of continuous improvement; as a result, the OSI will monitor and annually review each district's implementation of the comprehensive support and improvement plan through a series of three milestone reviews. If a school is not meeting expected performance or unable to implement with fidelity the state may take further action.

- The first milestone is a desktop review occurring early in the school year to collect baseline academic assessment data and non-academic leading indicator data pertinent to school climate. This review will also address any additional supports or resources which may be needed to implement the approved plan with fidelity.
- A second milestone will consist of on-site visits to districts and Priority schools to examine progress on academic and non-academic indicators from the previous milestone and fidelity of implementation of the school plan. In the event challenges in academic, non-academic areas or fidelity of plan implementation are identified during the on-site school visits, the TDOE, in collaboration with the district, will more closely support and monitor the plan. In the event that the plan is not being implemented to fidelity, exploratory discussions involving the district, school, and TDOE will occur to determine the root cause. A collaborative decision on the revision to the approved plan will be made.
- The third milestone will be conducted with the possibility of school visits as needed to those schools where challenges with lack of progress or fidelity of plan implementation were identified previously.

Each district and school will complete an annual report that details areas of challenges and success with supporting data. The purpose of this report is to help inform the grant renewal decision.

The state will make a determination of interim academic progress based on the periodic collection of formative assessment and leading indicator data. In the event, data indicate regression or lack of progress at the mid-point in the year, the office of school improvement will work with the district and school to conduct a mid-year root cause analysis to determine the reason for the lack of progress with a possible adjustment to the school's plan. The process will be repeated for all Priority schools at the beginning of each school year.

Continuous Support & Differentiated Technical Assistance

The TDOE has developed a School Improvement Continuum of Support. Included in the continuum is the SISN to provide differentiated technical assistance and support to districts and schools. The network will engage the TDOE office of school improvement, CORE, and CPM regional consultants to support all priority schools at varying levels. The SISN will work directly with districts and Priority schools on assessing the needs, conducting a readiness review, developing a plan for improvement, and supporting and monitoring of progress.

In addition, the OSI will meet with district and school leadership teams, including iZone or other partners, twice yearly, prior to the beginning of school and at the year's mid-point, to provide support in common areas of challenge and to share promising practices.