2019 School Accountability Protocol
User Guide

Section 1: Document Intent

This document outlines the rationale and data sources included in school accountability and provides a general understanding of how and why the Tennessee Department of Education uses accountability data to measure school and district success. Our goal is to provide a transparent and replicable framework for making accountability determinations. We hope schools and districts will have the information to use data to make informed decisions in regards to student success.

The department makes accountability determinations at the school and district levels. The two frameworks are similar though not identical. To learn more about district accountability, please reference section 5 of the 2019 Accountability Protocol. Please direct any questions, concerns to TNED.Accountability@tn.gov.

Section 2: Background

The accountability framework was created in response to the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and to align with state goals and priorities. It provides an opportunity for schools and districts to receive feedback on student achievement, growth, and postsecondary success for all students.

Section 3: Design Overview and Rationale

In order to reflect the many ways schools support and serve our students, the department designed a framework with multiple indicators using feedback from a diverse audience around the state. These indicators hold importance for the department to achieve its mission of all students being equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to embark on their chosen path in life.

Indicator and Definition	Rationale	Measure for All Students and Student Groups	Weight
Achievement[1]: Progress toward on track or mastered	Achievement measures student mastery of academic standards.	Absolute performance **or** AMO targets (set to increase the percent of students scoring on track or mastered)	**K-8**: 45% **HS**: 30%
Growth: Progress toward approaching, on track, or mastered	Assessing growth across a continuum allows schools and districts to be measured for the impact on student learning and the value they add to a student's educational experience.	TVAAS (student-level growth measure across achievement continuum)	**K-8**: 35% **HS**: 25%
Graduation Rate[2]: Percent of students in the graduation cohort who graduate on time with a regular diploma	Graduation is a significant milestone in students' postsecondary success.	Absolute performance **or** AMO targets (set to increase the graduation rate)	**K-8**: NA **HS**: 5%
Ready Graduate: Percent of students who graduate **and** meet postsecondary readiness criteria	Students should be prepared with both knowledge and skills to be successful on postsecondary paths.	Absolute performance **or** AMO targets (set to increase the percent of ready graduates)	**K-8**: NA **HS**: 20%
Chronically Out of School: Chronic absenteeism rate, including out-of-school suspension	Attendance is a significant factor in student achievement.	Absolute performance **or** AMO targets (set to decrease the percent of chronically absent students)	**K-8**: 10% **HS**: 10%
English Language Proficiency Assessment: Performance on WIDA ACCESS	Rewarding schools and districts for students' English language acquisition is a measure of student growth. WIDA ACCESS offers an opportunity for students with limited English proficiency to demonstrate knowledge and growth.	The percent of students meeting growth standards	**K-8**: 10% **HS**: 10%

3.1 Accountability Results

Due to legislation requiring "no adverse action" on students, teachers, schools, or districts, schools will not receive summative letter grades. Schools will, however, receive scores (0-4) for each indicator to help make informed instructional decisions on behalf of students. Furthermore, schools will only receive scores for indicators containing sufficient data for all pathways (Absolute Performance and AMO Targets).

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[1] The Achievement indicator will use results from 2018-19 state testing. For grades 3-8, English language arts and math will be included. High school End-of-Course (EOC) exams will include Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English I, and English II. Integrated math courses I, II, and III will be used as well.

[2] Data reported for the Graduation Rate and *Ready Graduate* indicators are lagged measures. These data will include those students from the 2018 graduating class.

In order to be included in the accountability calculations, students must be enrolled for 50 percent or more of the school year, and student groups must include at least 30 valid students, with the exception of English learners. For schools in which minimum number counts for student groups are not met, the Super Subgroup[3] will be utilized.

Regarding the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) indicator, schools with fewer than 10 valid tests, will see a redistribution of the 10 percent indicator weight equally between the achievement and growth indicators. As described in the protocol, weighting is scaled up proportionally for schools that are missing indicators other than ELPA. If schools are missing one or more indicators in addition to ELPA, the weight of the ELPA indicator is first redistributed evenly between the achievement and growth indicators. All other indicators are then proportionally rescaled.

3.2 Pathways for Scoring

For most indicators schools have two possible pathways for scoring, absolute proficiency and annual measurable objective (AMO) targets. The department uses the better of these two pathway scores in accountability. For each indicator, excluding Growth and ELPA, absolute proficiency is identified as meeting a specific performance level, while AMO targets address the improvement in performance. For example, within the achievement indicator, absolute proficiency would identify the percent students who scored on track or mastered. By contrast, AMO targets are determined by cutting the percent of students whose performance does not meet the standard (e.g., on track for achievement) by half over eight years. Double AMO targets expect the percent of students not meeting the standard to decrease by half in four years. AMO targets are rounded to one decimal place, and targets are set if a school or district has 30 or more valid tests in the prior year.

It is also important to note the scoring process for the English Language Proficiency indicator, as it differs from the indicators described above. In addition to having at least 10 valid tests[4], students must also have valid composite performance levels in both the current and prior year. This indicator reflects the percent of students meeting the growth standard, which is differentiated based on the students' prior-year composite performance. Students in which the difference between their current-year and prior-year composite performance is greater than or equal to the corresponding growth standard based on the prior year are considered to have met the growth standard. However, students who miss the growth standard in the most recent year but meet a combined two-year growth standard count as meeting the growth standard[5].

To understand more about the calculations of AMO Targets, please reference section 3.7 of the protocol. For more information about English Language Proficiency scoring, reference section 6.4.7.

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[3] The Super Subgroup is defined as all students who identify with one or more historically underserved student groups and is used for schools with fewer than 30 valid tests for each of the four underserved student groups, assuming the school has at least 30 valid tests for the Super Subgroup. Additionally, a student only counts once in the Super Subgroup, regardless of how many student groups with which they identify.
[4] Please note student counts apply to not only the current year, but also the prior year.
[5] Students who meet exit criteria on WIDA ACCESS also count as having met the growth standard for this indicator.

3.3 School Designations

3.3.1 Reward Schools

Reward schools are those earning an "A", which translates to a score of 3.1 or greater on their overall school accountability results. These results exemplify student success in achievement and growth. Schools with a Reward designation are recognized for their student accomplishments of performance and improvement.

3.3.2   Priority School Identification

In 2018, Priority designations were identified per federal law and excluded the use of 2017-18 testing data, due to legislation Public Chapter 881 and Public Chapter 1026. Priority schools are those that fell in the bottom five percent of their school pool[6] **and** did **not** meet the TVAAS safe harbor of levels of 4 or 5[7], **or** schools that had a graduation rate of less than 67 percent for the 2017-18 school year. Please note, no new Priority schools will be identified in 2019.

3.3.3 Priority School Exit Criteria

Priority schools identified in 2018 will have their first opportunity to meet exit criteria in 2019. Priority schools have the opportunity to exit annually by meeting **one** of the following criteria:

- Exceed 15th percentile for most recent year **or**
- Exceed 10th percentile for two most recent years **or**
- Earn TVAAS 4 or 5 in all accountability content areas for two consecutive years **or**
- Meet AMO targets for a specific student group for two consecutive years, if identified for consistently underperforming student groups **or**
- Exceed 67 percent graduation rate for two consecutive years, if identified for graduation rate.

3.3.4 Comprehensive Support and Improvement School Identification

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) [8] schools were also identified in 2018. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) required the department to use data inclusive of 2017-18 to identify a bottom five percent of schools for "Comprehensive Support and Improvement". CSI schools include those that fall in the bottom five percent of their pool based on data from 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 **and** earned a one-year TVAAS score of 3 or less in 2016-17 and/or 2017-18, **or** schools that had a graduation rate of less than 67% for the 2017-18 school year. CSI schools also include all schools in the Achievement School District (ASD), as they are receiving the most intensive state intervention.

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[6] No school was identified as a Priority school using 2017-18 TNReady data. Priority school calculations were based on a two-year success rate for high schools and a one-year success rate for K-8 schools that incorporated TCAP data from only the 2015-16 (high school only) and 2016-17 school years.

[7] Schools that demonstrated high growth (represented by a TVAAS level 4 or 5) in 2016-17 and 2017-18 were not identified as a Priority school.

[8] The vast majority of schools identified for CSI are also identified as Priority.

3.3.5 Focus School Identification

Focus schools are those having one or more significantly and/or consistently underperforming subgroup(s) and include both Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) designations. Both designations[9] are required by federal law to identify not only the four accountability subgroups but also six individual racial and ethnic groups[10]. Schools that are identified for multiple cycles[11] for the same student group will be labeled as Priority.

More specifics around the methodology and identification timelines can be located in section 6 of the [protocol.](#)

3.3.6 Focus Exit Criteria

TSI schools are identified annually and may only exit if they are not identified as TSI schools in the following year, while ATSI schools can exit annually by meeting one of the following exit criteria:

- The school's one-year success rate for each student group for which it was identified exceeds the 15th percentile in the state in the most recent year **or**
- The school's one-year success rate for each student group for which it was identified exceeds the 10th percentile in the state in both of the two most recent years **or**
- The school earns a TVAAS level of 4 or 5 in all accountability subjects/content areas for both of the two most recent years for each student group for which it was identified; **or**
- If it was identified for graduating less than 67 percent of its students, the school can exit by graduating at least 67 percent of its students for each subgroup for which it was identified in both of the two most recent years.

Additionally, schools may exit ATSI status every three years by not appearing on the subsequent ATSI list.

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[9] Both TSI and ATSI are federal designations required through ESSA.

[10] These individual racial and ethnic groups are Hispanic/Latino, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Asian, and White.

[11] TSI schools identified on the third consecutive cycle will be labeled Priority, while ATSI schools identified on the second cycle will be labeled Priority.