



Department of
Education

2020-21

Accountability Data Appeals Guidance

Released: 7/27/2021

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Section 1: Appeals Timeline and Process	3
Section 1.1: Tests Included in the 80% Participation Rate	7
Section 1.2: Timeline	7
Section 1.3: Submission Process.....	8
Section 2: Accountability Appeals Parameters	9
Section 3: Frequently Asked Questions	10

Section 1: Appeals Timeline and Process

Accurate data is critical for making decisions in education. As with previous years, the department will allow for accountability appeals to ensure all data is reflected correctly, and this year is especially important, as little data was available from the 2019-2020 school year.

This process allows districts to resolve issues related to accountability data in line with federal and state guidelines. This document explains the timeline and parameters for submitting an accountability data appeal. Please contact TNEducation.Accountability@tn.gov for questions not addressed in this document.

The process for those appeals is detailed in proceeding sections, as well as a reminder as to which tests are to be included in the 80% participation rate this year. For more information about the implications of [Public Chapter 2 of the First Extraordinary Session of the 112th General Assembly](#), or PC 2, on accountability this year, reference the [2021 Accountability Protocol](#). This year, PC2 was enacted to amend laws regarding school and district accountability which offer the opportunity to remove negative consequences associated with accountability this year.

Most 2020-21 accountability data available from the department will initially be made available on **Aug. 10** via the Accountability Application. Any remaining files will be provided at the beginning of the appeals window on Aug. 19. Districts will then verify the accuracy of their accountability indicator data and submit appeals **between Aug. 19-Sept. 1** in order to ensure data is accurate. Appeals submitted after 5 p.m. CT on **Sept. 1** will be automatically denied. The timeline below outlines important dates in the accountability appeals process.

Accountability Milestones

Date	Milestone	Delivery Medium
Aug. 10	Release of accountability indicator files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement and End-of-Course school-, and district- level assessment data with performance levels • Student-, school-, and district-level Chronic Absenteeism data through June 17 • School-, and district-level WIDA ACCESS data *Note: Student-, school-, and district-level 2020 <i>Ready Graduate</i> and graduation rate data will be released at this time reflecting appeals decisions. Since these files have been finalized, they are not subject to further appeals.	Accountability Application
Aug. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of District & School Accountability Data Files • Release of Preliminary School Accountability Designation List File 	Accountability Application
Aug. 19	Accountability files appeal window opens	Appeals should be submitted to TNE.Accountability@tn.gov.
Aug. 19	Re-release of Assessment files <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This release includes an update of the student-, school-, and district-level assessment files through the Accountability application. This re-release will include the TCAP-Alt files. Please note, these data do not impact accountability calculations, but are subject to appeals beginning Aug. 19 and ending Sept. 1. 	Accountability Application
Sept. 1	Accountability files appeals window closes at 5 p.m. CT.	Appeals should be submitted to

		TNED.Accountability@tn.gov.
Sept. 13	Final accountability files will be released.	Accountability Application and TDOE website.

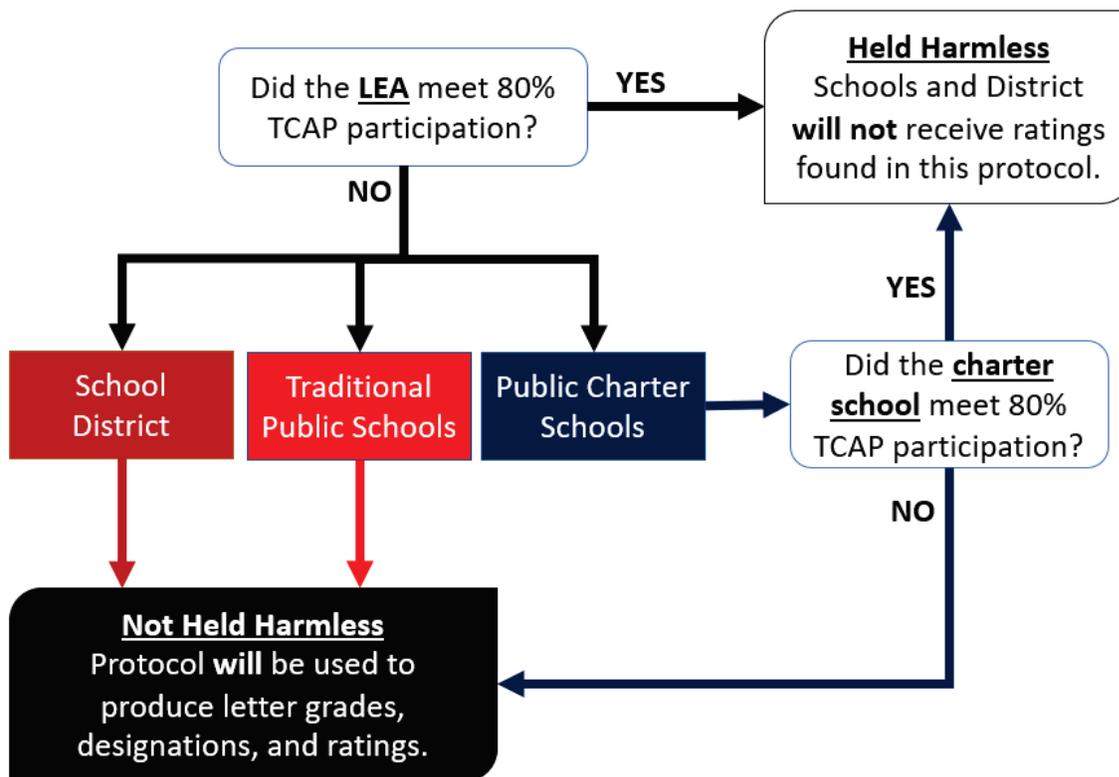
This document explains the timeline and parameters for submitting appeals for these data. Please contact TNED.Accountability@tn.gov for questions not addressed in this document.

Section 1.1: Hold Harmless Information

While PC 2 does not use the phrase “hold harmless,” the Accountability Protocol will refer to schools and districts being “held harmless” from the accountability provisions specified in PC 2 when they meet the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) “eighty-percent-participation requirement” detailed in PC 2. “Held harmless” refers to schools and school districts for which the data from the 2020-21 school year cannot be used to assign letter grades or any other summative ratings in the 2021 state report card, to identify a school as a priority school, nor to assign a school to the Achievement School District (ASD).

As a reminder, PC 2 does not change any part of the accountability system. It acts as a gate which determines if the accountability system will produce ratings for a school or LEA, as modeled in the chart below.

Figure 1: Hold Harmless on Accountability Designations



Section 1.2: Tests Included in the 80% Participation Rate

The table below lists the tests that will be used in the 80% participation rate calculation.

Table 1: Tests Included in the 80% Participation Requirement

Tests included in the 80% Participation Requirement	Included?
TCAP ELA (ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS) GRADES 3-8	√
TCAP MATH GRADES 3-8	√
TCAP SCIENCE GRADES 3-8	√
TCAP SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 6-8	√
TCAP ELA EOC	√
TCAP MATH EOC	√
TCAP SCIENCE EOC	√
TCAP SOCIAL STUDIES EOC	√
TCAP ALT SCIENCE GRADES 3-8 AND EOC	√
TCAP ALT SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 6-8	√
MSAA MATH	√
MSAA ELA	√
WIDA ACCESS GRADES 3-12	√
WIDA ACCESS ALT GRADES 3-12	√
WIDA ACCESS GRADES K-2	N
WIDA ACCESS ALT GRADES K-2	N
ACT	N
SAT (SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST)	N
NAEP (NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS)	N
SDC (STATEWIDE DUAL CREDIT)	N
AP (ADVANCED PLACEMENT)	N
IB (INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE)	N
CLEP (COLLEGE LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM)	N
CIE (CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS)	N
TCAP GRADE 2 ELA	N
TCAP GRADE 2 MATH	N
TCAP ALT GRADE 2 ELA	N
TCAP ALT GRADE 2 MATH	N

Key

√ indicates this test **will** be counted toward the 80% participation rate

N indicates this test **will not** be counted toward the 80% participation rate

Section 1.3: Submission Process

Districts must explain the appealable issues (see Section 3) in a letter on district letterhead from the district's director of schools. This letter must be submitted, along with requisite supporting documentation, to TNE.Accountability@tn.gov. Supporting documentation can include transcripts, attendance records, assessment notices, and other official documents. Appeals submitted without supporting documentation or after the appeals window closes will automatically be denied. The appeals window closes **Sept. 1 at 5 p.m. CT.**

Section 2: Accountability Appeals Parameters

Districts may submit appeals to correct major, systematic data or calculation errors made by the department. Below is a list of appealable issues.

Appealable issues:

- Department Errors
 - The department made a calculation error (i.e., the calculations differ from the process outlined in the 2020-21 Accountability Protocol.)
- Special Circumstances
 - Systematic and uncorrectable district data errors

Districts may appeal if there are major, systematic data quality issues in their data files that they could not correct during the school year. The department requires documentation to consider appeals of systematic data errors. Acceptable evidence will demonstrate that the data were correct in the Education Information System (EIS) at the time of processing. Appeals submitted without supporting documentation will automatically be denied.

The department will deny requests to update student demographic data information. All demographic data corrections must take place in EIS prior to the demographics pull which occurred on **May 26**.

Due to COVID-19, districts were given significant flexibility during Spring 2021 TCAP administration to work with their local health authorities in developing safe, in-person assessment plans. The department offered an expanded test administration window as a flexibility. The inclusion of the expanded test window allowed students impacted by COVID-19 to complete makeup testing before the end of the window giving these students an opportunity to be included in participation. Thus, as in prior years, the department will **not** review student-level appeals for assessment data including for participation rate for students who missed testing for these reasons and were not previously marked medically exempt. Information regarding appropriate protocols for [fall](#) and [spring](#) testing, as well as [medical exemption](#), was released by the assessment team earlier in the year.

Section 3: Frequently Asked Questions

Who is granted access to the Accountability Application, and where can I access it?

Only district-level (central office) employees with permission from the director of schools/superintendent are eligible for access to the Accountability Application. Eligible personnel can access the site through [Single Sign On](#).

How does the department calculate accountability determinations?

For business rules used in producing Tennessee's school and district accountability data, consult the [2020-21 Accountability Protocol](#).

Under what circumstances may a district submit an appeal?

As stated in Section 2 of the document, districts may appeal department errors, including calculation errors, and special circumstances, such as systematic and uncorrectable district data errors.

What is the process for submitting an appeal?

Districts must submit appeals to the department on district letterhead from the director of schools/superintendent detailing the district's appeals. Districts should include appropriate documentation and justifications for each student in the email to TNE.Accountability@tn.gov. Appeals submitted without supporting documentation will automatically be denied.

What is the deadline for submitting an appeal?

Sept. 1, 2021 is the deadline for submitting accountability appeals that include input files. The department will automatically deny appeals submitted after 5 p.m. CT on Sept. 1.

Can we appeal participation rate this year? What about next year?

No, schools and districts cannot appeal student-level participation rate data this year. Decisions regarding 2021-22 Accountability appeals will be released at a later date.

If the department denies a district appeal, may the district appeal the denial?

No, the department's appeals decisions are final.

To whom should districts address any questions or concerns relating to accountability data and appeals?

Districts should submit all accountability-related inquiries to TNE.Accountability@tn.gov.