



# Knox County Schools 2017 – 2018 Annual Authorizer Report

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Curriculum and Instruction Department  
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## **Section 1: Authorized Charter Schools**

1. Name of School: Emerald Academy
2. Current Address: 220 Carrick St. Knoxville, TN 37921
3. Current Phone number: (865) 249-7223
4. School Director: Renee Kelly
5. School Director Email: renee.kelly@emeraldcharterschools.org
6. Operating Status: B – Open and Operating
7. Contracted Services:
  - a. Knox County Schools' Nutrition Department for food services,
  - b. Knox County Schools' Information Technology Department for software customization.



# **Emerald Academy -Charter School Performance Monitoring**

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October 2018

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.”<sup>1</sup> 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 will be evaluated for academics and school culture on an annual schedule. The methodologies are noted within the framework to ensure consistency in the annual review. Emerald Academy 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. Operational monitoring occurs on a regular basis between the Emerald Academy and Knox County Schools.

The academic and financial performance framework is made up of four key areas, which are outlined below.

1. Student Achievement (50%)
  2. Comparative Performance (20%)
  3. School Culture (15%)
  4. Financial Performance (15%)
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| 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 |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---|--------|--|--|--|--|---------------|----------------|
| Absolute Achievement    | 25%            | 25%                  | All students' achievement grade as reported on the TN state report card. Letter grade reflects the best of performance against absolute performance targets and AMO performance targets | D      | F  | D  | C  | A or B   | 2             | 0.50           |
| Growth                  | 20%            | 20%                  | TVAAS overall Composite Level (All Students, All Subjects)  | 3      | Level 1  | Level 2  | Level 3  | Level 4&5  | 3             | 0.60           |
| Chronic Absenteeism     | 5%             | 5%                   | Chronic absenteeism grade as reported on the TN state report card. Letter grade reflects the best of performance against absolute performance targets and AMO performance targets       | C      | F  | D  | C  | A or B   | 3             | 0.15           |
| Comparative Performance | 3.4%           | 5.00%                | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 ELA  | 36     | 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           |
|                         | 3.3%           | 5.00%                | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 Math   | 6      | 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 | 1             | 0.05           |
|                         | 3.3%           | 0.0%                 | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 3-5 Science  | NA     | 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 |               |                |
|                         | 3.3%           | 3.3%                 | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 ELA  | 18.8   | 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 | 3             | 0.10           |
|                         | 3.4%           | 3.4%                 | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 Math   | 37.5   | 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             | 0.14           |
|                         | 3.3%           | 3.3%                 | Emerald Academy percentile rank, Grade 6-8 Science  | 18.8   | 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 | 3             | 0.10           |

| 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                                   | 1.9%           | 1.9%                 | Suspension rate, Elementary School grades | 19.4%  | 5% or more   | 4%-4.9%   | 3%-3.9%   | Less than 3%   | 1             | 0.02           |
|  | 1.9%           | 1.9%                 | Suspension rate, Middle School grades     | 27.8%  | 20% or more  | 13%-19.9%   | 5%-12.9%  | Less than 5%   | 1             | 0.02           |
|  | 3.8%           | 3.8%                 | Student attrition Rate                    | 14.0%  | 35% or more  | 25%-34.9%   | 15%-24.9%   | Less than 15%  | 4             | 0.15           |
|  | 3.8%           | 3.8%                 | Teacher retention rate                    | 52.0%  | Less than 65%  | 65%-74.9%   | 75%-84.9%   | 85% or more  | 1             | 0.04           |
|  | 3.8%           | 3.8%                 | Student attendance rate                   | 95.3%  | Less than 90%  | 90%-93.9%   | 94%-96.9%   | 97% or more  | 3             | 0.11           |
| 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%                 | Monthly financial reports                 | NA     | Provides no monthly financial reports to chartering authority.                     | Provides a monthly financial report to the chartering authority, but does not do so for each of the 12 months of the fiscal year. | Provides a monthly financial report for each of the 12 months of the fiscal year to the chartering authority, but not within 30 days of that month's end. | Provides a monthly financial report for each of the 12 months of the fiscal year to the chartering authority, with each report submitted within 30 days of that month's end.   | 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%                 | Fundraising                               | NA     | <80% of all annual fundraising targets met.  | 80%-89.9% of all annual fundraising targets met   | 90%-100% of all annual fundraising targets met.   | All annual fundraising targets exceeded  | 4             | 0.12           |
|  | 3%             | 3.0%                 | Enrollment variance                       | NA     | <85%   | 85%-94.9%   | 95%-96.9%   | ≥97%   | 4             | 0.12           |
| Weighted Average Total Score = 3; Meets Standard |                |                      |   |        |  |   |   |  |               |                |

Percentiles are calculated as the number of schools with equal or lower performance divided by the total number of schools in each grade band/subject combination  
School rankings only based on grade-level data for which the charter school has data.  
Student performance data from state accountability set. Only includes valid tests and students enrolled in their school for 50%. Data includes MSA test takers.  
When subject-level data is missing in a grade band, the weight of the missing indicator is assigned equally to the other subjects in the grade band.

## **Emerald Academy Response**

Emerald Academy (EA) opened as a new charter school on July 27, 2015. The 2017-18 school year was Emerald's third year of operations.

- 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, Emerald again expanded by two grade levels, to serve third and seventh graders.
  - o 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.
  - o Kindergarten and sixth grade were the primary points of entry for new scholars. Again, the majority of these scholars were lower-income, urban youth who were performing below grade level.

*Emerald Academy's mission is to provide Knoxville's urban students with the academic foundation, skills, habits, and character traits that they need to succeed in high school, college, and in life. Through our rigorous educational program and our relational culture, we will create a transformative experience for our scholars that prepares them to become self-sufficient, reflective, and resilient leaders in their communities.*

- EA is encouraged by the academic growth achieved by scholars in 2017-18 and remains committed to achieving the outcomes described in its mission statement. The growth seen in 2017-18 is a positive indicator that scholars are on a trajectory to meet the performance standards in this framework over time.
- EA also is encouraged that scholars in the middle school grades already are outpacing some of their urban peers, and that third grade scholars are doing the same in ELA.
- EA's action items for the 2018-19 school year. EA has reallocated the number of daily instructional minutes to increase the amount of daily instructional time in both math and ELA and to add a second daily planning period for teachers. EA expects that these changes will further strengthen its academic program and improve outcomes across all grade levels, including third grade math.

From an operational standpoint, EA is clearly a desirable place for scholars, as evidenced by its low rate of scholar attrition and high attendance rate. EA also has demonstrated strong financial accountability. EA is working to reduce both the scholar suspension rate and the teacher attrition rate.

- For the 2018-19 school year, Emerald has created teams that consist of a Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and a Dean of Scholars, which support teachers and scholars in specific grade bands (K-2, 3-5, and 6-8).
- The Deans of Curriculum and Instruction are focused on supporting teachers, primarily by spending time in classrooms and coaching teachers in regard to their instructional practices.
- The Deans of Scholars are focused on supporting scholars and families, including coaching scholars in regard to behavior.

## Methodology for the Cultural Sections of the Emerald Charter School Monitoring Process

1. Elementary school suspension rate: The suspension rate is measured as the percentage of individual students suspended one or more times during the school year. This rate includes out-of-school suspensions only.
2. Middle school suspension rate: The suspension rate is measured as the percentage of individual students suspended one or more times during the school year. This rate includes out-of-school suspensions only.
3. Student attrition rate: 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 October 1 of a given year and October 1 of the next year. This annual cycle was selected to account for student attrition during the school year and during the summer months. (The National Center for Education Statistics also uses this date when referencing enrollment for a given year.)
4. Teacher retention rate: 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.
5. Average total rating: To assign the final score determination, the Average Total Rating will be rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, a score of 2.5 would be rounded up to a 3 and assigned the determination of Meets Standard. A score of 2.4 would be rounded down to a 2 and assigned a determination of Does Not Meet Standard.