
State Identified Reward & Priority Exit Schools

The Background:

In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-1-602, and Tennessee's accountability system as approved in its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, the Tennessee Department of Education is charged with presenting to the State Board of Education a listing of Reward Schools annually.

Public Chapter 2 (PC 2) of the First Extraordinary Session of the 112th General Assembly provided a pathway for schools to be held harmless from the negative consequences of accountability if 80 percent or more of an LEA or public charter school's students in grades 3-12 participated in the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) administered during the 2020-21 school year. If LEAs and public charter schools met the TCAP participation threshold, then student performance or student growth data from the 2020-21 TCAP administration could not be used to assign a letter grade or other summative rating to a school, identify a school as a Priority school, or assign a school to the Achievement School District. According to PC 2, schools could still exit Priority status based on data from the 2020-21 TCAP administration.

All LEAs and public charter schools exceeded the required 80 percent participation rate and therefore qualified for the hold harmless protections found in PC 2. As a result, no schools were newly designated with Priority status. Schools could still earn Reward status or exit priority status if they satisfied the Priority exit criteria detailed in the state's accountability model and the requirements to be held harmless.

Reward Designation and Criteria

Descriptions of each indicator of the 2020-21 accountability data are as follows:

- The **Achievement** and **Growth** indicators reflect the proportion of students who meet content standards and whether students are making expected academic growth.
- The **Chronically Out of School** indicator measures the proportion of students missing 10 percent or more of the school year.
- The **English Language Proficiency** indicator evaluates how students with limited English proficiency are improving their language fluency.
- The two high school indicators (**Graduation Rate** and **Ready Graduate**) assess whether students are earning regular diplomas on time and whether they are prepared for postsecondary success.

For the 2020-21 school year, schools that are held harmless can still earn the status of Reward schools, and schools can still exit priority status. This item contains the list of schools newly identified for Reward status and schools that exited priority status using data from the 2020-21 TCAP administration.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on first and final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.