

2018 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 represent 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 and insight 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 [2018 Accountability Protocol](#). Please direct any questions, concerns to TNEducationAccountability@tn.gov.

Section 2: Background

The accountability framework was created in response to the new 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 quality feedback on student achievement, growth, and postsecondary success for all students. The framework was built on the following guiding principles:

- **Poverty is not Destiny:** All schools should be able to achieve the highest score if their students perform well and meet growth expectations or if they make extraordinary achievement gains.
- **All Means All:** Each indicator should be evaluated for historically underserved student groups, and student group performance should have a significant impact on overall school scores.
- **All Growth Matters:** Each indicator should have multiple levels of performance that differentiate and reward a school's progress (both achievement and TVAAS). High achievement in the absence of expected growth does not merit the highest designation.
- **Transparency:** Each school should receive scores on each indicator that show how the overall summative evaluation was determined.

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
Achievement¹: Progress toward on track or mastered	Achievement provides an opportunity to measure 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, 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: 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 score 21+ on the ACT	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 of 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%

¹ The Achievement indicator will use results from the 2017-18 state testing. For grades 3-5, English language arts, math, and grade 5 science will be included. For grades 6-8 and high school, English language arts, math, and science will be used, including Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English I, English II, English III, Biology and Chemistry. Integrated math courses I, II, and III will be used as well.

3.1 Grading vs. Scoring

It is important to note that 2017-18 school and district accountability will be scored but not graded. 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 them make informed instructional decisions on behalf of students. Furthermore, schools will only receive scores for indicators containing sufficient data for all pathways (Absolute Achievement and AMO Targets).

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 be comprised of at least 30 valid tests. The Super Subgroup, defined as all students who identify with one or more historically underserved student groups, will be 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.

Schools with less than 10 valid tests for the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) indicator will redistribute the 10 percent weight of the indicator between the achievement and growth indicators. As described in the Accountability 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

Schools and districts will have two options for scoring – Absolute Proficiency and Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) Targets – the better of which will be used. For each indicator, excluding Growth and ELPA, absolute proficiency is identified as meeting a specific performance level, while AMO addresses the improvement of performance-level results. For example, within the achievement indicator, absolute proficiency would identify those students who scored on track or better. Moreover, AMO targets are determined by decreasing the percent of students whose performance does not meet the standard over the course of eight years by half. 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 when a school or district has 30 or more valid tests in the prior year.

It is 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, 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.

To understand more about the calculations of AMO Targets, please reference section 3.7 of the [Accountability Protocol](#). For more information about English Language Proficiency scoring, reference section 6.4.7.

3.3 School Designations

3.3.1 Reward Schools

Reward schools are those earning greater than 3 on their overall school accountability results exemplifying 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 April 2018, the Tennessee General Assembly passed [Public Chapter 881](#) and [Public Chapter 1026](#) prohibiting the use of 2017-18 student achievement data to label a school Priority.

Schools identified as **Priority** are schools that:

- a. Ranked in the bottom 5 percent of its pool based on data from 2015-16 and 2016-17 **AND**
 - b. Did **not** earn school-wide TVAAS composite levels of 4 or 5 in both 2015-16 and 2016-17 **or** 2016-17 and 2017-18
- OR**
- c. Has a graduation rate of less than 67 percent for the 2017-18 school year

Note that no school is identified as a Priority school using 2017-18 TNReady data. The Priority school calculation is based on a two-year success rate for high schools and a one-year success rate for K-8 schools that incorporates TCAP data from only the 2015-16 (high school only) and 2016-17 school years.

Additionally, schools that demonstrate high growth (represented by a TVAAS level 4 or 5) in 2016-17 and 2017-18 will not be identified as a Priority school.

3.3.3 Priority School Exit Criteria

Priority schools are identified every three years, but schools have the opportunity to exit annually. In order to exit, a school must meet **one** of the following criteria:

- The school is not identified on the next Priority list;
- The school exceeds the 10th percentile in the state for **both** of its two most recent one-year success rates;
- The school earns a level 4 or 5 TVAAS in all accountability subjects/content areas for two consecutive years;
- The school exceeds the 15th percentile in the state for its most recent one-year success rate;
- group for two consecutive years; or
- If identified for graduation rates below 67 percent, schools may exit by graduating at least 67 percent of students for two consecutive years.

3.3.4 Comprehensive Support and Improvement

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) law requires the department to use data inclusive of 2017-18 to identify a bottom 5 percent of schools for “comprehensive support and improvement” (CSI).

Schools identified for CSI include schools that:

- a. Ranked in the bottom 5 percent of its pool based on data from 2015-16, 2016-17, **and** 2017-18 **AND**
 - b. Earned a one-year TVAAS score of 3 or less in 2016-17 and/or 2017-18
- OR**
- c. Had a graduation rate of less than 67% for the 2017-18 school year
- OR**
- d. All schools in the Achievement School District (ASD) are designated as CSI schools, because they are currently receiving the most intensive state intervention.

Note that the vast majority of schools identified for CSI are also identified as Priority.

3.3.5 Additional Targeted Support and Improvement

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) law requires the department to identify those schools with the lowest performance across student groups using 2017-18 data.

There are two pathways to identification for ATSI:

- a. Overall school accountability score of 1.0 or less **and** ranks in bottom 5 percent for at least one accountability subgroup (i.e., Black, Hispanic, or Native American; economically disadvantaged; English learners; students with disabilities),

OR

- b. Ranks in bottom 5 percent for two or more accountability subgroups or racial/ethnic groups

For more information regarding school designations, please reference the [School Improvement: ESSA Updates for 2017-18](#).