



## **Annual Authorizer Report**

Tennessee State Board of Education

January 1, 2020

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## Letter from the Executive Director

In 2014, the Tennessee General Assembly adopted a law establishing the State Board of Education (“State Board”) as an appellate authorizer of charter schools. At the time, we didn’t yet know what to expect in this new role, but we were eager to dig into the work. We knew we had a lot to learn, but we also recognized the unique opportunity to provide more high quality school options to students who may not otherwise have them.

In August 2017, the State Board celebrated the opening of its first charter school, Bluff City High School, operated by Green Dot Public Schools in Memphis. One year later, our charter school portfolio grew to provide greater choice and opportunity to students in Nashville with the opening of KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary in August 2018 and again this August with KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle.

One of the State Board’s overarching priorities is to insist that all students have access to high quality schools regardless of ZIP code, prior achievement, or demographics. One way we strive to fulfill this priority is by increasing families’ access to high-quality charter schools in our state. Our State Board members and staff understand that the approval of a high-quality charter application is the first step to expanding quality options for students, and that we must hold applicants to a high bar to ensure students receive the education they deserve.

A lot has happened since the first review of our schools’ applications – hard work, smart planning, and a lot of collaboration – much of which is reflected in this report. Our annual report presents Bluff City High School and KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary’s academic, fiscal, and operational performance for the 2018-19 school year. These findings are based on the State Board’s approved charter school performance framework and are consistent with the best practices for transparent authorizing in [State Board Policy 6.111 – Quality Charter Authorizing Standards](#), which the State Board established in 2018, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-108, and regularly evaluates.

We are extremely pleased that the data continues to show our students are growing and our hope is that this strong start sets the foundation for future success. We are proud of the work of our students and staff across all of our schools and will continue to work closely with them to ensure they are supported from the district level to provide a high-quality education to all the students we serve.

I would like to thank our State Board members and staff for their continued dedication to our priority of insisting that all students have access to high-quality schools regardless of ZIP code, prior achievement, or demographics. We look forward to celebrating the continued successes of our schools.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sara Morrison", is positioned above the typed name.

Dr. Sara Morrison, Ed.D.

Executive Director, State Board of Education



## **About the Tennessee State Board of Education**

The State Board of Education is composed of eleven members — one from each of Tennessee’s nine congressional districts, plus a student member and the executive director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, who serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member. Dr. Sara Heyburn Morrison serves as the Executive Director of the Board. All members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. Board members serve five-year terms; the student member serves a one-year term.

Mr. Nick Darnell – 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District

Mr. Mike Edwards – 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District

Mr. Bob Eby – 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, Vice Chairman

Mr. Gordon Ferguson – 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Ms. Elissa Kim – 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Ms. Lillian Hartgrove – 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Chairman

Mr. Nate Morrow – 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Mr. Larry Jensen – 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Mr. Darrell Cobbins – 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Mr. Mike Krause – Ex Officio, Executive Director, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Vacant — Student Member

Dr. Sara Heyburn Morrison – Executive Director, Tennessee State Board of Education

## **Appellate Authorizer of Charter Schools**

In 2014, the Tennessee General Assembly adopted the law establishing the State Board as an appellate authorizer of charter schools. Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated (“T.C.A.”) § 49-13-108(b)(4), if the State Board of Education finds that a local school board’s decision to deny an application of a charter school was contrary to the best interests of the pupils, school district, or community, the State Board may approve the application for a charter school. If the charter school is located in a Local Education Agency (LEA) that has a priority school on the current or last preceding priority school list, the State Board will be the chartering authority of the school. The school will then be evaluated and held accountable to the State Board of Education’s [Charter School Performance Framework](#) unless the LEA and the charter school agree that the charter school will be overseen and monitored by the LEA, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-142(b)(3). Since 2014, the State Board has authorized three charter schools: one in Memphis, Tennessee and two in Nashville, Tennessee.

The State Board's first authorized charter school, Bluff City High School, opened in Memphis, Tennessee for the 2017-18 school year. Operated by Green Dot Public Schools Tennessee, Bluff City High School opened with 9th graders in 2017 and will serve grades 9-12 when fully expanded. Additionally, the State



Board's second and third authorized charter schools, operated by KIPP Nashville, opened in 2018 and 2019, respectively. KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School opened for the 2018-19 school year and will serve grades K-4 when fully expanded. KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle School opened in August 2019 and will serve grades 5-8 when fully expanded.

## **Our Charter Authorizing Mission**

To meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-13-108, the State Board develops an annual Master Plan that outlines its vision for Tennessee students. In order to achieve this vision, the State Board established a number of strategic priorities. As part of those strategic priorities, the State Board is committed to ensuring that all students and families in Tennessee have access to high-quality school options.

## **Core Principles**

With regard to its authorizing functions, the mission of the State Board is to increase families' access to high-quality charter schools. The State Board will carry out this mission by upholding the core principles set forth in [State Board Policy 6.200](#).

1. *Core Authorizing Principles.* The State Board will, in all of its endeavors, be guided by the following three core authorizing principles: maintaining high standards for charter schools; upholding charter school autonomy, and protecting student and public interests.

2. *Maintaining High Standards.* To maintain high standards, the State Board will:

- a) Set high standards for the approval of charter schools in its portfolio.
- b) Maintain high standards for the charter schools it oversees.
- c) Hold charter schools accountable for, over time, meeting the performance standards and targets set forth in their charter agreements on a range of measures and metrics.
- d) Close all charter schools in its portfolio that fail to meet the standards and targets set forth in law and under their charter agreements.

3. *Upholding School Autonomy.* To uphold school autonomy, the State Board will:

- a) Honor and preserve the independence of its charter schools' governing boards.
- b) Preserve core school autonomies related to educational programming, financial, personnel, school culture, and scheduling decisions.
- c) Assume responsibility, not for the success or failure of individual charter schools in its portfolio, but for holding schools accountable for their performance.
- d) Focus on school accountability for outcomes rather than inputs and processes.
- e) Minimize, within state and federal law, administrative and compliance burdens on charter schools in its portfolio.

4. *Protecting Student and Public Interests.* The well-being and best interests of students will be the fundamental value informing all State Board actions and decisions.



- a) The State Board will hold its charter schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to all students, including:
  - i. Non-selective, nondiscriminatory access to all eligible students;
  - ii. Fair treatment of all students in admissions and disciplinary actions; and
  - iii. Appropriate services for all enrolled students in accordance with the law.
- b) The State Board will hold its charter schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental obligations to the public, including that schools provide the following:
  - i. Sound governance, management, and stewardship of public funds; and
  - ii. Public information and operational transparency in accordance with the law.
- c) When granting a charter and providing oversight to a State Board authorized charter school, the State Board will:
  - i. As part of its mission, focus on chartering high-quality charter schools;
  - ii. Demonstrate clarity, consistency, and public transparency in its authorizing policies, practices, and decisions;
  - iii. Maintain effective and efficient public stewardship of its public resources;
  - iv. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations; and
  - v. Employ ethical conduct in all activities.
- d) The State Board will support parents' and students' abilities to make informed choices about educational options by providing clear, accurate, and timely information related to performance of the charter schools in the State Board's portfolio.



## About the Annual Report

Each year, the State Board of Education produces an Annual Report for each charter school it oversees. The report summarizes each school's academic, financial, and organizational performance based on the State Board's [Performance Framework](#). For each measure in this report, the school receives one of the ratings described below.

RATING	DESCRIPTION
Exceeds Standard	The school is exceeding expectations and showing exemplary performance. This rating only applies to academic performance.
Meets Standard	The school is performing well and meeting expectations for performance.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school has failed to meet minimum expectations for performance.
Falls Far Below Standard	The school falls far below the stated expectations and/or significant concern(s) are noted. The failures are material and significant to the viability to the school.

The State Board is committed to providing high-quality education for the public schools students in Tennessee. The purpose of the Annual Report is to:

1. Provide timeline information to the charter school on its performance relative to the standards and expectations established by federal and state law, State Board rules, and the charter agreement;
2. Identify the school's strengths and any areas needing improvement; and
3. Provide information that enables the community and the public to understand the school's performance, including its fulfillment of public obligations.



TENNESSEE  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

# District Summary 2018 - 2019

2  
Charter  
Schools

26  
Teachers

3  
Grades  
Served

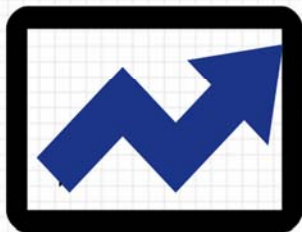
439  
Students



## ACADEMICS

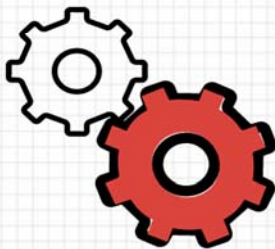
Bluff City High School EXCEEDS THE STANDARD for student growth with a TVAAS Level 5 composite score.

KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary EXCEEDS THE STANDARD with only 2.9% of students chronically absent.



## FINANCIAL

Results of each schools' financial performance will be made available in early 2020.



## ORGANIZATIONAL

Bluff City High School MEETS THE STANDARD in measures relevant to the health and performance of the organization.

KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary MEETS THE STANDARD in measures relevant to the health and performance of the organization.





<b>School Name</b>	Bluff City High School
<b>Address</b>	4100 Ross Road, Memphis, TN 38115
<b>Phone</b>	(901) 881-7375
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://tn.greendot.org/bchs/">http://tn.greendot.org/bchs/</a>
<b>School Leader</b>	Lameika Pegues, lameika.pegues@greendot.org
<b>School Mission</b>	Our mission is to help transform public education so <i>ALL</i> students graduate prepared for college, leadership, and life.
<b>Operating Status</b>	Open and operating
<b>Year Opened</b>	2017
<b>Grades Served in 2019-20</b>	9, 10, 11 (growing to 9-12)
<b>Enrollment in 2019-20</b>	410 students
<b>Contracted Services</b>	n/a
<b>Approved Waivers</b>	View <a href="#">here</a>

## **A Message from Bluff City High School**

Bluff City High School, the only TVAAS 5 high school in the Hickory Hill community for two years in a row, is reshaping the academic trajectory for students from historically low performing schools in Memphis, Tennessee. Proudly serving students in grades 9 and 10 during the 2018-19 school year, Bluff City saw students thrive through new opportunities at the school. While our focus is to increase academic proficiency with our students, the school participated in a number of events that support our mission to prepare all students for success in college, leadership and life, including:

- Students completed individual Service Learning projects that required research into areas of interest and the completion of a minimum of ten hours of service to the community. As a group, students also volunteered for the St. Jude Marathon, providing runners with refreshments at hydration station # 11.
- Students visited a variety of colleges, including: Alabama A & M University, Baptist College of Nursing, University of Memphis, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri, Rust College, and Washington University.
- The Grey Wolves kicked off the inaugural athletics program by participating in the following sports: Junior varsity boys' and girls' basketball, volleyball, junior varsity football, cheerleading, and track and field.
- Bluff City won a competitive 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant for over \$70,000, allowing the school to offer a free after school program with an array of offerings for students, including: ACT Prep, Film, Fitness, Music, Robotics, Soap-making and Yoga.

With new facilities and increased opportunities for students, we look forward to the coming school year.

With Gratitude,

Megan Quaille

Chief Growth Officer

Executive Director, Green Dot Public Schools Tennessee

**I. Academic Performance & School Culture**
**DOES NOT MEET**

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the 2018-19 school year based on a variety of academic measures the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter agreement.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE	RATING
<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT</b>		
Absolute performance in ELA	9% scoring on-track/mastered	Falls Far Below
Absolute performance in math	5% scoring on-track/mastered	Falls Far Below
Growth	TVAAS Level 5 Composite	Exceeds Standard
Chronic Absenteeism	29.9% chronically absent	Falls Far Below
<b>COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE</b>		
School comparative performance to Shelby County Schools (“SCS”) in ELA	SCS 12.1% in grades 9-10	Meets Standard
School comparative performance to SCS in math	SCS 18.5% in grade 9-10	Does Not Meet
<b>SCHOOL CULTURE</b>		
Out of School Suspension rate	12.2%	Falls Far Below
Student attrition rate	24%	Meets Standard
Teacher retention rate	71% retention	Does Not Meet

**II. Financial Performance**
**MEETS STANDARD**

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the 2018-19 school year and recent historical trends based on financial measures the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter agreement. These measures provide information about the school’s financial health and sustainability.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	RATING
<b>NEAR TERM FINANCIAL HEALTH</b>	
Current Ratio	Meets Standard
Unrestricted Days Cash	Does Not Meet
Enrollment Variance	Meets Standard
Debt Default	Meets Standard
<b>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	
Total Margin	Meets Standard
Debt to Asset Ratio	Does Not Meet
Cash Flow	Falls Far Below
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Meets Standard

**III. Organizational Performance**
**MEETS STANDARD**

Charter schools are required to meet certain regulatory requirements and responsibilities as established by applicable state and federal law and their charter agreements. This section reports the school's overall performance in the 2018-19 school year based on fulfilling legal requirements and fiduciary/public stewardship responsibilities, and other measures relevant to organizational health and performance.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	RATING
<b>EDUCATION PROGRAM COMPLIANCE</b>	
Charter Terms	Meets Standard
Compliance with Education Requirements	Meets Standard
Students with Disabilities Rights	Meets Standard
English Language Learner Rights	Meets Standard
<b>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT</b>	
Financial Reporting and Compliance Reporting	Meets Standard
Generally Accepted Accounting Principles	Meets Standard
<b>GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING</b>	
Governance Requirements	Meets Standard
Accountability of Management	N/A
Reporting Requirements	Meets Standard
<b>STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Rights of Students	Meets Standard
Attendance	Meets Standard
Credentialing	Meets Standard
Employment Rights	Meets Standard
Background Checks	Meets Standard
<b>SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Facilities and Transportation	Meets Standard
Health and Safety	Meets Standard
Information Handling	Meets Standard
<b>ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS</b>	
All Other Obligations	Meets Standard



# ANTIOCH COLLEGE PREP

<b>School Name</b>	KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School
<b>Address</b>	3655 Murfreesboro Pike, Antioch, TN 37013
<b>Phone</b>	(615) 226-4484, option 7
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://kippnashville.org/">https://kippnashville.org/</a>
<b>School Leader</b>	Molly Ramsey, <a href="mailto:mramsey@KIPPNashville.org">mramsey@KIPPNashville.org</a>
<b>School Mission</b>	KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School (KACPE) is a free, open-enrollment public charter school located in South Nashville. KACPE is grounded in the promise that we make to our families, students, and community that through educating with love, equity, and excellence, our students will be leaders who impact change for themselves, our communities, and our world. The culture of our school is made up of all of the individual choices, actions, and words that collectively shape the experience of every person who enters our community.
<b>Operating Status</b>	Open and operating
<b>Year Opened</b>	2018
<b>Grades Served in 2019-20</b>	K, 1 (growing to K-4)
<b>Enrollment in 2019-20</b>	295 students
<b>Contracted Services</b>	n/a
<b>Approved Waivers</b>	View <a href="#">here</a>



## **A Message from the KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary**

On August 6, 2018, KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School opened its doors to a fully enrolled founding kindergarten class and a waitlist topping 100 students. During that summer, in those living rooms and on those front porches, we laid the foundation for our school. KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary is a school that embraces our students' culture, lifts our families up, and supports and develops our teachers, while setting and maintaining a high bar for academic excellence.

A few highlights of note:

- 97% of our students stayed with us during the school year.
- 100% of families expressed satisfaction in our school through an online survey.
- Student growth on ELA and math MAP assessments far exceeded KIPP Nashville network goals and ranked among the top 10 out of 85 other KIPP elementary schools across the United States.

At KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School, our charge isn't just to *teach* – it is to foster in our KIPPsters a love of learning and, in doing so, light the fire that will sustain them on the path to and through college and life beyond.

With Gratitude,

Molly Trenkamp Ramsey

KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School Principal

**I. Academic Performance & School Culture**
**MEETS STANDARD**

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the 2018-19 school year based on a variety of academic measures the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter agreement.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE	RATING
<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT</b>		
Absolute performance in ELA	N/A	N/A
Absolute performance in math	N/A	N/A
Growth	N/A	N/A
Chronic Absenteeism	2.9% chronically absent	Exceeds Standard
<b>COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE</b>		
School comparative performance to Metro Nashville Public Schools (“MNPS”) in ELA	N/A	N/A
School comparative performance to MNPS in math	N/A	N/A
<b>SCHOOL CULTURE</b>		
Out of School Suspension rate	3.3%	Meets Standard
Student attrition rate	11.8%	Exceeds Standard
Teacher retention rate	69% retention	Does Not Meet

**II. Financial Performance**
**MEETS STANDARD**

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the 2018-19 school year and recent historical trends based on financial measures the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter agreement. These measures provide information about the school’s financial health and sustainability.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	RATING
<b>NEAR TERM FINANCIAL HEALTH</b>	
Current Ratio	Meets Standard
Unrestricted Days Cash	Meets Standard
Enrollment Variance	Meets Standard
Debt Default	Meets Standard
<b>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	
Total Margin	Meets Standard
Debt to Asset Ratio	Meets Standard
Cash Flow	Meets Standard
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Meets Standard

**III. Organizational Performance**
**MEETS STANDARD**

Charter schools are required to meet certain regulatory requirements and responsibilities as established by applicable state and federal law and their charter agreements. This section reports the school’s overall performance in the 2018-19 school year based on fulfilling legal requirements and fiduciary/public stewardship responsibilities, and other measures relevant to organizational health and performance.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	RATING
<b>EDUCATION PROGRAM COMPLIANCE</b>	
Charter Terms	Meets Standard
Compliance with Education Requirements	Meets Standard
Students with Disabilities Rights	Meets Standard
English Language Learner Rights	Meets Standard
<b>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT</b>	
Financial Reporting and Compliance Reporting	Meets Standard
Generally Accepted Accounting Principles	Meets Standard
<b>GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING</b>	
Governance Requirements	Meets Standard
Accountability of Management	N/A
Reporting Requirements	Meets Standard
<b>STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Rights of Students	Meets Standard
Attendance	Meets Standard
Credentialing	Meets Standard
Employment Rights	Meets Standard
Background Checks	Meets Standard
<b>SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Facilities and Transportation	Meets Standard
Health and Safety	Meets Standard
Information Handling	Meets Standard
<b>ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS</b>	
All Other Obligations	Meets Standard





# ANTIOCH COLLEGE PREP

<b>School Name</b>	KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle School <sup>1</sup>
<b>Address</b>	3655 Murfreesboro Pike, Antioch, TN 37013
<b>Phone</b>	(615) 226-4484, option 7
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://kippnashville.org/">https://kippnashville.org/</a>
<b>School Leader</b>	Nicole Olszewski, <a href="mailto:nolszewski@KIPPnashville.org">nolszewski@KIPPnashville.org</a>
<b>School Mission</b>	To cultivate in its students the character and academic skills needed to succeed in rigorous high schools and colleges, and to become productive citizens in the world beyond.
<b>Operating Status</b>	Open and Operating
<b>Year Opened</b>	2019
<b>Grades Served in 2019-20</b>	5 (growing to 5-8)
<b>Enrollment in 2019-20</b>	132 students
<b>Contracted Services</b>	n/a
<b>Approved Waivers</b>	View <a href="#">here</a>

<sup>1</sup> KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle School opened in August 2019 and will receive its first evaluation on the State Board's Performance Framework at the end of the 2019-20 school year.