Introduction

I’m so proud of the work the TCSC team has done this year to help ensure public charter schools across the state are equipped to meet their goals and help students achieve success. Our policy team worked tirelessly with policy makers and partners to ensure public charter school students would be equitably considered as our state launched a new school funding formula focused on the needs of students, a huge step forward for Tennessee. The policy team also continued our streak of defeating 100% of anti-charter school legislation, while ensuring an unprecedented investment in facilities funding for public charter schools. Our programs team built a strategy to welcome schools as members of our organization, creating an even stronger foundation for partnership and advocacy.

In 2022, our External Relations team sought to find new ways to honor the success of students and educators in overcoming obstacles of the pandemic, and created a new program for recognition of academic proficiency in the form of the Changemaker Charter School List, which you can read more about in this report. In addition to this list, our team once again presented the Charter Champion Awards, which recognize the people and schools making a difference across our state, and we are excited to have so many opportunities to celebrate public charter schools, their students, and staff. Our advocacy teams convened school leaders and worked collaboratively with schools and community advocates to champion growth and push back against limitations on charter schools at the local level, pushing back against restrictions on athletic participation for public charter school students, and the national level, joining partners from across the country to rally in support of the Charter Schools Program and advocate with members of Congress in Washington D.C.

Whether our team members are helping policy makers understand the role public charter schools can play in a thriving public education environment, supporting school leaders as they navigate the complexities of finding the right facility and financing to meet student needs, or consistently keeping public charter schools up-to-date on policy changes, trainings, and good news, they’re dedicated to supporting the students and educators of Tennessee. I hope you’ll enjoy learning more about the work of Tennessee’s public charter schools and our team here at the Tennessee Charter School Center through this report.

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About Public Charter Schools

Public charter schools are public schools that are free to attend and open to all students, but operate under an independent contract, or “charter,” with an authorizing agency - in Tennessee, most commonly a local education agency (school district), though some are authorized by the Achievement School District (ASD) or the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission. Following an appeal or transfer from the ASD, Tennessee state law requires all public charter schools to be non-profit, and prohibits for-profit charter school operators. Public charter schools in Tennessee are required to meet the same academic standards and administer the same assessments as any other public school in Tennessee. Their school support organization, or CSO. A non-profit organization, TCSC engages in policy, advocacy, and school support work to ensure that Tennessee’s public charter schools have an equitable environment to operate in and have the resources they need to ensure they are offering a high quality public education to all of their students.

About the Tennessee Charter School Center

The Tennessee Charter School Center (TCSC) is the state’s primary charter school support organization, or CSO. A non-profit organization, TCSC engages in policy, advocacy, and school support work to ensure that Tennessee’s public charter schools have an equitable environment to operate in and have the resources they need to ensure they are offering a high quality public education to all of their students.
Our vision is that every student in the state of Tennessee will receive and have access to a high-quality public education that equitably allocates opportunity, is aligned with their best needs and prepares them to thrive and experience post-secondary success.

Our work to lead the charge for effective policy, excellent schools, quality operators and informed communities is driven by:

Mission, Vision and Values

**Diversity**
Diversity at all levels (professional background, race, gender, etc.) is paramount to our ability to demonstrate empathy for others, build diversity of experience and think critically about our personal beliefs and biases.

**Equity**
Academic and opportunity gaps are real in our public education system. With this in mind, it is essential that public education advocates work to create an equitable environment for families; our actions must be rooted in social justice. From equitable funding across schools, fair distribution of quality teachers and legitimate access to a variety of meaningful experiences that foster growth and opportunity, an equitable public education system will be key.

**Integrity**
Honesty, care and candor are critical to build trusting relationships with our communities. We will have the courage to have difficult conversations, admit mistakes and stand up for the right thing to do on behalf of children, even if it’s not the most popular.

**Quality & Excellence**
All families deserve access to a high-quality public education that will provide the foundation for future success and growth. Schools, districts, authorizers, elected officials and other committed partners in this work must be held accountable for high standards of quality and excellence.

Tennessee Charter Locations in 2022-2023

Tennessee charter schools exist in the four major metro areas across the state. These schools are authorized by four traditional districts as well as the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission and the Achievement School District:

- **Metro Nashville Public Schools**: 26 Schools
- **Shelby County Schools**: 54 Schools
- **Knox County Schools**: 1 School
- **Hamilton County Schools**: 8 Schools
- **Tennessee Public Charter School Commission**: 9 Schools
- **Achievement School District**: 16 Schools

Tennessee Charter Schools by the Numbers

- **Total Charter Schools**: 114
- **Students Enrolled**: 44,000+
- **Years of Innovation in Education**: 19

89%+ of Tennessee charter students are students of color — we’re opening all students and providing public school options to communities of color.

55% vs. 47%

48% vs. 42%

Sources:
- Tennessee Department of Education, Active Charter School List for 2022-2023, provided by special request.

*Includes charter high schools not run by ASD given their unique mission/focus.
The Tennessee Charter School Center Board members are committed to high-quality education for all of Tennessee’s children. Along with the Center’s chief executive officer, they lead the organization advising on policy, advocacy, programming, funding and communication.

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Maya creates the center’s vision and strategy. She leads fundraising, local, state and national partnership development; and state-level policy efforts.
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Emily oversees TCSG’s internal and external communication work, advises the TCSC policy team, manages external organization relationships, and represents TCSC in East Tennessee. She also supports both the work of the TCSC board and organizational development efforts.
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Communication Manager
Tommiea uses media to inform educators, families, community members and elected officials about the Center’s efforts to ensure high-quality education for Tennessee’s children through programming and advocacy.
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Tennessee policymakers and education stakeholders have demonstrated a strong commitment to education reform by advancing significant policies and programs to support Tennessee’s public education system and innovation. As a result, Tennessee’s public charter school movement has garnered strength and generated positive outcomes for students and communities.

Overview of TCSC

Tennessee Charter School Center Impact Report 2022

Here’s a look at where we’ve been:

1998

The Tennessee Charter School Association (TCSA) was established to unite efforts and resources towards creating a local and statewide policy environment that enables the creation and growth of high-quality public charter schools.

2002

Tennessee Charter School Act passed. This act introduced charter schools as an “alternative means” within the public school system for ensuring the accomplishment of the necessary outcomes of education.

2003

First Tennessee charter schools opened in Nashville (1) and Memphis (3).

2005

Law amended to allow students zoned to “high priority” schools to attend charter schools.

2009

Inspired by the success of high-quality public charter schools in other parts of the country, the Tennessee Charter School Incubator (TCSI) was started. TCSI focused on systematically identifying and training new charter leaders and managing school launch and early support activities. TCSI has launched nine charter schools in Tennessee, recruited and placed two high-impact Fellows into school leadership positions in the Achievement School District, and initially incubated five new public charter schools that opened in 2015.

Expansion of enrollment eligibility to “at-risk” students, Limit or “cap” on the number of charter schools raised to 90.

2011

Open Enrollment amendment passed to allow all students the option to attend a charter school, removing the “cap” on the number of charter schools.

Achievement School District created.

2013

The Tennessee Charter School Incubator and the Tennessee Charter School’s Association merged to form the Tennessee Charter School Center: This new organization combines the resources and functions of both groups (charter school incubation and support and policy and advocacy) to better respond to the strong demand for high-quality public charter schools across the state. The new Center aims to provide ongoing, comprehensive support to the growing charter sector in Tennessee while also creating a unified voice among charter organizations.

2014

Legislation passed to allow the State Board of Education to act as an authorizer upon request for charter applicants in a district with a priority school in their area.

2016

TCSC collaborates with TN Dept. of Ed. to secure a federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant to support the launch of new high-quality charters schools in TN.

2017

Legislation is passed that modernizes and strengthens the 2002 Tennessee Charter School Act. This law clarifies rules on everything from the application process to closure. Enables local districts to charge an authorization fee to cover the cost of charter oversight. Established fund of up to $6 million per year for facilities.

The Memphis Charter Compact was approved. The Compact will help to provide facility support for charters, Establish a School Performance Framework, Formulate School Closure Procedures for charters, Establish a District Shared Services Standard Operating Procedure and a more collaborative agreement for unified relations with a focus on quality schools (regardless of model or operator type).

TCSI awarded a federal credit enhancement grant to support charter school facilities in TN.

2018

Legislation to ensure public charter schools are included in reimbursements for high-cost special needs students was passed.

2019

The Public Charter School Commission—an independent commission with the authority to hear charter school appeals and authorize schools following successful appeal anywhere in Tennessee—was established. The State Board of Education was established as a formal accountability body for charter school authorities, including the requirement for evaluation of authorizer compliance with state law and the Tennessee Quality Authorizing Standards, as well as the power to enforce compliance.

2020

The Charter School Facilities Fund is established as a recurring budget item in the Tennessee State Budget, better ensuring stable access to vital facilities funds for public charter schools in Tennessee.

2021

The Charter School Facilities Fund is established as a recurring budget item in the Tennessee State Budget, better ensuring stable access to vital facilities funds for public charter schools in Tennessee.

2022

The state’s new funding formula, the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) was established. Among many other improvements; TISA includes a direct funding component specifically for students enrolled in charter schools. Additionally, the Charter School Facilities Fund was increased to $38 million, an historic $22 million of it a recurring budget item.

Impact Report 2022

Tennessee Charter School Center

Today, 118 charter schools are serving more than 41,000 Tennessee students—law and our demand continues to grow year after year. Not only are charter schools promoting choice and opportunity in our K-12 education system, but they are also playing a pivotal role in helping the state address several critical education issues, including literacy and workforce development.

Through the Years

The charter school movement has gained strength and generated positive outcomes for students and communities.

Legislation to ensure public charter schools are included in reimbursements for high-cost special needs students was passed.

The Charter School Facilities Fund is established as a recurring budget item in the Tennessee State Budget, better ensuring stable access to vital facilities funds for public charter schools in Tennessee.

The Charter School Facilities Fund was increased to $38 million, an historic $22 million of it a recurring budget item.
Policy & Advocacy Leadership

The Tennessee Charter School Center Policy & Advocacy team advocates for state policies that ensure innovation, collaboration and quality continue to be top priorities in education. We believe fair policies offer transparency, equity, quality, autonomy and accountability.

Tennessee Charter School Center works closely with educators, legislators, parents and other community advocates to identify key policy challenges and opportunities facing the state’s charter school sector. TCSC is committed to making sure all voices are clearly heard and students always come first.

2022 Legislative Session

The 2022 Legislative Session saw a great deal of significant work from policy makers and education advocates, with historic progress made for students. Key policies from the 2022 legislative session include:

• Historic levels of funding to support public charter school facility needs in the FY 2022-23 budget including $32 million in new dollars, for a total of $38 million, for charter school facilities.

• The Tennessee Investment in Education Act (TISA ), the state’s new K-12 funding formula was established, and included a $1 billion investment. TISA is a student-based formula that will ensure funding is more targeted to students and their needs and provide greater transparency and accountability around how education dollars are spent.

• TISA specifically includes a direct funding component for students enrolled in a charter school. This is a huge step in closing the funding gap that we know exists between public charter schools and traditional public schools.

• All legislation that would have negatively impacted Tennessee’s public charter school sector, including legislation to allow for-profit charter schools to operate in Tennessee, was defeated.

Tennessee Investment in Education Act

The Tennessee Investment in Education Act (TISA ), the state’s new student-based K-12 funding formula was established, and included a $1 billion investment in education funding.

Increased Staff Numbers Meant Increased Student Gains at Believe Memphis Academy

In 2021, schools across the nation were working to identify strategies to mitigate learning losses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Believe Memphis Academy was highlighted by Chalkbeat for their ten percent student gain in math scores on mid-year tests at a time when many schools were struggling, especially in math.

The school attributes these learning gains directly to staffing increases, as well as technological investments, the school was able to establish through community fundraising.

“Tennessee Charter School Center closely works with Believe Memphis Academy as they work tirelessly to support their students and help close the learning gaps created by the pandemic. This is a testament to the critical role played by Tennessee charter schools in ensuring student success.” - Jason Baker, the school’s director of development and marketing.

TCSC tracked 60+ pieces of legislation impacting charter schools and K-12 education during the 2022 legislative session.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY IN ACTION

To read the complete article, visit TN.ChalkBeat.org

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TCSC tracked 60+ pieces of legislation impacting charter schools and K-12 education during the 2022 legislative session.
TCSC strongly values innovation and collaboration as there are always opportunities to learn and grow from others. In order to achieve the state of all students accessing and realizing a high-quality education, it is important that we work with, and alongside a variety of partners, stakeholders and communities. The year 2021 saw relationships develop and partnerships grow as TCSC identified similarly focused leaders and organizations committed to educating Tennessee’s children. Together, we focused on empowering educators, students and families with information, trainings and other resources.

**CHARTER CHAMPION AWARDS**

TCSC once again put forward the Charter Champion Awards, which allows the charter school community to nominate those in their schools and school communities for awards ranging from school of the year to advocate of the year, and even community impact project of the year. This year we received 33 nominations and presented awards to winners at schools all across the state.

**WEBSITE UPDATE**

With a smooth transition to a new website as well as an updated look. The new site will allow for member portals for all other resources.

**COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS**

The Communications team worked in partnership with the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools to design and promote a ten-week media campaign sharing facts and best information about public charter schools in Nashville and Memphis. TCSC also released the Understanding Charters and Moments with Maya campaigns on social media. The team also designed and implemented a communications campaign around membership, which resulted in almost 50% of schools joining in year one, exceeding our goal.

**SPORTS ADVOCACY**

TCSC, led by SVP Advocacy for Nashville Laurie Brown, led work to create a charter middle school sports league to ensure they could play after MNPS prohibited charter middle school teams from participating in district sports. TCSC’s policy, communications, and advocacy teams collaborated to coordinate an action campaign against a TSSAA proposal to move charter schools from Division 1, the public school division, to Division 8, independent schools. This campaign resulted in a unanimous vote against the proposal from the TSSAA Legislative Council.

**TISA**

TCSC played a key role in advocating for TISA, a new student-based funding formula in Tennessee for public education, and offered detailed feedback for TDOE’s funding framework. Our team’s advocacy ensured a charter-specific weight included in the formula that will allow for a consistent budget item that charter schools can plan around. The Policy Team also participated in the TDOE’s TISA/Charter School working group to provide front and feedback on the development of the rules with TDOE and the State Board.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH FAA AND FEDEX**

The Memphis advocacy team helped distribute nine full scholarships from the Federal Aviation Administration and the FedEx flight training programs for Black girls for National Flight Academy. Students from Memphis Rise, Compass Community Schools, MCSI traditional public schools and DeSoto County Schools attended the training. Our team’s diligent work resulted in further partnership with the FAA and FedEx.

**MEMPHIS ADVOCACY**

The TCSC team participated in over 25 school based, family and staff centered events to provide education about our work and allow interested people to sign on as “advocates” through our new advocacy building platform Phone 2 Action. We have collected over 750+ advocates through this new piece of our advocacy work. July - December 2022.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Programs team was responsible for launching a Membership program for TCSC, with the goal of at least 25% of schools joining in the first year, and have surpassed that goal. In fact, nearly 50% of schools have become members at this point.

**PROGRAM INSIGHT**

TCSC offered trainings throughout the year open to all schools regarding facilities financing and debt service. In addition to hosting 25 PD sessions focusing on ELA, MATH, and School Operations with over 250 participants with 65% school participation.

Nashville Classical Fourth Graders Study Social Studies by Answering Four Questions

While many schools have invested less in or eliminated social studies, Nashville Classical is taking very noticeable steps to ensure its students get the lesson. Forbes Magazine highlighted the school in its Feb. 2022 article, “Want Kids to Learn History? Ask These Four Questions.”

Nashville Classical Director of Knowledge and Curriculum Emma Colonna began researching different ways to teach research-based history to elementary and middle school students a few years ago. She became interested in the Four Question Method as created and documented by two Boston-area high school history teachers, Jonathan Bassett and Gary Shiffman. After participating in one of their trainings, Colonna inquired about using those lessons for elementary students. For three years, the trio worked together to build a foundation that would be accessible to fourth graders and lead them successfully grasping history lessons. Not only are students learning from textbooks, educators are identifying ways for students to think critically so that they are able to apply those lessons to their present circumstances.

“We believed it was really important for kids to have a lot of context and knowledge,” Colonna said. “Without context to understand what is being discussed, they can never have the full meaning of what they are learning.”

In order to fully appreciate the lessons on the Renaissance Period from the 14th through 17th century, students are using the four question method and asking, “What happened? What were they thinking? Why then and there? And What do we think about that?”

The classes have been going well. “It’s been great! The first couple of classes we think about that? What happened? What were they thinking? Why then and there? And What do we think about that? They are learning this because they want to learn so that they are informed citizens and make better choices going forward.”

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Forbes Magazine highlighted the school in its Feb. 2022 article, “Want Kids to Learn History? Ask These Four Questions.”
**Charter Champion Awards**

The Tennessee Charter School Center, along with Hyde Family Foundation, facilitated its inaugural Charter School Awards. Our team announced the results for each of our annual awards Nov. 15-17, 2022. Read below to learn more about the finalists and winners.

Although ongoing caution regarding public health made it impossible to gather in person for the awards, this process allowed us to connect with schools, school leaders, and teachers in a particularly special way. We have enjoyed watching school leaders, teachers and advocates celebrate each other. For a complete listing of Charter Champion Award winners, visit www.tncharterscenter.org/charter-award-winners/

### TCSC’s 2022 Charter Champions were:

- **Charter Champion**
  - Teacher of the Year
    - Eddie Walsh
      - Memphis Griot: Preparatory Charter School (Memphis)
    - Nicole Lattimore
      - Emerald Academy (Knoxville)
    - Jamie Walsh
      - Crosstown High School (Memphis)
  - Finalists: Megan Cohen, Emerald Academy; Shelbi Stanbridge-Monroe, Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy

- **Charter Champion**
  - Advocate of the Year
    - Nicole Lattimore
      - Emerald Academy (Knoxville)
    - Finalists: Megan Cohen, Emerald Academy; Shelbi Stanbridge-Monroe, Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy

- **Charter Champion**
  - Local Policy Champion
    - Sen. John Stevens
      - Mandee Lattimore is an exceptional leader who is incredible
        - with creating systems, developing people and
        - leading academic programs. His strong leadership
        - has consistently placed Valor amongst the top 5%
        - of Tennessee’s charter schools in Tennessee. Valor’s
        - suspension data is the lowest in the school district.
        - Their data for exiting EL Scholars is highest in the school
        - district. It is rare for a school to excel in any of these
        - areas and truly remarkable to excel across several.
    - Finalists: Ted and Kelly Alling, Chattanooga Preparatory School; Jamie Gutter, Valor Flagship (Nashville)

- **Charter Champion**
  - Administrator of the Year
    - Michelle Lyons
      - Purpose Preparatory Academy Prep - Denver (Memphis)
    - Finalists: Michelle Lyons, Purpose Preparatory Academy Prep; John Little, Purpose Preparatory Academy Charter School (Memphis)

- **Charter Champion**
  - Community Impact Project of the Year
    - Dr. Patrick Washington
      - Man Up Teacher Fellowship
    - Finalists: Compass Community Schools - Clean Memphis, Mid South Food Bank, Lichterman Nature Center, and H.A.P.P.Y. - Helping Hands and Hope for Our Neighbors Without Homes

- **Charter Champion**
  - Local Policy Champion
    - Dr. Patrick Washington’s Man Up Teacher Fellowship
    - Finalists: Compass Community Schools - Clean Memphis, Mid South Food Bank, Lichterman Nature Center; Jessica Sallor - Epiphany - Helping Hands and Hope for Our Neighbors Without Homes

Purpose Prep’s mission requires an impeccable academic foundation, most intensively within literacy, measurable at each grade level, and we dedicate the majority of our financial, temporal, and curricular resources towards that goal. Purpose Prep is in the 91st percentile for increasing the percentage of students who are proficient in ELA since the last pre-pandemic assessment in 2019, among the top 25% in the state for this rate of increase. Purpose Preparatory Academy has been named to the Changemaker Charter School List (K-8) for OVERALL recognition, as well as ELA and Math recognition. Purpose Preparatory Academy is the only public charter school in the state recognized in all categories. Purpose Prep is also a 2022 Reward School as designated by the State of Tennessee, an honor the school has received multiple times.

Finalists: Compass Community Schools - Clean Memphis, Mid South Food Bank, Lichterman Nature Center, Jessica Sallor - Epiphany - Helping Hands and Hope for Our Neighbors Without Homes

**Hyde Family Foundation**

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**Impact Report 2022**

Tennessee Charter School Center

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Charter school’s nimble model creates changemakers for children

Despite a worldwide health pandemic that interrupted traditional learning for two years, some 18 public charter schools in Tennessee saw meaningful academic growth in 2021 over 2019. That is significant as many schools across the country spent the last year battling the “COVID slide” where students saw critical learning loss. The Tennessee Charter School Center decided to recognize these accomplishments with its inaugural 2022 Changemaker Charter Schools List for the state. Each school landed in the top 25 percent of all public schools in ELA and/or Math.

“There was a great deal of learning loss last year. As we think about how to best prepare students to come back and catch up, it’s important to acknowledge the nimbleness typical of the state’s public charter schools, allow schools to meet the data-driven needs of each student. Regular assessments showed growth, parents and teachers kept pushing in the work, and it all paid off. We want scholars to want to be here and want to enjoy learning,” said Dr. Martin.

In addition to COVID interrupting traditional student learning, Purpose Preparatory teachers and students also dealt with another natural disaster. A tornado tore through the community weeks before the health pandemic caused students worldwide to begin learning at home. “Our school was eight blocks, but we had scholars,” said Shauna Russell, the school’s director of academics. “We’d been raising funds to help students and checking in with students.” There was spring break, and then school closures followed. “Teachers sprung to action to build virtual models that reflected our values,” Russell said. They focused on literacy, a two teacher model and data-driven instruction. Those strategies continued until students returned to the physical building.

The Purpose Prep team found that there had been a learning loss before students returned to the school building. They’d seen data that showed student ELA and Math scores were the lowest they’d been. School leaders made specific efforts “not to remediate, but to accelerate.” For example, educators knew third graders would have a decline in fluency and reading when they returned. Third and fourth grade teachers worked together so that they’d be prepared to move students forward with comprehension. Students that needed further assistance got extra support through intervention.

“We used PPP funds for professional development so that teachers would know how to intervene and not reduce rigor,” said Russell. “Today, having a student below grade level isn’t that big of a deal.” For example, a student reading at grade level was still on track.

Dr. Washington came and interrupted the assembly. He put a message on the screen that said we were a level five school! I can’t describe how my heart swells when I see the results of our hard work. Parents and teachers kept pushing in the work, and it all paid off. We want scholars to want to be here and want to enjoy learning,” said Martin. “Even adults, the staff, we have to step out of our comfort zone to make things fun.” Emerald Academy is not about fun alone. The energizing cheers and chants are like daily parties with a purpose. The motivation keeps the students focused on lessons and learning, which were especially necessary after COVID interrupted traditional school.

“We are facing a generation that, after COVID, is very easy to skip school to find reasons not to be in school. Bringing the joy factor really is key,” Brimm said. “Bringing the joy factor means reading and comprehension, takes a lot of work and planning. When schools began shutting down in the spring of 2020, Martin said they had one week to prepare teachers to teach virtually. For Emerald, Brimm was ahead of the curve and had electronic devices to distribute quickly to families. Educators and parents worked closely to ensure students did not miss any instructional time in the classroom. Once school doors opened again, Emerald’s board supported leaders in hiring intervention, enrichment and virtual teachers.

All of the planning and hard work paid off. Emerald Academy achievement levels have exceeded pre-pandemic proficiency. “We believe all children can achieve at a high level, and along with the rest of the teachers in the building, come to work every day to make that a reality,” said Megan Cohan, a sixth-grade teacher whose scholars achieved some of the highest results in school history and outperformed the district average. These results show that we are closing the achievement gap and are on the right trajectory to grow these results even further.

“We are very proud of the success our scholars achieved,” said Carla Martin, school director of Emerald Academy. “This is a testament not only to their hard work but also to parents, faculty and staff who are working tirelessly to meet the needs of each student.” Significant gains are critical as we continue to scale and build toward our goal of becoming a Model Charter School.”

Additionally, Emerald Academy was named a Changemaker Charter School by the Tennessee Charter School Center. This distinction is for schools that are in the top 25% of all public schools in the state for an increase in the percent of students proficient over pre-pandemic (2019) scores in English Language Arts (ELA) and/or Math, along with Tennessee Value Added System scores (academic growth) of Level 3 or above in the same areas.

Although the pandemic proved challenging, Martin said educators must continue pushing students. “While it is easy to get bogged down by the challenges that scholars face, education is their way to be successful in life. Those high expectations are what drive us every day.”

Promising Academy Spring Hill Principal Kimdra McBride entered the school auditorium with other educators for a special assembly, but this was no typical gathering.

“In Washington, there was a message on the screen that said we were a level five school! I can’t describe how my heart swells when I see the results of our hard work.”

Promising Academy’s charter states that it can have longer school days, 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. When all students returned to the campus in 2021, leaders knew that teachers would know how to intervene and not reduce rigor,” said Russell. “Today, having a student below grade level isn’t that big of a deal.” For example, a student reading at grade level was still on track.

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Having a Strong Impact on Student Proficiency

Particularly in light of the unique challenges the pandemic presented to all schools in terms of recovering learning losses following the significantly disrupted school years in 2020 and 2021, in reviewing 2022 TNReady data, TCSC zoomed in on schools that not only helped students avoid or recover any learning losses but also found ways to help students achieve beyond even their pre-pandemic proficiency levels.

This year, TCSC announced our first ever K-8 Changemaker Charter Schools List, and will celebrate high school Changemaker Charter Schools in Spring 2023. With this K-8 list based on TNReady results, TCSC is pleased to honor public charter schools that utilized their unique nimbleness and autonomy to support student success in both proficiency and growth particularly during this unique set of school years. There are two different categories of criteria determining honors. The schools honored on this list are:

**ELA AND MATH**
Public charter schools that are in the top 25% of all public schools in the state for the significance of increase over 2019 in proficient students in ELA, Math, or both on the 2021-22 TNReady assessment along with level 3 or higher TVAAS growth in the same subjects

**OVERALL**
Public charter schools performing in the top 25% of all public schools in the state for percentage of proficient students in both ELA and Math on the 2021-22 TNReady assessment along with level 3 or higher TVAAS growth in both subjects.

### 2022 Changemaker Charter Schools (K-8)

#### Overall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>ELA/MATH COMPOSITE TVAAS</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS ELA</th>
<th>ELA PERCENTILE RANK</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS MATH</th>
<th>MATH PERCENTILE RANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valor Flagship Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valor Voyager Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville Classical Charter School</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Preparatory Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary School</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>TPCSC</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ELA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TVAAS (ELA)</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS ELA FY19</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS ELA FY22</th>
<th>% POINT CHANGE</th>
<th>PERCENTILE RANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memphis STEM Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City University School Girls Preparatory</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey Community Schools East Academy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premise Academy - Spring Hill</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Center Academy Hickory Hill Elementary School</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornerstone Prep Denver Campus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Preparatory Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Prep Whitehaven Elementary at Millbranch</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strive Collegiate Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Academy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>HCDE</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TVAAS (ELA)</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS ELA FY19</th>
<th>PERCENT MEETS/EXCEEDS ELA FY22</th>
<th>% POINT CHANGE</th>
<th>PERCENTILE RANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smithson Craighead Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore Community School</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerald Academy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Knox</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Preparatory Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MNPS</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premise Academy - Spring Hill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Memphis

Home to Tennessee’s first charter schools dating back to 2003, Memphis continues to host the largest public charter school sector in the state. Overwhelming parent demand for high-quality public school options and community engagement has spurred this growth. While some schools face performance struggles, most are making a positive difference and are offering quality options to families.

Nashville

The city of Nashville has experienced a population boom in recent years, and a growing need for access to a high-quality public education has followed. Nashville’s public charter schools are reimagining what’s possible in public education and providing parents a new set of quality public school options to consider.

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**SPECIAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

**TVAAS**

Tennessee’s public charter schools achieved high levels of student growth in the 2021-22 school year, particularly as measured by TVAAS, which Tennessee uses to measure growth by value added. In nearly every district, public charter schools saw significantly higher percentages than traditional public schools of students meeting or exceeding expectations at levels 3, 4, and 5. The levels of growth Tennessee’s public charter schools saw in the school year is particularly notable as these schools have identified strategies for success while serving many of the state’s most vulnerable students. Nearly 92% of Tennessee’s Public Charter School students are students of color, with public charter schools serving a greater percentage of economically-disadvantaged students than traditional public schools.

---

**GRADUATION RATE**

**READY GRADUATE RATE**

---

**TVAAS SCORE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charter</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>District Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TVAAS Score</th>
<th>Charter</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>District Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Analyses are based on data provided directly from districts as well as publicly available files. Schools with redacted data are excluded from these numbers. School counts and enrollment reflect FY22 whereas high school outcomes reflect FY23.
Although Chattanooga’s charter sector is small, Hamilton County continues to see a significant demand for more public school options. The sector continues to expand this innovative and effective education model in the community.

**SPECIAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

- Students of Color (Black/Hispanic/Native American)
  - Percentage: 75%
  - Source: Hamilton County Schools, 2022-2023

**GRADUATION RATE**

- Hamilton County Charter Schools: 92%
- District Schools: 88%

**READY GRADUATE RATE**

- Hamilton County Charter Schools: 76%
- District Schools: 37%

**TVAAS**

- Tennessee’s public charter schools achieved high levels of student growth in the 2021-22 school year, particularly as measured by TVAAS, which Tennessee uses to measure growth by value added. In nearly every district, public charter schools saw significantly higher percentages than traditional public schools of students meeting or exceeding expectations at levels 3, 4, and 5. The levels of growth Tennessee’s public charter schools saw in this school year is particularly notable as these schools have identified strategies for success while serving many of the state’s most vulnerable students. Nearly 10% of Tennessee’s Public Charter School students are students of color, with public charter schools serving a greater percentage of economically-disadvantaged students than traditional public schools.

**2040 STUDENTS ENROLLED**

**SPECIAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

- Students of Color (Black/Hispanic/Native American)
  - Percentage: 69%

**TVAAS**

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**450 STUDENTS ENROLLED**
Established in 2011, the Achievement School District (ASD) is the state-run turnaround system implemented to intervene in the state’s lowest-performing schools. With the goal of providing innovative supports and improving student achievement, the ASD leverages charter operators and directly operates a select few schools to support this work. Since its beginning, the district has seen both bright spots and noted challenges in its efforts to improve the quality of these local schools, but the ASD’s most recent approach focuses on collaboration and partnership with local school districts to turn around schools together.

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**TVAAS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>ASD</th>
<th>(Only includes ASD charter schools)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Economically Disadvantaged Students of Color (Black/Hispanic/Native American)**

- **Economically Disadvantaged**
  - ASD: 41%
  - Ready Graduate: 80%

**Graduation Rate**

- **ASD**
  - 2022: 83%
  - FY22: 97%

**Ready Graduate Rate**

- **ASD**
  - 2022: 9%
  - FY22: 8%
The Path Forward

Each year, the Tennessee Charter School Center team strives to ensure that every student in Tennessee has access to a high-quality, public school option. It is vital for the future of Tennessee’s students to encourage innovation and student-focused practices.

The Tennessee Charter School Center’s goal is that by 2026, our state will have 100,000 high-quality charter seats available or approved, and that Tennessee will be the best place in the country to launch a public charter school.

In 2023, the Tennessee Charter School Center’s policy team is focused on:

1. Ensuring facilities funding and equitable facilities access for public charter schools
2. Strengthening the role of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission to ensure high quality authorizing practices across the state
3. Protecting against any efforts to limit or decrease the ability for charter schools to operate across the state
4. Protecting public charter school quality and transparency
5. Adding clarity to existing charter school law to meet best practices regarding charter school enrollment lotteries, grade band expansion in line with authorizing district bands, and allowing authorizers to provide corrective action plans when challenges arise

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