



Charter Schools

Knox County Schools

Emerald Charter Academy

Charter Performance Framework

October 2022

Introduction

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-13-143, the chartering authority must adopt a performance framework for its charter schools. Knox County Schools has adopted the model performance framework developed by The Tennessee Department of Education with a few modifications to comply with this statute and to provide objective assessment and feedback to the charter schools within its supervision.

This model is based on the framework created by the Tennessee State Board of Education in 2014 and revised in January 2018.

Section I. Academic Performance & School Culture

Pursuant to T.C.A § 49-13-102, two of the purposes of a charter school are to improve learning for all students and to ensure that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments. In addition, the law states that "[t]he performance-related provisions within a charter agreement shall be based on a performance framework that clearly sets forth the academic and operational performance indicators, measures, and metrics that will guide the authorizer's evaluation of each public charter school."¹ For students, families, and the community, the main question that needs to be answered is: "Is this school a high-achieving school?" With increased school autonomy, a bedrock of charter school authorization, comes the expectation of high academic achievement. The following pages outline the measures by which a charter school's academic performance may be evaluated for purposes of yearly monitoring, potential interventions and plans of correction, and renewal and revocation decisions. A school will be evaluated on each performance measure and will receive a rating for each measure as well as a composite score that encompasses the entire academic performance framework.

¹ T.C.A. § 49-13-143(a)

The academic performance framework is made up of three key areas, which are outlined below. Additional details and explanations around these areas are included in the pages that follow.

1. Student Achievement (50%)
2. Comparative Performance (30%)
3. School Culture (20%)

1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (50%)

Charter schools will be evaluated in the following three areas in student achievement. The total weight of the following three areas equals 50 percent of the total final score for this area.

1. *Absolute Achievement*: Absolute achievement will be measured by the percentage of students scoring “On Track” or “Mastered” on the Tennessee state assessments in the subject areas of ELA, Math, and Science.² The total scoring weight for absolute achievement is 25 percent with each subject area consisting of 8.3 percent of the total 25 percent. If a school is not being tested in a certain area, the total of 25 percent will be reallocated equally among the total tested subject areas.
2. *Growth*: Growth in achievement will be measured by the TVAAS overall composite index. TVAAS composites are reported on a 1-5 scale and are one-year scores.
3. *Chronic Absenteeism*: Defined as the percent of students missing 10 percent or more of enrolled school days.

² The science thresholds are based on Tennessee state assessment data from 2017. Once the new aligned science TNReady assessments are released, these science thresholds will be updated to be more consistent with the latest science assessment data.

ABSOLUTE ACHIEVEMENT CHART

[illegible]

2: COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE (30%)

This section of the performance framework measures comparative performance between the charter school and the authorizing district average in the subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Comparison of charter performance to the authorizing district average allows for the evaluation of whether the charter school is providing a better option for students. Comparative achievement will be measured by evaluating the percentage of students who scored “On Track” or “Mastered” on the state assessments at the charter school, as compared to the authorizing district average.

- In grades 3-8, an average percent “On Track” or “Mastered” of all grades will be calculated for each tested subject.
 - This average will be calculated by taking the total number of students scoring “On Track” or “Mastered” and dividing it by the total number of students who took the test in grades 3-8.
- In high school, an average percent “On Track” or “Mastered” will be calculated for end-of-course (EOC) assessments in English I and II, Algebra or Integrated Math I, Geometry or Integrated Math II, Algebra II or Integrated Math III, Biology, and U.S. History.
 - This average will be calculated by taking the total number of students scoring “On Track” or “Mastered” and dividing it by the total number of students who took the tests, which will be grouped by subject.
 - EOC assessments will be grouped by subject in the following way:
 - ELA: English I and II
 - Math: Algebra or Integrated Math I, Geometry or Integrated Math II, Algebra II or Integrated Math III
 - Science: Biology
 - Social Studies: U.S. History

*If a school is not being tested in certain subject areas, the total weight will be reallocated equally among the total tested subject areas

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE CHART

Section	Section Weight	Redistributed Weight	Indicator	Metric	Falls Far Below Standard 1	Does Not Meet Standard 2	Meets Standard 3	Exceeds Standard 4	Section Score	Weighted Score
Comparative Performance	30.0%	5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 ELA*	26.0	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20
		5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 Math*	30.0	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20
		5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 Science	22.0	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20
		5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 ELA	33.3	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20
		5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 Math	44.4	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20
		5.0%	Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 Science	22.2	Achievement (%otm) less than 10th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 10th percentile, but less than the 15th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) greater than or equal to the 15th percentile, but less than the 20th percentile in district	Achievement (%otm) at or above the 20th percentile in the district	4	0.20

3: SCHOOL CULTURE (20%)

This section on the performance framework measures aspects of the school culture by assessing the school's suspension, student attrition, teacher retention, and student attendance rates.

Section	Section Weight	Redistributed Weight	Indicator	Metric	Falls Far Below Standard 1	Does Not Meet Standard 2	Meets Standard 3	Exceeds Standard 4	Section Score	Weighted Score
School Culture	20.0%	2.5%	Suspension rate***, Elementary School grades	19.4%	5% or more	4%-4.9%	3%-3.9%	Less than 3%	1	0.03
		2.5%	Suspension rate***, Middle School grades	19.9%	20% or more	13%-19.9%	5%-12.9%	Less than 5%	2	0.05
		5.0%	Student attrition rate	28.1%	35% or more	25%-34.9%	15%-24.9%	Less than 15%	2	0.10
		5.0%	Teacher retention rate	71%	Less than 65%	65%-74.9%	75%-84.9%	85% or more	2	0.10
		5.0%	Student attendance rate	91.1%	Less than 90%	90%-93.9%	94%-96.9%	97% or more	2	0.10

^{3a}: The suspension rate is measured as the percentage of individual students suspended one or more times at a school during the school year. This rate includes out-of-school suspensions only.

^{3b}: The student attrition rate is measured as the total percentage of students who left the school for reasons other than completing the highest grade in one annual cycle between Oct. 1 of a given year and Oct. 1 of the next year. This annual cycle was selected to account for student attrition during the school year and during the summer months.

^{3c}: Teachers who are non-renewed are not included as part of the teacher retention rate. This metric will also hold harmless teachers who move into a different role at the school or in the charter management organization.

^{3d}: The student attendance rate is measured as an average number of days students attend school as compared to the average number of days students are enrolled.

^{3e}: Oct. 1 is commonly used as the date by which schools track official enrollment numbers, because typical beginning-of-year fluctuations in enrollment even out by Oct. 1. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) also uses this date when referencing enrollment for a given year.

SECTION II. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

In addition to academic performance, another important indicator of short-term and long-term success of charter schools is financial performance. Annually, a charter school will be rated on the following near term and sustainability indicators. Any school that receives a “Falls Far Below” rating in any category will receive an immediate Plan of Correction to assist in remedying the deficiencies in this financial area. Three or more successive years of ratings that include a measure in the “Falls Far Below” category may result in a recommendation of immediate revocation of the charter.

Indicators and Measures:

1.Near Term Indicators:

Current Ratio: ~11.74

Enrollment Variance: ~.9889

Unrestricted Days Cash: 79

Default: No

2.Sustainability Indicators:

Total Margin: 10.98%

Debt to Asset Ratio: .6332

Cash Flow: Positive between 2021 & 2022

Debt Service Coverage Ratio: 4.14 (2021-2022)

1: Near Term Indicators

1(A). CURRENT RATIO:

The Current Ratio is determined by dividing the charter school's total current assets divided by the current liabilities.

☐ **Meets Standard:** ~11.74

- ☐ Current Ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1, OR
- ☐ Current Ratio is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is positive (current year ratio is higher than last year's)
- ☐ *For schools in their first or second year of operation, the Current Ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1*

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ Current Ratio is between 0.9 and 1.0 or equal to 1.0, OR
- ☐ Current Ratio is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is negative

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ Current Ratio is less than or equal to 0.9, OR
- ☐ If a school is in their first or second year of operation, Current Ratio is less than 1.1

1(B). UNRESTRICTED DAYS CASH:

Unrestricted Days Cash divided by ([Total Expense minus Depreciation Expenses] Divided by 365)

☐ **Meets Standard:** 79 days

- ☐ 60 Days Cash, OR
- ☐ Between 30- and 60-Days Cash and one-year trend is positive
- ☐ For schools in their first or second year of operation, Days Cash is 30 days or greater

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ Days Cash is between 15-30 days, OR
- ☐ Days Cash is between 30-60 days and one-year trend is negative

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ Fewer than 15 days cash, OR
- ☐ For schools in their first or second year of operation, Days Cash is less than 30 days

1(C). ENROLLMENT VARIANCE:

Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget

☐ **Meets Standard: ~.9889 percent**

- ☐ Enrollment Variance equals or exceeds 95 percent in the most recent year
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ Enrollment Variance is between 85 percent and 95 percent in the most recent year
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ Enrollment Variance is less than 85 percent in the most recent year

1(D). DEFAULT:

☐ **Meets Standard: Not in default or delinquent**

- ☐ School is not in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is not delinquent with debt service payments
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ School is in default of loan covenant(s), but has worked with lender(s) to restructure debt service payments
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ School is in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is delinquent with debt service payment
 - ☐

2: Sustainability Indicators:

2(A). TOTAL MARGIN:

Total Margin is Net Income divided by Total Revenue, and Aggregated Total Margin is Total Three-Year Net Income divided by Total Three-Year Revenues

☐ **Meets Standard: 10.98%**

- ☐ Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is positive, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive, OR
 - ☐ Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, the trend is positive for the last two years, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive
 - ☐ For schools in their first or second year of operation, the cumulative Total Margin is positive
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, but trend does not "Meet Standard"
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is less than or equal to -1.5 percent,
 - ☐ The most recent year Total Margin is less than -10 percent, OR

- For schools in their first or second year of operation, the cumulative Total Margin is negative.

2(B). DEBT TO ASSET RATIO:

Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

- **Meets Standard: 0.6332**

- Debt to Asset Ratio is less than 0.9
- **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - Debt to Asset Ratio is between 0.9 and 1.0
- **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - Debt to Asset Ratio is greater than 1.0

2(C). CASH FLOW:

Multi-Year Cash Flow = Year 3 Total Cash – Year 1 Total Cash; One-Year Cash Flow = Year 2 Total Cash – Year 1 Total Cash

- **Meets Standard: Positive between 2021 & 2022**

- Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is Positive, and Cash Flow is positive each year, OR
- Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, Cash Flow is positive in one of two years, and Cash Flow in the most recent year is positive
- For schools in their first or second year of operation, cash flow is positive
- **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, but trend does not “Meet Standard”
- **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is negative, OR
 - For schools in their first or second year of operation, cash flow is negative

(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense) divided by (Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)

- **Meets Standard: 4.14 (2021-2022)**

- Debt Service Coverage Ratio is equal to or exceeds 1.1
- **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - Debt Service Coverage Ratio is less than 1.1
- **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - Not Applicable

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE CHART

Section	Section Weight	Redistributed Weight	Indicator	Metric	Falls Far Below Standard 1	Does Not Meet Standard 2	Meets Standard 3	Exceeds Standard 4	Section Score	Weighted Score
Financial Performance	3%	3.0%	Annual budget variance	NA	Exceeds 15% of the annual budget	Exceeds between 10% - 15% of the annual budget	Does not exceed 10% of the annual budget	Does not exceed the annual budget	4	0.12
	3%	3.0%	Most recent annual audit	NA	Audit does not have an unqualified opinion and finds material weakness in controls	Audit either does not have an unqualified opinion or finds material weakness in controls	Audit has an unqualified opinion and finds no material weakness in controls	Audit has an unqualified opinion, finds no material weakness in controls, and the organization receives the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting Award from the Association of School Business Officials	3	0.09
	3%	3.0%	Monthly financial reports	NA	No monthly financial reports provided to Chartering Authority	Financial reports provided to the Chartering Authority, but not monthly	Financial reports provided to the Chartering Authority on a monthly basis, but not within 30 days of each month's end	Financial reports provided to the Chartering Authority on a monthly basis, with each report submitted within 30 days of that month's end	4	0.12
	3%	3.0%	Fundraising	NA	Less than 80% of all targets met	80% - 89.9% of all targets met	90% - 100% of all targets met	all targets exceeded	4	0.12
	3%	3.0%	Enrollment variance	.9889	Less than 85 % in the most recent year	85% - 94.9% in the most recent year	95% - 99.9% in the most recent year	equals or exceeds 100% in the most recent year	3	.09
	1%	1.0%	Current Ratio	N/A	less than 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.1 - 1.2	greater than 1.2	4	.04
	3%	3.0%	Debt Analysis/Default	NA	School is in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is delinquent with debt service payment	School is in default of loan covenant(s), but has worked with lender(s) to restructure debt service payments	School is not in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is not delinquent with debt service payments	School is not in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is not delinquent with debt service payments. Principal balance has declined from prior year.	4	0.12
	Weighted Average Total Score = 3; Meets Standard									

SECTION III: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

A charter school's performance in the organizational measures is a large piece of the overall health of a charter school. Deficiencies or weaknesses in organizational performance may be an indicator of the overall health of the charter school. Any school that receives a "Falls Far Below" rating in any category will receive an immediate Plan of Correction to assist in remedying the deficiencies in this organizational area. Three or more successive years of ratings that include a measure in the "Falls Far Below" category may result in a recommendation of immediate revocation of the charter.

Indicators and Measures:

1. Education Program:

- a. Charter Terms
- b. Compliance with Education Requirements
- c. Students with Disabilities Rights
- d. English Language Learner Rights

4. Students and Employees

- a. Rights of Students
- b. Credentialing
- a. Rights of Students
- d. Background Checks

2. Financial Management and Oversight

- a. Financial Reporting and Compliance Reporting
- b. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

5. School Environment

- a. Facilities and Transportation
- b. Health and Safety
- c. Information Handling

3. Governance and Reporting

- a. Governance Requirements
- b. Accountability of Management
- c. Reporting Requirement

6. Additional Obligations

- a. All Other Obligations

1: EDUCATION PROGRAM

1(A). IS THE SCHOOL IMPLEMENTING THE MATERIAL TERMS OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM AS DEFINED IN THE CURRENT CHARTER CONTRACT?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school implemented the material terms of the education program in all material respects and the education program in operation reflects the material terms as defined in the charter contract, or the school has gained approval for a charter modification to the material terms.

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to implement the material terms of the education program as defined in the charter agreement; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to implement the material terms of the education program as defined in the charter agreement in the manner described above.

1(B). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH APPLICABLE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to education requirements, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Instructional days or minutes requirements
 - ☐ Graduation and promotion requirements
 - ☐ Content standards
 - ☐ State assessments
 - ☐ Implementation of mandated programming as a result of state or federal funding

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to education requirements as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to education requirements as described above.

1(C). IS THE SCHOOL PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ Consistent with the school's status and responsibilities, the school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract (including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act) relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability, including but not limited to:
 - Equitable access and opportunity to enroll
 - Identification and referral
 - Appropriate development and implementation of Individualized Education Plans and Section 504 plans
 - Operational compliance, including provision of services in the least restrictive environment and appropriate inclusion in the school's academic program, assessments, and extracurricular activities
 - Discipline, including due process protections, manifestation determinations, and behavioral intervention plans
 - Access to the school's facility and programs in a lawful manner and consistent with students' IEPs or Section 504 Plans
 - Securing of all applicable funding

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school did not materially comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability in the manner described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability in the manner described above.

1(D). IS THE SCHOOL PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) STUDENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract (including Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the US Department of Education authorities) relating to the English Language Learner requirements, including but not limited to:
 - Required policies related to the service of ELL students
 - Proper steps for identification of students in need of ELL services
 - Appropriate and equitable delivery of services to identified students
 - Appropriate accommodations on assessments
 - Exiting of students from ELL services
 - Ongoing monitoring of exited students

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school did not materially comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to English Language Learner requirements in the manner described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to English Language Learner requirements in the manner described above.

2: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

2(A). IS THE SCHOOL MEETING FINANCIAL REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial reporting requirements, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Complete and on-time submission of financial reports, including annual budget, revised budget (if applicable), periodic financial reports as required by the authorizer, and any reporting requirements if the board contracts with an Education Service Provider (ESP)
 - ☐ On-time submission and completion of annual independent audit and corrective action plans, if applicable.
 - ☐ All reporting requirements related to the use of public fund

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to financial reporting requirements as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to financial reporting requirements as described above.

2(B). IS THE SCHOOL FOLLOWING GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial management and oversight expectations as evidenced by an annual independent audit, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ An unqualified audit opinion
 - ☐ An audit devoid of significant findings and conditions, material weaknesses, or significant internal control weaknesses
 - ☐ An audit that does not include a going concern disclosure in the notes or an explanatory paragraph within the audit report

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to financial management and oversight expectations as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to financial management and oversight expectations as described above.

3: GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

3(A). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to governance by its board, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Board policies, including those related to oversight of an Education Service Provider (ESP), if applicable
 - ☐ Board bylaws
 - ☐ State open meetings law
 - ☐ Code of ethics
 - ☐ Conflicts of interest
 - ☐ Board composition and/or membership rules (e.g., requisite number of qualified teachers, ban on employees or contractors serving on the board, etc.)
 - ☐ Compensation for attendance at meetings
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to governance by its board as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to governance by its board as described above.

3(B). IS THE SCHOOL HOLDING MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABLE?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to oversight of school management, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ (For Education Service Providers [ESPs]) Maintaining authority over management, holding it accountable for performance as agreed under a written performance agreement, and requiring annual financial reports of the ESP
 - ☐ (For Others) Oversight of management that includes holding it accountable for performance expectations which may or may not be agreed to under a written performance agreement
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to oversight of school management; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to oversight of school Management as described above.

3(C). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to relevant reporting requirements to the school's authorizer, State Education Agency (SEA), , and/or federal authorities, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Accountability tracking
 - ☐ Attendance and enrollment reporting
 - ☐ Compliance and oversight
 - ☐ Additional information requested by authorizer
- ☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to relevant reporting requirements as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.
- ☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**
 - ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement as described above.

4: STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

4(A). IS THE SCHOOL PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL STUDENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the rights of students, including but not limited to:
 - Policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment, and enrollment (including rights to enroll or maintain enrollment)
 - The collection and protection of student information (that could be used in discriminatory ways or otherwise contrary to law)
 - Due process protections, privacy, civil rights, and student liberties requirements, including First Amendment protections and the Establishment Clause restrictions prohibiting public schools from engaging in religious instruction
 - Conduct or discipline (discipline hearings and suspension and expulsion policies and practices)

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the rights of students as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the rights of students as described above.

4(B). IS THE SCHOOL MEETING TEACHER AND OTHER STAFF CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract (including the federal Highly Qualified Teacher and Paraprofessional requirements within Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA]) relating to state certification requirements.

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to state certification requirements; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to state certification requirements.

4(C). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH LAWS REGARDING EMPLOYEE RIGHTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to employment considerations, including those relating to the Family Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and employment contracts. The school does not interfere with employees' rights to organize collectively or otherwise violate staff collective bargaining rights.

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to employment considerations; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to employment considerations.

4(D). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLETING REQUIRED BACKGROUND CHECKS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to background checks of all applicable individuals (including staff and members of the charter community, where applicable).

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to background checks; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to background checks.

5: SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5(A). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school facilities, grounds, and transportation, including but not limited to:

- ☐ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- ☐ Fire inspections and related records
- ☐ Viable certificate of occupancy or other required building use authorization
- ☐ Documentation of requisite insurance coverage
- ☐ Student transportation

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school facilities, grounds, and transportation as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to school facilities, grounds, and transportation as described above.

5(B). IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to safety and the provision of health-related services, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Appropriate nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals
 - ☐ Food service requirements
 - ☐ Other district services, if applicable

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to safety and the provision of health-related services as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to safety and the provision of health-related services as described above.

5(C). IS THE SCHOOL HANDLING INFORMATION APPROPRIATELY?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to handling of information, including but not limited to:
 - ☐ Maintaining the security of and providing access to student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities
 - ☐ Accessing documents maintained by the school under the state's Freedom of Information law and other applicable authorities
 - ☐ Transferring of student records
 - ☐ Proper and secure maintenance of testing materials.

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the handling of information as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the handling of information as described above.

6: ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS

IS THE SCHOOL COMPLYING WITH ALL OTHER OBLIGATIONS?

☐ **Meets Standard**

- ☐ The school materially complies with all other material legal, statutory, regulatory, or contractual requirements contained in its charter contract that are not otherwise explicitly stated herein, including but not limited to requirements from the following sources:
 - ☐ Revisions to state charter law
 - ☐ Consent decrees
 - ☐ Intervention requirements by the authorizer
 - ☐ Requirements by other entities to which the school is accountable (e.g., State Education Agency [SEA])

☐ **Does Not Meet Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to materially comply with all other material, legal, statutory, regulatory, or contractual requirements contained in its charter contract that are not otherwise explicitly stated herein as described above; however, the school promptly came into compliance once the shortcoming(s) were identified.

☐ **Falls Far Below Standard**

- ☐ The school failed to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions contained in its charter contract that are not otherwise explicitly stated herein as described above.

Charter Evaluation Feedback:

Commendations:

- Student and school safety is a priority. The school hired an outside Security agency to assess the school facilities for strengths and any additional improvements that should be considered.
- All required reports are complete and provided in a timely manner.
- Financial practices are appropriate and align with expectations.
- The Emerald Academy board of directors are committed to the mission of the school and dedicated to the school's success.
- There is a strong commitment to collaboration between scholars, parents, faculty, school leaders, and the board of directors.

Emerald Academy was selected as Tennessee Charter School of the Year based on academic growth and dedication to student success, scoring Level 5 in all categories for the 2021 school year.

Recommendations:

- Implement strategies to address deficiencies with regard to Chronic absenteeism of scholars.
- Continue to maintain commitment to raise achievement for all scholars.
- Continue to offer social and emotional support to scholars as appropriate to ensure a positive culture is maintained.

As a result of the above evaluation Emerald Academy is:

☒ Approved and in good standing (On track for renewal)

☐ Approved and in need of improvement

☐ Unapproved (Plan of Correction required to address the following deficiency: Due Date _____)

Signature: Julie E. Thompson
Julie E. Thompson, Executive Director of Academic Supports, Knox County Schools

Date: 10/12/22

Signature: Steve Diggs
Steve Diggs, President and CEO, Emerald Academy

Date: 10/12/22

Emerald Academy Response
October 27, 2022

Emerald Academy (EA) opened as a new charter school on July 27, 2015. The 2021-22 school year was Emerald Academy's sixth year of operations. The school served scholars in grades K-8, with an enrollment of 455 scholars.

- In its first year (2015-16), Emerald served kindergarten and first grade scholars.
- In 2016-17, Emerald expanded by two grade levels, to serve second and sixth graders.
 - o Emerald's second graders primarily consisted of the previous year's first grade scholars.
 - o All of Emerald's sixth graders were new to the school; they consisted primarily of lower-income, urban youth who were performing below grade level.
- In 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, Emerald expanded the grade levels it served, as current scholars moved to subsequent grade levels. Scholars in these new grade levels primarily consisted of scholars who had been enrolled at Emerald during the previous year and moved up to the next grade level.
- The 2019-20 school year was the first year in which EA served scholars in every grade level, K-8.

EA's mission is to prepare urban scholars for the college of their choice and community leadership.

We are pleased that 2021-22 state assessment data confirms that EA continues to change the trajectory of learning outcomes for urban youth and close the academic achievement gap for economically disadvantaged and minority scholars. EA was named a Changemaker Charter School by the Tennessee Charter School Center, a distinction for the 17 charter schools that are in the top 25 percent of all public schools in the state for increased proficiency in reading and/or math from 2019 to 2022.

- Emerald Academy's achievement levels have not only recovered, but exceeded, pre-pandemic (2019) proficiency.
- Emerald Academy's economically disadvantaged scholars, as well as its Black scholars, closed the achievement gap and outperformed their peers in reading and math in every major metropolitan district in Tennessee.
- The increase in Emerald Academy scholars' math proficiency was in the 91st percentile of all public schools statewide.
- For the second year in a row, Emerald Academy is unequivocally the top performing urban middle school in Knoxville, based on the percentage of scholars performing on or above grade level. EA scholars in third through fifth grades again performed near the top of all local urban elementary schools in most grade level/ subject combinations.
- More than 90 percent of Emerald Academy teachers who taught in tested subjects achieved at least Level 3 growth, and several teachers achieved Level 4 or 5 growth. This demonstrates that EA is providing scholars with high-quality instruction across grade levels and academic subjects.

EA's results for chronic absenteeism reflect the challenges of operating a school while recovering from the disruptive effect of a pandemic. EA's chronic absenteeism rate was the lowest among urban Knoxville middle schools, and seven to 15 percentage points lower than the top four urban schools that EA scholars are zoned to attend. EA has deployed strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism in 2022-23.

In summary, Emerald Academy continues to deliver on the mission outlined in its charter agreement with Knox County Schools. Academically, financially, and culturally, the school is well-managed and achieving strong results.

KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

This Document is approved by the Knox County Board of Education on the 9th day of November, 2022, as reflected in its minutes, and certified by its Chairperson.

Kristi Kristy, Chair

Date: _____

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Jon Rysewyk, Superintendent

Date: _____

KNOX COUNTY LAW DEPARTMENT

CONTRACT #: 22-717

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM

Gary Dupler, Deputy Law Director

Date: 11/1/2022