

Public Virtual Schools

Frequently Asked Questions by Families

1. What is a Tennessee public virtual school?

A Tennessee public virtual school is a public school that uses technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to its students via the internet in a virtual or remote setting. Public virtual schools are held to the same rigorous standards as all other public schools in Tennessee.

2. How do I enroll my child in a public virtual school?

To locate a public virtual school in Tennessee, families can access a list of public virtual schools from the Tennessee Department of Education's website here: [Virtual Schools \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/virtual-schools). Public virtual schools and their authorizing districts set enrollment dates, policies, and procedures. This information is typically specified on the school's website; therefore, families should contact a school or visit a school's website to begin the enrollment process.

3. Can my child attend any public virtual school in the state?

Public virtual schools that are labeled "Statewide" within the department's [list of public virtual schools](#), allow Tennessee students to enroll regardless of their county/district of residency provided that the student meets the school's enrollment criteria. Families should contact a public virtual school directly or visit a school's website to determine any enrollment criteria for students who reside outside the zone of residency of the school district that authorizes the public virtual school.

4. Do all public virtual schools provide the same type of virtual instruction?

No, instructional type can vary from school to school. The primary types of instruction used within public virtual schools are asynchronous, synchronous, bisynchronous, and hybrid. Before enrolling, families should contact the school to identify which instructional models are used and if the school offers in-person learning opportunities or has any in-person attendance requirements.

- **Asynchronous Virtual Instruction:** An instructional model that provides students access to on-demand instruction that is fully virtual/online. This model allows students to access

instructional materials and progress at their own pace and does not require students to attend regularly scheduled (daily/every other day) virtual classes with a teacher.

- **Synchronous Virtual Instruction:** An instructional model that provides scheduled, teacher supervised instruction that is fully virtual/online. This model of instruction does require students to attend regularly scheduled (daily/every other day) virtual classes with a teacher.
- **Bisynchronous Virtual Instruction:** An instructional model that utilizes both asynchronous and synchronous virtual instruction.
- **Hybrid Virtual Instruction:** An instructional model that provides students access to virtual instruction and requires students to periodically attend class in-person within a brick-and-mortar location.

5. Where can I find information about the performance of a specific public virtual school in Tennessee?

Each year the Tennessee Department of Education releases the [Tennessee State Report Card](#) for public schools and districts that operate within the state. Families can search for a specific virtual school and view multiple accountability metrics. Additionally, each July, the department publishes a Virtual Education report to the [Tennessee Virtual Schools website](#).

6. Can my child go back to a brick-and-mortar school during the year if we decide that virtual school is not a good fit?

School districts set their own student transfer policies and procedures. To determine these policies, families should contact the administration of both the virtual school and the brick-and-mortar school to which their child would like to transfer.

7. Can my child graduate early by attending a Tennessee public virtual school?

The Tennessee State Board of Education has standardized graduation requirements across all public schools in Tennessee, these requirements are outlined in [State Board of Education Policy 2.103](#). Students may graduate once they have met all graduation requirements. Many public virtual schools offer a path for expedited academic advancement through Tennessee's "[Move on When Ready Act](#)" as outlined in State Board of Education Policy 2.103. Each school may have different methods by which a student would opt into this path for expedited advancement. Families should contact the school directly to ask about the process.

8. If we want to enroll in a TN public virtual school, is an intent to home school form needed?

No, home schooling and attending a public virtual school are different. Although a student enrolled in a public virtual school may complete work in the student's home, the student is attending a public school.

9. Do category III, non-public virtual schools operate by the same guidelines as public virtual schools?

No, category III, non-public virtual schools are not public virtual schools. Families can find resources related to category III, non-public virtual schools on the department's [Home School website](#).

10. Am I required to have Internet at home or a home computer for my child to attend a public virtual school?

No, pursuant to State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-03-.05(1)(b)(10), school districts are required to ensure virtual school students have materials and access to necessary technology such as a computer, a printer, and an internet connection used for schoolwork. At a minimum, this requirement may be satisfied by an LEA providing access to a physical computer lab that is available to the student during regularly scheduled times.

11. Are there any in-person attendance requirements for virtual school?

Most learning within a virtual school will be accomplished virtually; however, there will be times when the virtual school requires in-person attendance for meetings and/or testing. Families should determine the specific requirements of a virtual school before enrolling their student.

12. How will my child attend a required in-person meeting or testing administration if we live a significant distance from the virtual school?

This is something to consider when enrolling in a virtual school. All Tennessee students are required to complete their state assessments in an in-person, proctored environment. It is recommended that families discuss these requirements with the school administration before enrolling students into a virtual school.

13. Will the district or school provide transportation for my child for the required in-person meetings?

Districts are not required to provide transportation for students unless specified in the student's

Individualized Education Program (IEP).

14. Can my child participate in the extracurricular activities of their zoned school while enrolled in a virtual school?

Each district may determine its policy regarding the participation of virtual school students in the extracurricular activities of their zoned schools, such as sports, CTE, prom, clubs, etc. Families should consult with both the public virtual school and the student's zoned school to determine participation policies.

15. Where will my child's diploma come from if they satisfy all Tennessee graduation requirements while enrolled in a virtual school?

A student will receive a diploma from the school at which the student received the majority of instruction during the school year when all [graduation requirements](#) were met.

Questions?

Visit our website:

[Virtual Schools \(tn.gov\)](https://VirtualSchools.tn.gov) or

email us at Virtual.Schools@tn.gov

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