



Department of  
**Education**

# 2019-20 Accountability Data Appeals Guidance

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## Section 1: Overview

Due to COVID-19 and school closures, the United States Department of Education and the Tennessee General Assembly have [waived](#) the federal and state assessment and accountability requirements based on data from the 2019-20 school year. In suit, the Tennessee Department of Education **will not provide any new accountability designations** this year. Recognizing the challenges of returning to school, the department is committed to providing the best possible data for districts to safely plan for the year, as well as measure and celebrate progress made during the 2019-20 school year.

The appeals process and data outlined in this guiding document are for **informational purposes only**, providing an opportunity for districts to reflect on and correct data from the 2019-20 school year. While these data will not contribute toward accountability ratings, districts should still ensure data is accurate and meaningful as if there were no federal and state waivers for accountability. With such limited data from an unprecedented school year, all data available becomes more valuable. Further, the process of appealing and correcting data helps to improve the department's processes, improving our own accuracy and reducing the need for future appeals.

This document explains the timeline and parameters for submitting appeals for these data. Please contact [TNE.Accountability@tn.gov](mailto:TNE.Accountability@tn.gov) for questions not addressed in this document.

## Section 2: Appeals Submission Timeline and Process

### 2.1 Timeline

2019-20 accountability data available from the department will be made available during the week of **July 27** via the Accountability Application. Then, districts verify the accuracy of their data, and submit appeals **between July 30 and Aug. 13** in order to ensure data is accurate. Appeals submitted after 5 p.m. CT on the last day of the window will be automatically denied. Please note these data are **for informative purposes only** and will not result in any accountability calculations or designations.

The timeline below outlines important dates in the accountability appeals process.

Date	Milestone	Delivery Medium
<b>Week of July 27, 2020</b>	Release of indicator files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fall End-of-Course student-, school-, and district- level assessment data with performance levels</li> <li>▪ Student-, school-, and district-level Chronic Absenteeism data through March 2<sup>1</sup></li> <li>▪ Student-, school-, and district-level WIDA ACCESS data<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> *Note: Student-, school-, and district-level <i>Ready Graduate</i> data will be released at this time reflecting appeals decisions. Since these files have been finalized, they <b>are not</b> subject to further appeals.	Accountability Application
<b>July 30, 2020</b>	<b>Accountability indicator files appeals window opens.</b>	<b>Appeals should be submitted to <a href="mailto:TNEducation.Accountability@tn.gov">TNEducation.Accountability@tn.gov</a></b>
<b>Aug. 13, 2020</b>	<b>Accountability indicator files appeals window closes at 5 p.m. CT.</b>	<b>Appeals should be submitted to <a href="mailto:TNEducation.Accountability@tn.gov">TNEducation.Accountability@tn.gov</a></b>
<b>Aug. 18, 2020</b>	Final accountability files will be released for <b>informative purposes only.</b>	Accountability Application and <a href="#">TDOE website</a>

<sup>1</sup>Chronic Absenteeism for the 2019-20 school year is calculated up to a March 2, 2020 date. This was the final instructional calendar day in which **all** schools and districts were present prior to closings due to tornadoes and COVID-19.

<sup>2</sup>ELPA files will only be provided to those schools and districts who completed the WIDA ACCESS exam prior to school closures.

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## 2.2 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 any supporting documentation, to [TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov](mailto:TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov).

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## Section 3: 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 [2019-20 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, or did 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 EIS at the time of processing.

Please note that 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**. For more information regarding deadlines for data pulls, please see the [School and District Accountability Release Timeline](#).

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## Section 4: 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?**

**Due to COVID-19, no accountability determinations will be calculated for the 2019-20 school year.** For business rules used in producing Tennessee's school and district accountability data, consult the [2019-20 Accountability Protocol](#).

### **Under what circumstances may a district submit an appeal?**

Please see [Section 3](#) of this document.

### **What is the process for submitting an appeal?**

Districts must submit appeals 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 [TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov](mailto:TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov).

### **What is the deadline for submitting an appeal?**

**Aug. 13, 2020** is the deadline for submitting accountability appeals that include input files. The department will automatically deny appeals submitted after 5 p.m. CT on July 19.

### **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 [TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov](mailto:TNEA.Accountability@tn.gov).