Opening or Changing a Virtual School

March 3, 2022

Matt Bowser, Director of Virtual Schools

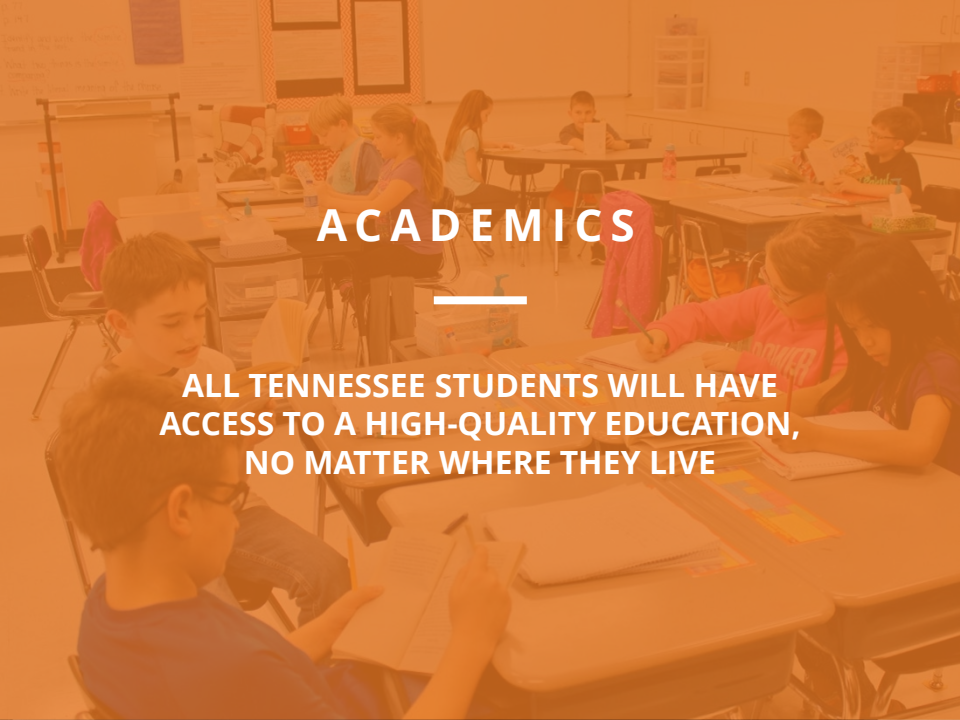Division of Choice, Tennessee Department of Education

BEST FOR ALL

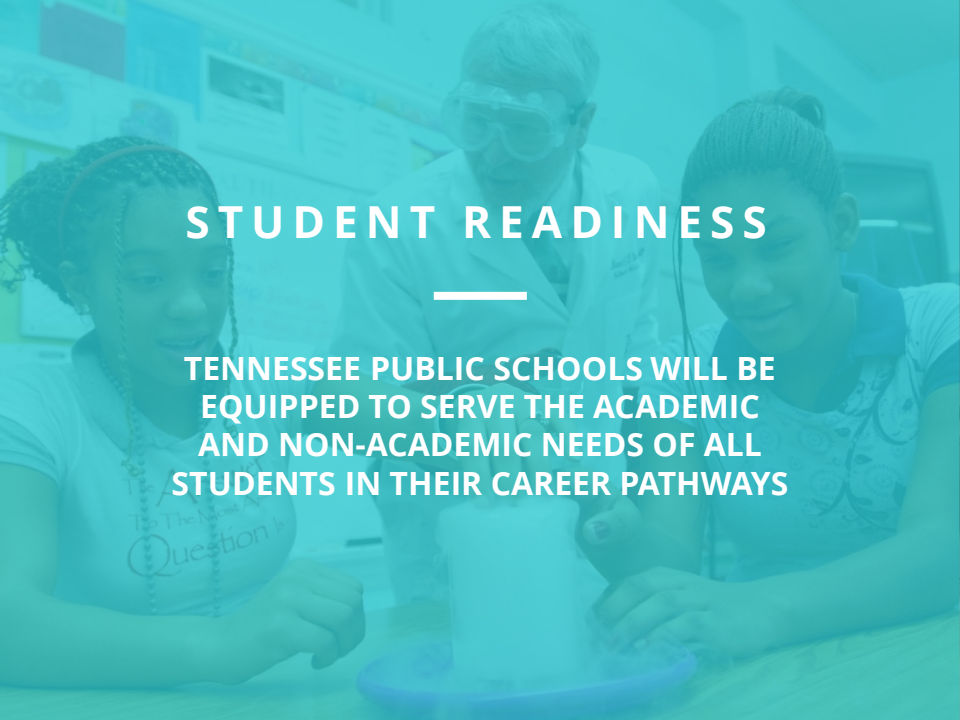We will set all students on a path to success.

ACADEMICS

ALL TENNESSEE STUDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE
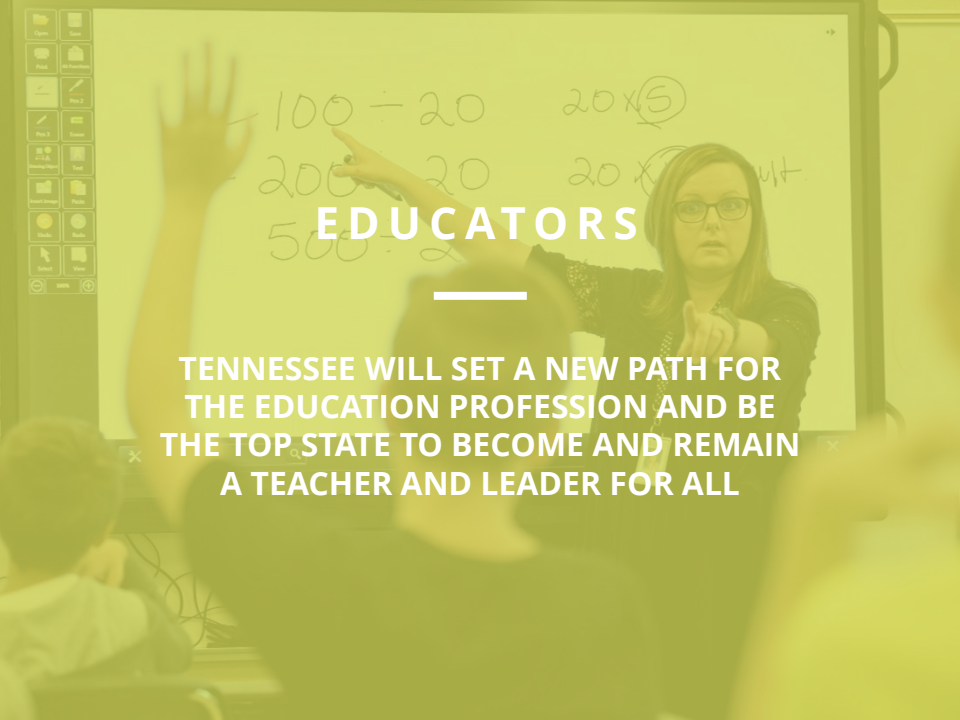
STUDENT READINESS

TENNESSEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BE EQUIPPED TO SERVE THE ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS IN THEIR CAREER PATHWAYS
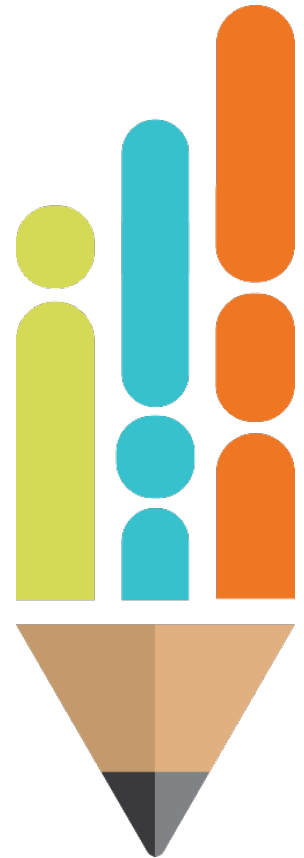
EDUCATORS

TENNESSEE WILL SET A NEW PATH FOR THE EDUCATION PROFESSION AND BE THE TOP STATE TO BECOME AND REMAIN A TEACHER AND LEADER FOR ALL

Norms

- Please mute microphones.

- Send any questions via chat.

- Stay engaged and contribute your expertise and knowledge.

- Respond to interactive exercises.

Purpose of this training...

- Explore the process of starting or changing a virtual school.

- Explain how to complete the Program and School Authorization Form (PSAF).

- Explain how to complete the School Directory Change Request Form (SDCRF).

- Identify resources to aid in the provision of virtual education.

Agenda

- Virtual Education Laws and Regulations – (5 minutes)

- Virtual Education Overview in Tennessee – (5 minutes)

- Why Open a Virtual School? – (5 minutes)

- Process of opening a Virtual School – (5 minutes)

- Completing the PSAF – (10 minutes)

- Changing a Virtual School – (10 minutes)

- Resources and Best Practices – (5 minutes)

- Q & A

How is Virtual Education Defined?

- **Virtual School:** A public school in which the school uses technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to its students via the internet in a virtual or remote setting. SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.05(1)(a)

- **Virtual Education Programs:** A course or series of courses offered through the use of technology by an LEA or public charter school to provide students a broader range of educational opportunities. SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.05(2)(a)

What Laws and Rules Govern Virtual Education in Tennessee?

Virtual Schools

- *Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-16-201 – 49-16-216*
  - Tennessee General Assembly passed Public Chapter 492 the "Virtual Public Schools Act" in 2011.
- *SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.05(1)*

Virtual Education Programs

- *Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-16-101 – 49-16-105*
  - Tennessee General Assembly passed Public Chapter 1096 in 2008.
- *SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.05(2)*

Virtual Education Quick Facts

- Tennessee has 57 virtual schools across 41 counties.

- Enrollment as of October 1st is 17,264 as compared to 4,037 in 2019-2020.

- Enrollment increased over 400% from 2019-2020 to 2021-2022.

- Number of schools increased from 17 to 57 between 2019 and 2021.

- Most Tennessee LEAs have implemented a virtual education program.

Opening a Virtual School

Why Open a Virtual School?

Virtual schools can provide…

take about 2 minutes and type in the chat

▪ Virtual schools can provide…

   – A flexible educational offering to meet student and family needs.

   – A safe environment for students that have underlying health conditions.

   – The opportunity for students to complete courses at their own pace.

   – The opportunity for the LEA to offer a broader range of courses.
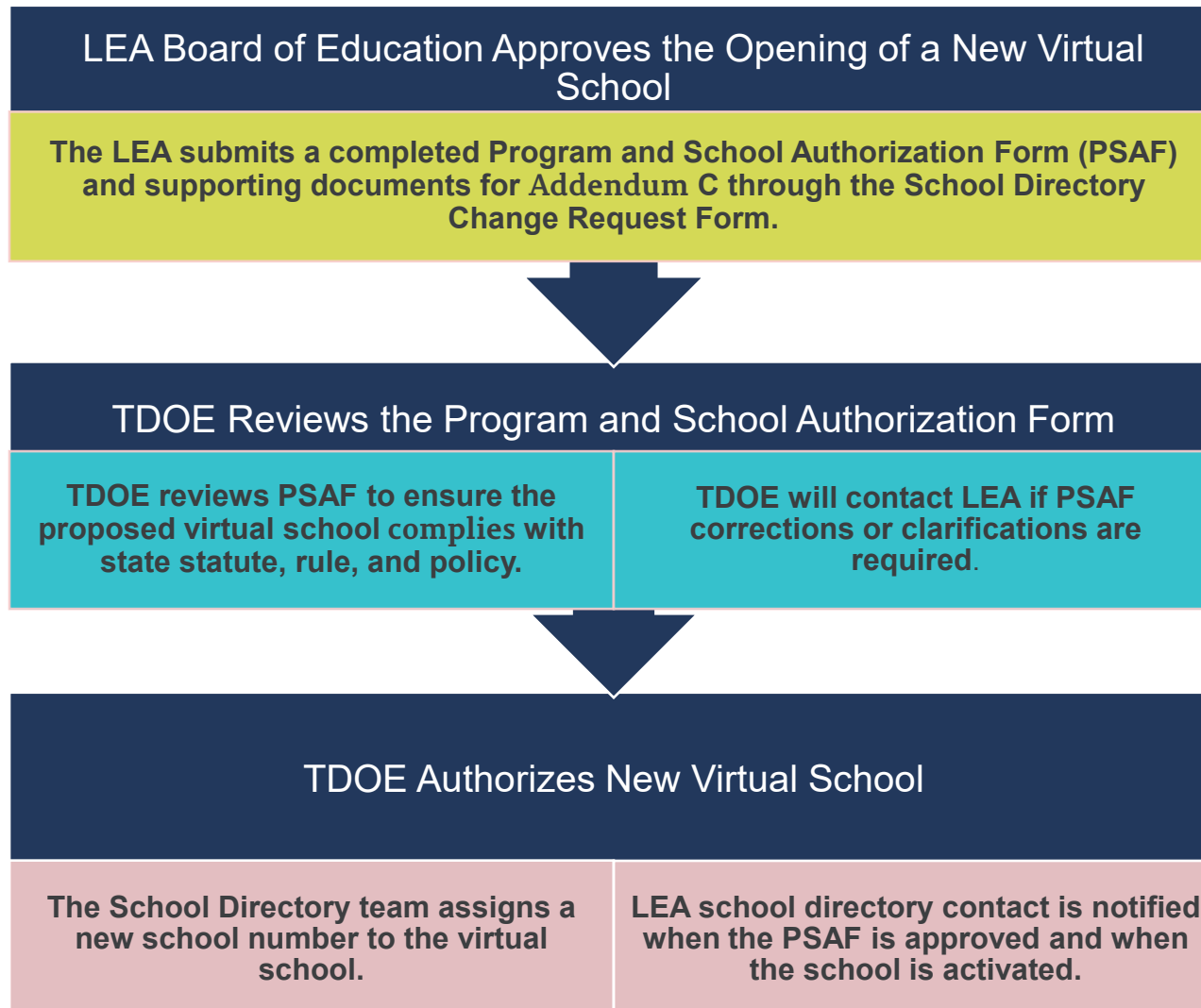
Timelines

- The window for submitting the PSAF to open or change a virtual school is currently open and will remain open until June 1.

- Standard turnaround time is 10 business days to review a submitted PSAF and provide an initial response.

Overview of Opening a New Virtual School

LEA Board of Education Approves the Opening of a New Virtual School

The LEA submits a completed Program and School Authorization Form (PSAF) and supporting documents for Addendum C through the School Directory Change Request Form.

TDOE Reviews the Program and School Authorization Form

TDOE reviews PSAF to ensure the proposed virtual school complies with state statute, rule, and policy.	TDOE will contact LEA if PSAF corrections or clarifications are required.

TDOE Authorizes New Virtual School

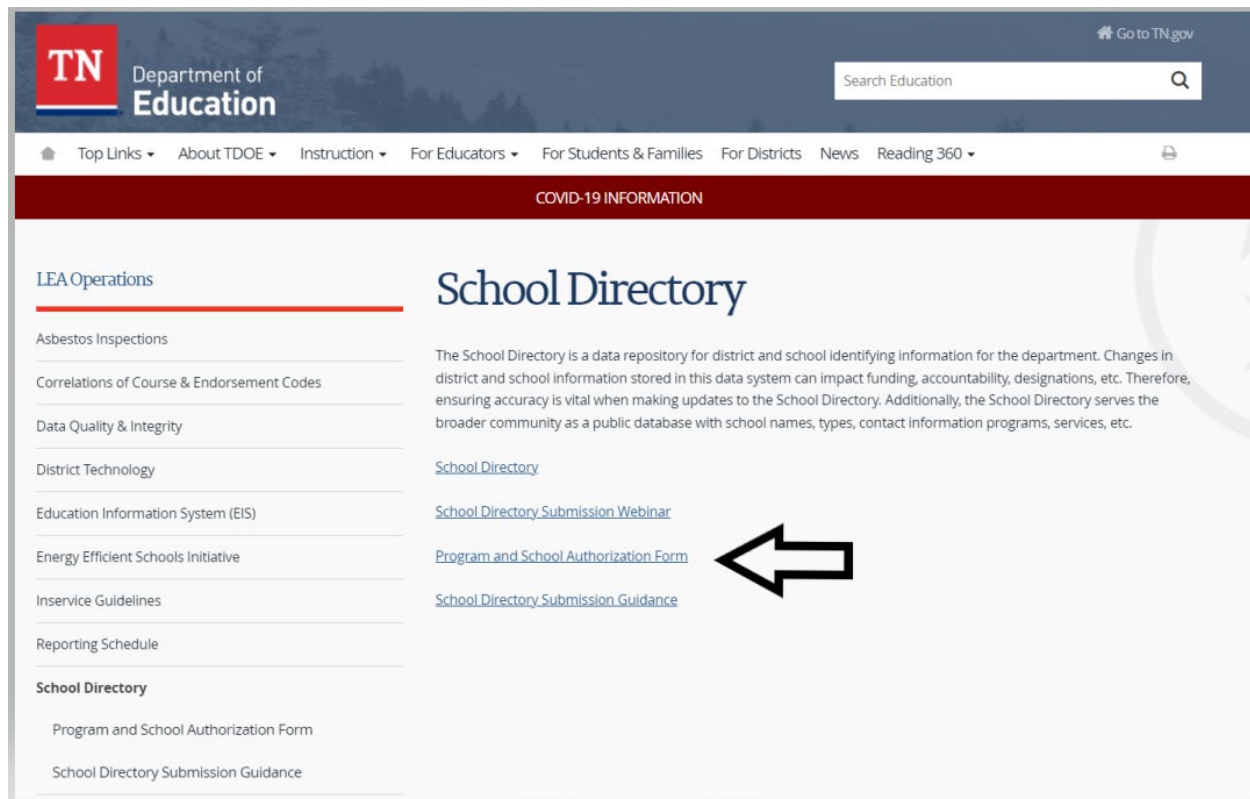|	
The School Directory team assigns a new school number to the virtual school.	LEA school directory contact is notified when the PSAF is approved and when the school is activated.

Completing the Program and School Authorization Form

Finding the Program and School Authorization Form (PSAF)

You can find the Program and School Authorization form (PSAF) here:

- https://www.tn.gov/education/lea-operations/school-directory.html

Request Checklist

- To open a new virtual school, check the following:

  - District Information
  - Assurances
  - Request Type and Sections
  - Addendum C: Virtual School Request

Program and School Authorization Form

Instructions

The purpose of this document is to request school and program changes that require department authorization. Please use this form to request the following:

- a new school[1] or program number;
- to change the school or program type;
- to change a school or program name, address, or grade configuration; or
- to close a school or program.

To complete the request, complete the school district information section, the request type, and the corresponding sections. The Director of Schools must also read and sign the assurances section. In order to process a request, all required fields must be completed. Upload the completed and signed document using the online School Directory Change Request Form.

A separate Program and School Authorization Form for each school or program change is required. All forms must be submitted by **June 1** each year to be authorized for the upcoming school year, with the exception of requests to open a new virtual school or expand an existing virtual school, which will be accepted on a rolling basis.

You can expect to receive confirmation of your submission within three (3) business days. All requests will be reviewed by School Directory personnel and other impacted TDOE divisions and processed in an expeditious manner. The department will notify the local education agency (LEA) in writing of the decision for each form submitted.

For questions or support in completing this form, click here or contact School.Directory@tn.gov

Request Checklist	Please check all that apply
District Information	Complete ☐ (Required)
Assurances	Complete ☐ (Required)
Request Type and Section(s)	Complete ☐ (Required)
Addendum A: Adult High School Request	Complete ☐
Addendum B: Non-Traditional School Request	Complete ☐
Addendum C: Virtual School Request	Complete ☐
Addendum D: Career and Technical Education School Request	Complete ☐
Addendum E: Early Postsecondary Classification Request	Complete ☐

District Information

District Information

District Name:	Date:
Director of Schools Name:	School District Number:
School District Phone Number:	School District Fax:
School District Mailing Address:	City and Zip Code:
Person Completing Form (if different from above):	Phone Number of Person Completing Form:
Email Address of Person Submitting Form:	

Assurances

Assurances

By signing below, I certify that all the information provided below in the attached sections is accurate and complete, to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if any of the below information changes, I am obligated to update school or program information with the Tennessee Department of Education via the same process presented above. **I also certify that the request in no way circumvents accountability measures under state or federal law, including the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*.** Obtaining a new school number does not guarantee receiving a "New School" accountability status (if applicable). If I have requested an adult, nontraditional, virtual school, career and technical education, or early postsecondary program number, I understand that our district must follow the criteria set forth in the applicable addendum as a condition of receiving and retaining that particular status.

Director of Schools Signature of Assurances: _____

Print Director's Name: _____

Date: _____

Request Type

Request Type

Please check all that apply, and then complete the corresponding sections and addendums for each request.

☐ New School or Program Number *(Complete Section A)*

☐ Change School or Program Type *(Complete Section B)*

☐ Change a School or Program Name, Address, Grade Configuration, or Principal Name and/or Email Address *(Complete Section C)*

☐ Close a School or Program *(Complete Section D)*

Section A:
New School or Program Number

Section A – New School or Program Number	
Is this request related to a school or program?	☐ School ☐ Program
School or Program Type:	☐ Regular Public ☐ Public Charter ☐ Pre-K ☐ Adult High School (Addendum A) ☐ Nontraditional (**Must complete** Addendum B): ☐ Virtual School (Addendum C) ☐ Career and Technical Education (Addendum D) ☐ Early Postsecondary (Addendum E)
New School or Program Name:	**Date Opening (First Day of Classes):**
Principal's or Program Director's Name:	**Lowest Grade Level:** / **Highest Grade Level:**
School or Program Phone Number:	**School or Program Fax:**
School Email Address:	**Web Address:**
School or Program Address, City and Zip Code:	
Is this school or program replacing an existing one? ☐ Yes ☐ No *If yes, please give the name of the school or program that is being closed; note that a form must also be submitted at the same time with this request for the closing school.* **If yes, Implementation of a School Improvement Plan?** ☐ Yes ☐ No **If yes, Is this school designated with any federal designations (i.e.: Priority, ATSI, TSI, etc.):** *If yes, please give the name of federal designations assigned to the previous school.*	
If this request is for a pre-K site, please select funding source: ☐ Federal ☐ State/Local ☐ Private	**School/Program Implementation Phase:** ☐ Pilot ☐ Expansion ☐ Lottery ☐ Other
Nearest Elementary School (for Pre-K School/Program Requests Only):	☐ Full-Time Supervising Principal ☐ Full-Time Teaching Principal ☐ Full-Time Program Director
Number of Teachers:	**Length of Teacher Day:** Hours Minutes

Section A (continued): New School or Program Number

Section A (continued) – New School or Program Number	
Estimated Student Enrollment: Total In-District Out-of-District	**Length of Student Day:** Hours Minutes
Are students assigned on a permanent basis per school year? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
What tests will be administered?	
Do students receive official Tennessee High School Diplomas/Mastery Certificates from this facility? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
Congressional District:	**Enrollment & Attendance Software Package:**
Additional Comments:	

Addendum C: Virtual School Authorization Request

All documentation identified below must be uploaded together with your request. In addition, the Assurances specified below supplement and are incorporated into the Assurances set forth on page 2 of this form. Questions related to the virtual school authorization may be directed to **Virtual.Schools@tn.gov**.

Documentation
Please provide documentation of the following:

1. Excerpt from the minutes of the meeting of the local board of education approving the opening of a virtual school.
2. Plan for ensuring that each student enrolled in the virtual school has access to instructional materials and technology, including devices and connectivity, for managing student access, and for providing troubleshooting and repairs.
3. Proposed sequential curriculum that will be implemented at the virtual school, including the complete list of courses to be offered. The virtual school must use textbooks and instructional materials that are on the State-approved lists linked here: State-Approved Textbooks and Instructional Materials.
4. Plan for providing the same length of time for learning opportunities per academic year that is required for public school students, including proposed daily schedules by grade band.
5. Plan for monitoring and documenting attendance and enforcing compulsory attendance laws, including truancy intervention, at the virtual school, in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-03-.05.
6. Plan for enrolling students in the virtual school and ensuring compliance with class size maximums.
7. Plan for identifying eligible students and administering special education and ELL services to eligible students enrolled in the virtual school and for complying with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations related thereto.
8. Plan for ensuring that teachers in the virtual school are properly licensed, endorsed in their content areas, assigned to students, trained in the delivery of virtual instruction, and annually evaluated.
9. Plan for administering the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) tests or successor tests to students enrolled in the virtual school.

How to Gather and Submit Documentation

▪ Follow the guidance found within the following documents:

- How to Open a New Public Virtual School FAQ: https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/virtual-schools/how-to-open-a-new-virtual-school.html

- Quick Reference Guide for Opening or Expanding a Virtual School: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/nonpublic/chtr_sch/Quick_Reference_Guide_for_Opening_a_Virtual.pdf

Explanation of Required Documentation: Excerpt from Board Minutes

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Excerpt from Board Minutes-<date>.

  – When possible, save in PDF format; this applies to all submitted files.

- Attach the excerpt from the minutes of the Board meeting at which the Board approved the opening of a new virtual school.

- The excerpt should include the vote tally and the date of the meeting.

Explanation of Required Documentation:
Access to Instructional Materials and Technology

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Access to Instructional Materials and Technology-<date>.

- Attach a document describing how the district will provide instructional materials to virtual school students, as well as access to devices and connectivity.

- The document should also describe how the district will support troubleshooting and repairs for technology.

Explanation of Required Documentation: Proposed Sequential Curriculum

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Proposed Sequential Curriculum-<date>.

- Attach a document describing the curriculum that will be taught at the virtual school.

- The document should include the list of courses and state-approved textbooks, or instructional materials used for each grade level.

- Approved Textbooks and Instructional Materials lists can be found here: https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html

Explanation of Required Documentation: Schedules/Calendar

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Schedules-<date>.

- Attach the virtual school calendar, demonstrating that students will receive the minimum 180 days of instruction.

- In addition, provide the daily schedules by grade band served, demonstrating that students will receive the minimum required hours of instruction.

Explanation of Required Documentation: Monitoring Attendance

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Monitoring Attendance-<date>.

- Attach a document describing how the school will track and document attendance on a daily basis.

- The response should identify at least two (2) of the methods specified in State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.05(c)(1).

- The document should explain how truancy intervention policies will be implemented in the virtual setting.

Explanation of Required Documentation: **Enrollment**

- Recommended File Name: \<school name\>-Enrollment-\<date\>.

- Attach your LEA enrollment policies and virtual school enrollment procedures.

- The document should show/explain:

  - How the district will ensure that class sizes do not exceed the maximum permitted by law and regulation.

  - If enrollment is allowed for students outside the LEA's zone of residency.

  - If applicable, procedures that outline the process of withdrawing a student who isn't meeting school academic/behavioral standards.

Explanation of Required Documentation: SPED and ELL

- Recommended File Name: \<school name\>-SPED and ELL-\<date\>.

- Attach a document explaining how the district will administer services for students with disabilities and English Learners in its virtual school.

- The document should describe how these students are identified in a virtual setting (Child Find) and how the virtual school will comply with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations for special populations.

Explanation of Required Documentation: Teachers and Staff

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Teachers and Staff-<date>.

- Attach a document describing the district's process for confirming the licensure and endorsements of each teacher.

- The document should describe:

  - the professional development in virtual instruction provided to virtual teachers;

  - how virtual teachers are assigned to students; and

  - how virtual teachers employed by the LEA are annually evaluated.

Explanation of Required Documentation: Administering Assessments

- Recommended File Name: <school name>-Administering Assessments-<date>.

- Attach a document describing the virtual school's procedures for administering TCAP tests in person to virtual school students.

Additional Assurances

- By signing the Assurances on page 2, the Director of Schools is also certifying that the listed additional assurances are accurate and complete.

- The virtual school will be monitored annually to verify compliance with state law and regulation as outlined in these Assurances.

Submitting the PSAF to Open a Virtual School

- The LEA's school directory contact or Director of Schools will fill out the School Directory Change Request Form: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/school_directory_change_request

- Upload the completed and signed PSAF and all required documents from addendum C when completing the School Directory Change Request Form.

- Either create a zip file containing all required files **or** combine all pdf files into 1 pdf file — in the correct order as outlined in Addendum C.

  - How to create a zip file on Windows: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/zip-and-unzip-files-f6dde0a7-0fec-8294-e1d3-703ed85e7ebc

  - How to create a zip file on Mac: https://discussions.apple.com/thread/4790839

Completing the School Directory Change Request Form

Completing the School Directory Change Request Form

Completing the School Directory Change Request Form (cont.)

Change Personnel or Contact Information

Do you need to change personnel or contact information (e.g., principal name, school website, etc.) for one or more schools?*

○ Yes
◉ No

Add New Program or School

In order to complete this section, please ensure the Program and School Authorization Form is completed and signed and uploaded below for department authorization. For any questions, please review the submission guidance document

Do you need to add a new school or program?*
◉ Yes
○ No

Upload completed Program and School Authorization Form in PDF format
[Choose File] [Remove File] No File Chosen
The Director of Schools must read and sign the assurances section on the attached Program and School Authorization Form

Is this request for a school or program?*
◉ School
○ Program

Completing the School Directory Change Request Form (cont.)

Close Existing School or Program

In order to complete this section, please ensure the Program and School Authorization Form is completed and signed and uploaded below for department authorization. For any questions, please review the submission guidance document

Do you need to close an existing school or program? *
○ Yes
◉ No

Change School or Program Type

In order to complete this section, please ensure the Program and School Authorization Form is completed and signed and uploaded below for department authorization. For any questions, please review the submission guidance document

Do you need to change a school or program type? *
○ Yes
◉ No

Change Grade Configurations

In order to complete this section, please ensure the Program and School Authorization Form is completed and signed and uploaded below for department authorization. For any questions, please review the submission guidance document

Do you need to change grade configurations for a school or program?
○ Yes
◉ No

Completing the School Directory Change Request Form (cont.)

Assurances

The director of schools must confirm below that all information is complete and accurate.

By signing below, I certify that all the information provided below in the attached sections is accurate and complete, to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if any of the below information changes, I am obligated to update school or program information with the Tennessee Department of Education via the same process presented above. I also certify that the request in no way circumvents accountability measures under state or federal law, including the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Obtaining a new school number does not guarantee receiving a "New School" accountability status (if applicable). If I have requested an adult, nontraditional, virtual school, career and technical education, or early postsecondary program number, I understand that our district must follow the criteria set forth in the applicable addendum as a condition of receiving and retaining that particular status. *
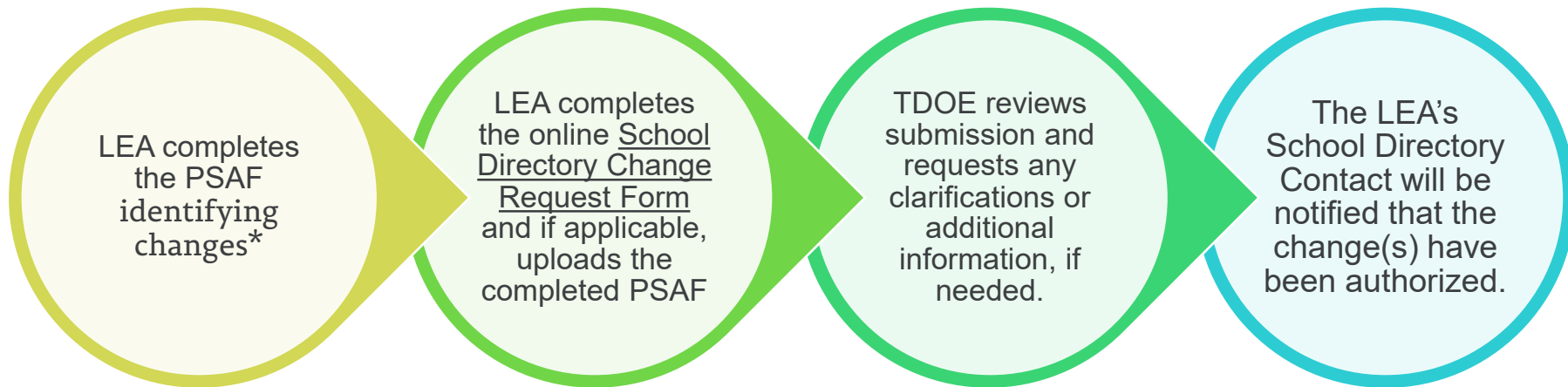
First Name

Last Name

Submit Form

Changing a Virtual School

Making Changes to a Virtual School

LEA completes the PSAF identifying changes*

LEA completes the online School Directory Change Request Form and if applicable, uploads the completed PSAF

TDOE reviews submission and requests any clarifications or additional information, if needed.

The LEA's School Directory Contact will be notified that the change(s) have been authorized.

Only applicable to changes that require TDOE approval.

Changes that <u>Do Not</u> Require TDOE Approval

- District/school leader name
- School email address
- School website
- School physical address or mailing address
- School phone or fax number

- LEA must use the School Directory Change Request Form to notify the TDOE of the requested change. https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/school_directory_change_request

Changes that <u>Do</u> Require TDOE Approval

- School name change
- Grade configuration (adding or removing grades)
  - Up to 3 grades can be added or removed each school year.
- School openings or closings

- Complete the following sections of the Program and School Authorization Form (PSAF).
  - Request Checklist
  - District Information
  - Assurances
  - Request Type and Applicable Sections

- Submit through the School Directory Change Request Form

Overview of Change Types and Deadlines

Type of Change	Needs TDOE Authorization	Required Forms	Submission Deadlines
School name change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	June 1st of each year
School, instructional, or program type change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
School grade change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
School openings	✓	PSAF, Addendum C docs*, & SDCRF	
School closings	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
District and school contact changes • District/school leader name • Email address • Website • Physical address • Phone number		SDCRF	Can be submitted throughout the year

Note: PSAF – Program and School Authorization Form; SDCRF – School Directory Change Request Form

*Addendum C documents are only needed when applying to open a virtual school

Resources

Statutory and Regulatory Resources

- **Tennessee Code – Lexis Law Link**:
  https://www.tncourts.gov/Tennessee%20Code

- **Tennessee State Board of Education Rules, Policies, and Guidance**:
  https://www.tn.gov/sbe/rules--policies-and-guidance.html

TDOE Website

- **TDOE Virtual School Website**: https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/virtual-schools.html

- **TDOE Textbooks and Instructional Materials List**:
  https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html

- **School Directory Webinar**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clL7PcnVAfA

TDOE Contact: Matt.Bowser@tn.gov or Virtual.Schools@tn.gov

Questions?

How was the training?

Please take a moment and complete the [Opening or Changing a Virtual School Guidance Feedback.](https://bit.ly/TDOEVS2)

https://bit.ly/TDOEVS2