



TENNESSEE
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

**Commission Policy 3.700 School Performance Framework
Guidance Manual
July 2026**

Contents

Commission Policy 3.700 School Performance Framework Guidance Manual July 2026.....1

Section 1: Document Intent and Overview 2

Section 2: Academic Performance 3

 Student Outcomes – State Accountability..... 3

 Academic Data – Mission-Specific Goal..... 4

 Proficiency Data – District Level..... 5

 Proficiency Data – School Level..... 6

 Comparative Performance 6

 Overall TVAAS Composite Index 8

Section 3: Financial Performance..... 9

 Near Term Indicators: 1(b) Unrestricted Days Cash 9

 Near Term Indicators: 1(c) Enrollment Variance 9

Section 4: Organizational Performance..... 10

 Education Program Indicators 10

 Students and Employees Indicators..... 11



Section 1: Document Intent and Overview

This document supplements Commission Policy 3.700¹ – Charter School Performance Framework (“SPF” or “framework”) for the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission (“TPCSC” or “Commission”) and serves as a technical manual outlining the methodology and business rules applied to evaluate schools in alignment with the framework.

The framework outlines the comprehensive benchmarks by which charter schools authorized by the Commission will be measured and evaluated in alignment to the Commission’s mission. The framework addresses the academic, financial, and organizational benchmarks by which schools will be scored to indicate the overall success and health of the charter school. A charter school’s performance on these measures will be published in the annual report produced by the Commission as required by Tennessee Code Annotated (“T.C.A.”) § 49-13-120, the Tennessee Department of Education (“TDOE” or “department”), and in alignment with the State Board of Education’s Quality Charter Authorizing Standards.²

The framework was initially adopted in October 2020 and was revised in January 2023 incorporating the feedback and collaboration received from the Tennessee Department of Education, Commission-authorized schools, other quality authorizers, and other key stakeholders. The framework was further revised in July 2025. The framework and supplemental guidance documents are reviewed annually to ensure that language is accurate and reflects the source documents that were used to prepare the annual report. During this review, if edits are made, they will be communicated to operators.

¹ All [Commission rules and policies](#) may be found on the [Commission’s website](#).

² [State Board of Tennessee Policies \(tn.gov\)](#) State Board of Education Policy 6.111

Section 2: Academic Performance

This section discusses the underlying data and business rules applied to prepare the data files used to compute indicators in the Academic Performance section of the framework.

The Commission seeks to align to the state's accountability system as the primary guide and source of data used in the computation of academic performance for the Student Outcomes section. The following provides additional clarity and guidance for computations in the Academic Performance section. The Commission staff will use professional judgment to determine the most accurate sources and methodologies. Any shifts will be communicated to operators during stakeholder meetings, closeout meetings, or when the draft framework is shared.

Student Outcomes – State Accountability

The Student Outcomes section is based on the Tennessee Department of Education's state accountability system.³ Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, the school letter grade includes the following indicators at the following weights:

K-8 Schools	High School
Achievement: 50%	Achievement: 50%
Growth: 40%	Growth: 30%
Growth25: 10%	Growth25: 10%
	College and Career Readiness: 10%

The Achievement indicator includes three types of achievement data: Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program ("TCAP"), TCAP Alternative Assessment ("TCAP-Alt"), and early postsecondary tests. The Growth and Growth25 indicators use two types of TVAAS composites: the TVAAS All Subjects composite and the TVAAS All Subjects composite for the highest need students as defined by the bottom 25%. The College and Career Readiness ("CCR") indicator for high schools as a measure of student readiness for postsecondary education and careers. Various data sources are used for CCR evaluation, including ACT/SAT and early postsecondary performance data.

If the department makes adjustments to the accountability system, the Commission staff will adjust to align with the state's accountability model.

The following table outlines the reallocation of weights if there is a disruption to the state accountability system.

³ [Tennessee Department of Education Accountability – School Letter Grade Resources](#)

Area of Academic Framework	Standard Weights	Reallocated Weights
Student Outcomes	25%-35%	None
Mission-Specific Goal	10%	20%
Comparative Performance	40%	50%
TVAAS Composite Score	15%-25%	30%

The weight for the comparative performance will be equally reallocated to the resident district overall comparative and subgroup comparative sections.

Academic Data – Mission-Specific Goal

For schools serving grade levels without state assessment data and, therefore, without data for the Student Outcomes, Comparative Data, and TVAAS subsections, the Academic Performance section of the framework will be based solely on the mission-specific goal. For example, if a school serves grades kindergarten through second and will be expanding a grade level each year, the academic section will be based solely on the mission-specific goal until additional data becomes available. If a school's Academic Performance section is only comprised of the mission-specific goal, the school may earn the overall ratings: Meets Standard, Does Not Meeting Standard, or Falls Far Below Standard.

The Commission staff provides support to schools during the creation of the mission-specific goal. Resources, including a process for reflection to assist schools in identifying the features of their program to be captured in the mission-specific goal.⁴

The following are guidelines for schools in the development of the mission-specific goal:

1. Mission-specific goals must be submitted on the provided template. A school may utilize the provided mission-specific goal inputs exercise document to think through the creation of its mission-specific goal.
2. The proposed goal must be student-centered, and outcome driven.
 - a. The goal must include student outcomes and not action steps, curriculum, or adult actions.
 - b. The goal must include quantitative data. This goal cannot be qualitative, including items such as survey responses or student statements.

⁴ [Commission Guidance Documents and Protocols](#): Resource "Mission-Specific Goal Development Inputs Exercise"

3. The proposed goal must include goals, predetermined metrics, and progress.
 - a. The goal must be aligned to the mission of the school as outlined within the charter application.
 - b. The goal must not include metrics or assessments already utilized within the performance framework such as TCAP achievement scores, TVAAS, or chronic absenteeism.
 - c. The goal must include pre-determined metrics to measure student success toward the mission. These metrics are not flexible and cannot change year over year to ensure comparison. A school may choose a short- or long-term goal, but metrics should be predetermined for both. Some metrics can include:
 - i. Nationally-normed internal assessment data (e.g., NWEA MAP)
 - ii. Aligned end of course assessments that are not included in TCAP (e.g., advanced placement courses, dual credit final exams, etc.)
 - iii. ACT scores/SAT scores
 - iv. Student performance rubrics
 - v. Postsecondary or persistence measures
 - vi. Curriculum-based measurements or evaluations
 - d. Schools must report on progress within the metrics toward the mission-specific goal. This must be demonstrated through aggregated (not raw) data and be clearly reported to the Commission. The school must report accurate data and determine whether or not they are meeting, exceeding, or not meeting their goal. Failure to report this data will result in the charter school receiving a “does not meet standard” for the mission-specific goal.

Proficiency Data – District Level

Commission staff will access publicly available data files from the Tennessee Department of Education’s webpages.⁵ The following list outlines the order in which data sources will be accessed. If the data file does not provide the necessary metric, the next file will be accessed.

Academic Data Source Levels

1. State Assessments – Accountability Files
2. State Report Card
3. State Assessments – Assessment Files

⁵ [Data Downloads & Requests \(tn.gov\)](#), [TN State Report Card](#)

For comparative performance, the Commission staff uses district-level proficiency rates that mirror the grade-level(s) of the school.

Example: ELA Success Rate of Resident District

School A	School B
Grades: Kindergarten through Grade 5	Grades: Kindergarten through Grade 4
The academic data source will be the accountability files as the data presented aligns with the grade band the school serves.	The academic data source will be the assessment files as the data presented does not align with the grade bands in the accountability files. The data in the accountability files are presented as K-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

Proficiency Data – School Level

Commission staff will access the school-level data files provided from the department through the Accountability Application. All calculations from these files will follow the business rules used by the department and outlined in the most recent accountability protocols, both federal and state.⁶ Schools will not be held accountable to subgroup comparison data if there are fewer valid tests for the subgroup than the limits outlined in the Commission’s framework. The weights of subgroup comparisons will be reallocated to the corresponding subject in overall school to resident district comparison. For example, if the comparison of English learner performance on math to the resident district does not meet the minimum n count, the weight will be reallocated to the overall school to resident district math comparison.

Comparative Performance

The Comparative Performance subsection accounts for 40% of the Academic Performance section. A school’s rating on the Comparative Performance subsection of the Academic Performance section is determined by the numeric score of the Comparative Performance subsection. The Comparative Performance subsection is split into two subparts: the overall comparative performance that compares the school’s overall proficiency rate for each subject area to the resident district and the subgroup comparative performance that compares the school’s ELA and math proficiency rates for four subgroups to the resident district. The example below demonstrates how to calculate the overall rating.

First, to calculate the numeric score for each comparative measure, the rating of each comparative measure (e.g., school comparative performance to resident district in ELA, school

⁶ [District and School Accountability \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/education/accountability)

English learner comparative performance to resident district in math) is multiplied by the weight of that measure. Then, the sum of those comparative measures is multiplied by the section weight (40%) as demonstrated below.

Example: ELA Comparative Performance

- The school outperformed the resident district by three percentage points for the overall ELA proficiency rate earning a Meets Standard. This results in a numeric score of 0.375.

$$12.5\% \text{ section weight} \times 3 \text{ for Meets Standard} = 0.375$$

- The school outperformed the resident district by seven percentage points for the English learner ELA proficiency rate earning an Exceeds Standard.

$$6.5\% \text{ section weight} \times 4 \text{ for Exceeds Standard} = 0.26$$

Example Overall Comparative Performance Score:

Step One: Calculation of the numeric score for each comparison using the weight of each comparison.

Section Name and Weight	Example Calculation and Numeric Score
ELA Overall: 12.5%	$12.5\% \times 3 = 0.375$
Math Overall: 12.5%	$12.5\% \times 4 = 0.5$
Science Overall: 12.5%	$12.5\% \times 3 = 0.375$
Social Studies Overall: 12.5%	$12.5\% \times 2 = 0.25$
ELA BHN: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 3 = 0.1875$
Math BHN: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 4 = 0.25$
ELA ED: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 3 = 0.1875$
Math ED: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 3 = 0.1875$
ELA EL: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 2 = 0.125$
Math EL: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 4 = 0.25$
ELA SWD: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 3 = 0.1875$
Math SWD: 6.25%	$6.25\% \times 2 = 0.125$

Step Two: Find the sum of all numeric scores.

$$\text{sum of each row above} = 3.0$$

Step Three: Multiply the sum by the weight of the Comparative Performance section.

$$3.0 \times 40\% = 1.2$$

The final numeric score determines if the school's overall rating on the Comparative Performance section. This example would earn a rating of Meets Standard for the Comparative Performance section.

Rating	Numeric Score Range
Exceeds Standard	1.40 – 1.60
Meets Standard	1.00 – 1.39
Does Not Meet Standard	0.60 – 0.99
Fall Far Below Standard	0.40 – 0.59

Overall TVAAS Composite Index

In alignment with the state's accountability system, the Commission uses the school's accountability composite score for all subjects. The level is calculated by the department following each school year. The department details the use of TVAAS in the department's Federal Accountability Protocol and State Letter Grade Protocol.⁷ Additional business rules and calculation processes are in TVAAS Statistical Models and Business Rules.⁸

⁷ [District and School Accountability](#)

⁸ [TVAAS: https://tvaas.sas.com/e/support.html?as=b&aj=b&zZ=tnpublic#/TVAAS-Statistical-Models-and-Business-Rules.pdf](https://tvaas.sas.com/e/support.html?as=b&aj=b&zZ=tnpublic#/TVAAS-Statistical-Models-and-Business-Rules.pdf)

Section 3: Financial Performance

This section details how the Commission will proceed with calculating specific indicators should the audited financial statements not include an amount that is needed to perform the calculation as written within the framework. Most indicators in the Financial Performance section of the framework are solely calculated using the audited financial statements.

Near Term Indicators: 1(b) Unrestricted Days Cash

In some instances, a school operating under a network structure may have cash balances excluded from the audited financial statements. In instances where this occurs and disrupts the Commission's ability to assess a school's Unrestricted Days Cash, the Commission will notify the operator and request the network provide financial statements as of June 30 to substantiate the available cash balance.

In instances where a school's days cash on hand falls between 30 and 60 days, meeting the standard is determined by whether the year-over-year trend is positive. The year-over-year trend assesses the days cash on hand metric. A positive trend is determined by an increase of days cash on hand, not the actual cash balance. Conversely, a negative trend is a decrease of days cash on hand.

Although the framework distinguishes expected days cash on hand for schools in their first or second year of operation, schools that are part of a larger network are evaluated on a consolidated basis. Therefore, this exception does not apply to network schools.

Near Term Indicators: 1(c) Enrollment Variance

Failure to report the enrollment projection used in the school's board-approved budget will result in the charter school not meeting standard on the Enrollment Variance indicator.

The Enrollment Variance indicator is calculated using a single board-approved budget. While the Commission staff typically uses the June 1 Charter School Board-Approved Budget for this calculation, it is recognized that new schools or those facing significant enrollment shifts may require revisions. Schools may maintain multiple internal budgets; however, only one board-approved submission will be designated as the official version for performance framework calculations. When submitting a revised budget, schools should explicitly notify Commission staff if it is to be used as the official budget of record. If the Commission requests a revised budget due to enrollment variances, this submission will not count against the school's standing.

Section 4: Organizational Performance

This section discusses the underlying data and business rules applied to prepare the data files related to the indicators in the Organizational Performance section of the framework. Many indicators are assessed through site visits and other monitoring structures. This section outlines in more detail the calculations and business rules underlying certain indicators. Many indicators align with the Tennessee Department of Education’s business rules and calculations.⁹

Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, the Statewide Operations Reporting Dashboard (“SWORD”) is the state-level authoritative source for gathering information and performing calculations, unless otherwise noted.¹⁰ SWORD gathers data from Student Information Systems (“SIS”) vendors statewide as well as teacher information. Schools are held accountable to the data reported at the state level. Indicator descriptions may reference specific data reports from the previous state-level system’s extracts. The Commission staff will use professional judgment to determine the most accurate sources and methodologies. Any shifts will be communicated to operators during stakeholder meetings, closeout meetings, or when the draft framework is shared.

Education Program Indicators

1(c) Enrollment Over Time

Source(s): Base ADM Report from SWORD, Charter Agreement

The percent variance is calculated with the following formula:

$$\text{percent variance} = \frac{\text{annual ADM from current year} - \text{annual ADM from previous year}}{\text{annual ADM from previous year}} \times 100$$

For a school that is scaling opening grade levels year over year, the percent variance will be calculated by cohort (e.g., kindergarten through second grade for previous year and first through third grade for current year) or by grade band (e.g., kindergarten through second grade for both previous and current years). The better percent variance will be used for the framework.

⁹ [TN State Report Card](#) Under Resources: Report Card Technical Document; [District and School Accountability](#) for the current year protocols

¹⁰ Prior to the 2025-26 school year, the department’s platform was the Education Information System (“EIS”) Information on the calculations and business rules for EIS or its equivalent are found on the department’s website: [Education Information System \(EIS\) \(tn.gov\)](#)

1(d) Student Retention Rates and 1(e) Student Retention Rates by Subgroup

Source(s): SWORD extracts (Student List with enrollment start/end, etc.) for both the enrollment as of October 1 of previous year and of current year.

The retention rates are calculated using the following formula. Each subgroup uses the same formula with only the students within each subgroup. Subgroup classifications are determined from the previous year’s enrollment data.

$$\text{retention rate} = \frac{\text{total number of unique students enrolled on October 1 of both the previous year and current year}}{\text{total number of students enrolled on October 1 of previous year eligible for promotion to current year}} \times 100$$

The denominator is calculated by removing any students who would be enrolled in a grade level the school does not serve. For example, if School A serves grades kindergarten through fifth (K-5), it would only be held accountable for students enrolled in grades kindergarten through fourth (K-4) as the fifth-grade students would advance to another school. The numerator is calculated by determining the total number of unique students, matched by students’ unique identifier (either the legacy state student identification number (“SSID”) or EdFi ID), of the current year that are also in the enrollment list of eligible students of the previous year. Unique identifier matches are run against the full enrollment of the current year, even for subgroups, to account for students who may have a change in classification for the current year. For example, if a student was in the English learner (“EL”) program in the previous year, exits the program for the current school year, and remained enrolled at the school, they would count in the numerator and denominator for the EL retention rate.

Schools may meet standard on the subgroup rates indicator even if they do not meet standard on the overall student retention rates indicator. Overall student retention rates are evaluated against a 70% threshold. Subgroup retention rates are evaluated against the school’s overall student retention rate. For example, if a school has an overall student retention rate of 64.5%, the school will not meet standard for 1(d) Student Retention Rates. However, if the student retention rates by subgroup are all within five percentage points of 64.5%, the school will meet standard for 1(e) Student Retention Rates by Subgroups.

Students and Employees Indicators

4(b) Suspension Reporting Requirements

Source(s): EIS extracts (Student Disciplinary Actions, Student Classifications, Absent Student, English Learners, etc.), SIS extracts, data file from department

The raw number of discipline incidents reported in the SIS will be compared to the state system to monitor for any misalignment.

Suspension rates are not evaluated in the framework beginning in 2025; however, suspension rates and subgroup rates will be calculated annually and discussed with schools at site visits, closeout meetings, and/or during other monitoring activities. Also, while schools are not held accountable to this metric within the framework, this can be used as part of high stakes decisions such as interim or renewal.

The suspension rates are calculated using the following formula. Each subgroup uses the same formula with only the students within each subgroup.

$$\text{suspension rate} = \frac{\text{total number of students with } \geq 1 \text{ disciplinary incident during the school year}}{\text{total number of students enrolled during the school year for } > 1 \text{ day}} \times 100$$

The denominator includes all students who have been enrolled at the school during the school year for more than one day. The numerator includes the total number of students who have received at least one disciplinary incident as shown in the state-level data. Students with the following disciplinary incidents will be included in the calculation: suspension, in-school; suspension, out-of-school, without services; change of placement (long-term); and expulsion without services.

For schools with pre-kindergarten programs, only students in K-12 grades are included.

4(c) Attendance

Source(s): SWORD extract (student list, ADM, etc.), accountability files, SIS extract

This indicator uses the chronically out of school indicator and aligned annual measurable objective (“AMO”) to evaluate performance. A school will meet standard if the school’s absenteeism rate meets the school’s AMO target for the school year. Additionally, if a school maintains an absenteeism rate below 12%, the school will meet standard. If the school only serves high school (only ninth through twelfth grades), the school may meet standard by meeting its AMO or by having an absenteeism rate below 20%. If a school is in Year 1 and does not have an AMO, the school may meet standard if the absenteeism rate is below 12% (or below 20% for high schools) or the school will be held harmless on this indicator.

To determine the absentee rate, Commission staff will mirror the formula released from the department in each annual accountability protocol.

$$\text{absenteeism rate} = \frac{\text{number of chronically absent students}}{\text{number of enrolled students}} \times 100$$

The number of enrolled students will include only students who are enrolled for at least 50% of the instructional days of the year at the school.

Average attendance rates are not evaluated in the framework beginning in 2025; however, average attendance rates and subgroup rates will be calculated annually and discussed with schools at site visits, closeout meetings, and during other monitoring activities. Also, while schools are not held accountable to this metric within the framework, this can be used as part of high stakes decisions such as interim or renewal.

Attendance rates are calculated using the following formula, using average daily attendance (“ADA”) and average daily membership (“ADM”).

$$\text{attendance rate} = \frac{\text{annual ADA}}{\text{annual ADM}} \times 100$$

To calculate the subgroup attendance rates, individual student period ADA and ADM are used. Students without membership during a period are removed from the data set. Then, the period ADA and ADMs are totaled. The following formula is used with each subgroup. The variance to the overall rate will use the rate of the summed period ADA and ADM.

$$\text{attendance rate} = \frac{\text{sum of all Periods ADA}}{\text{sum of all Periods ADM}} \times 100$$

Teacher Retention

Source(s): School Personnel Reports as of October 1 for current and previous school years

Teacher retention rates are not evaluated in the framework beginning in 2025; however, the teacher retention rate will be calculated annually, included in the annual report, and discussed with schools at site visits, closeout meetings, and/or during other monitoring activities. Also, while schools are not held accountable to this metric within the framework, this can be used as part of high stakes decisions such as interim or renewal.

The term teacher refers to licensed teachers and the principal. The teacher retention rate is calculated using the following formula.

$$\text{teacher retention rate} = \frac{\text{total number of teachers on current year personnel report}}{\text{total number of eligible teachers on previous year personnel report}} \times 100$$

Both the numerator and denominator totals are based on the employment status as of October 1 of each year. The denominator removes any teachers who are non-renewed by the school and teachers that may be inactive due to retirement or death. Teachers who move into a different role at the school or in the charter management organization are included in the numerator and denominator. In unique circumstances, the Commission staff will reach out to operators for additional information and use professional judgment in the calculation.

Example: School A Teacher Retention

Example Employee	October 1 Previous School Year Status	October 1 Current School Year Status	Included in Numerator?	Included in Denominator?
Employee A	Teacher	Academic Coach	Y	Y
Employee B	Not employed at school	Teacher (first year at school)	N	N
Employee C	Teacher	Not employed at school: Moved to network level	Y	Y
Employee D	Intervention Teacher	Not employed at school: left voluntarily (moved out of state)	N	Y
Employee E	English Learner Teacher	Not employed at school: non-renewed	N	N
Employee F	Teacher	Intervention Teacher	Y	Y
Employee G	Intervention Teacher	Teacher	Y	Y
Employee H	Teacher	Not employed at school: deceased	N	N
Employee I	Paraprofessional	Teacher	N	N
Employee J	Principal	Principal	Y	Y

$$teacher\ retention\ rate = \frac{5}{6} \times 100 = 83\%$$

Staff members categorized as a teacher include: all licensed staff coded with the positions of teacher – classroom teacher, ESL teacher, SPED teacher, support teacher, interventionist, principal, or a similar position as those listed.