



BEST FOR
ALL

We will set all students on a path to success.

An Overview of Nonpublic, Home & Virtual Schools

April 7, 2022

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Division of Choice, Tennessee Department of Education



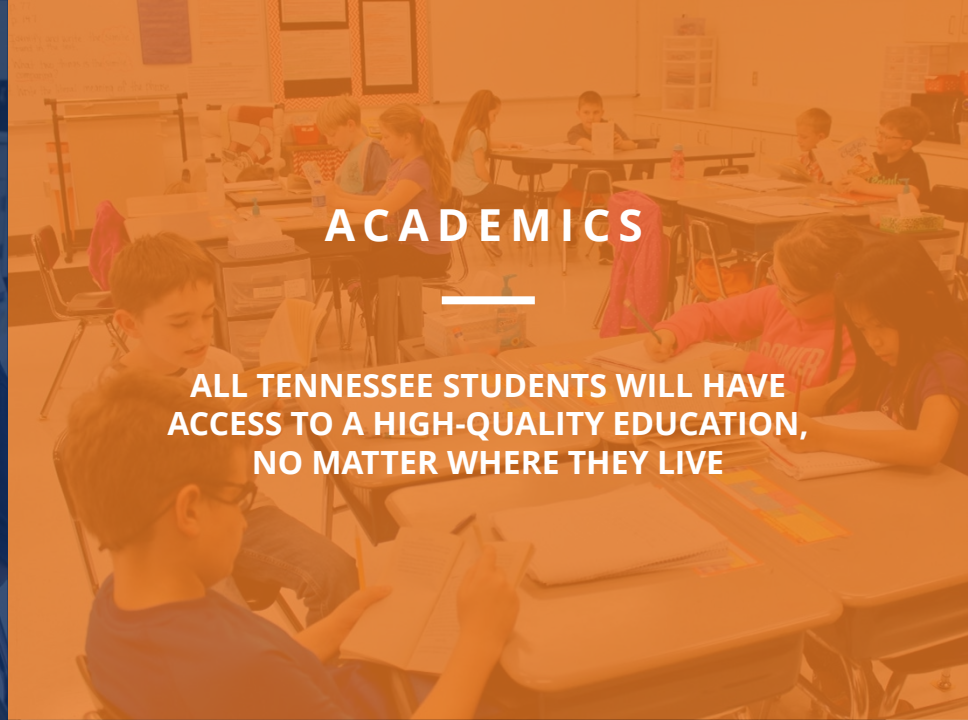
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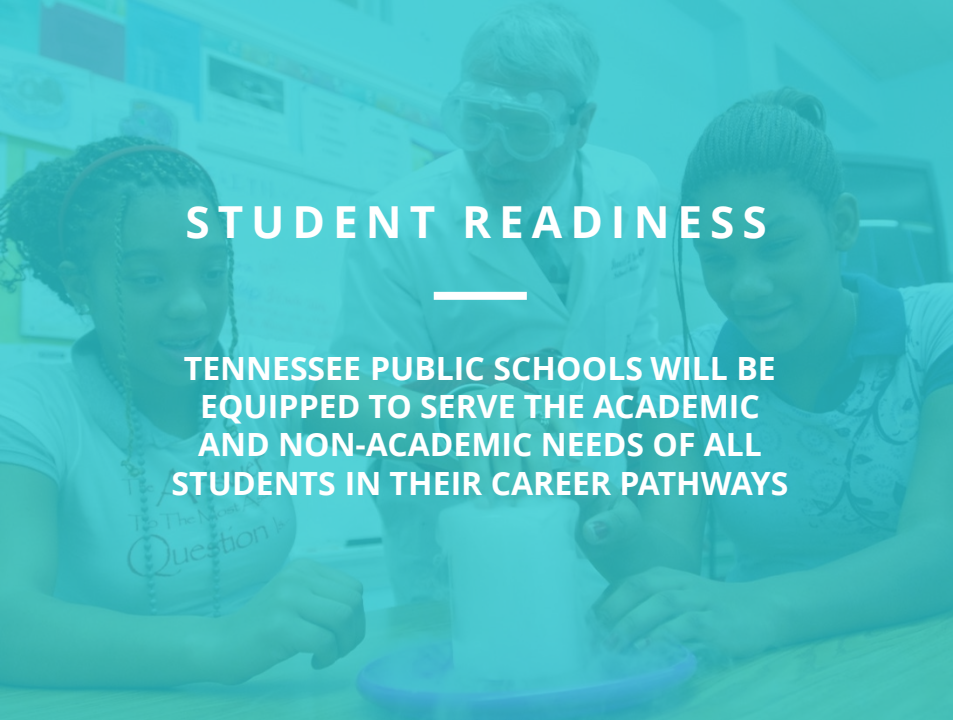
ACADEMICS

ALL TENNESSEE STUDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE



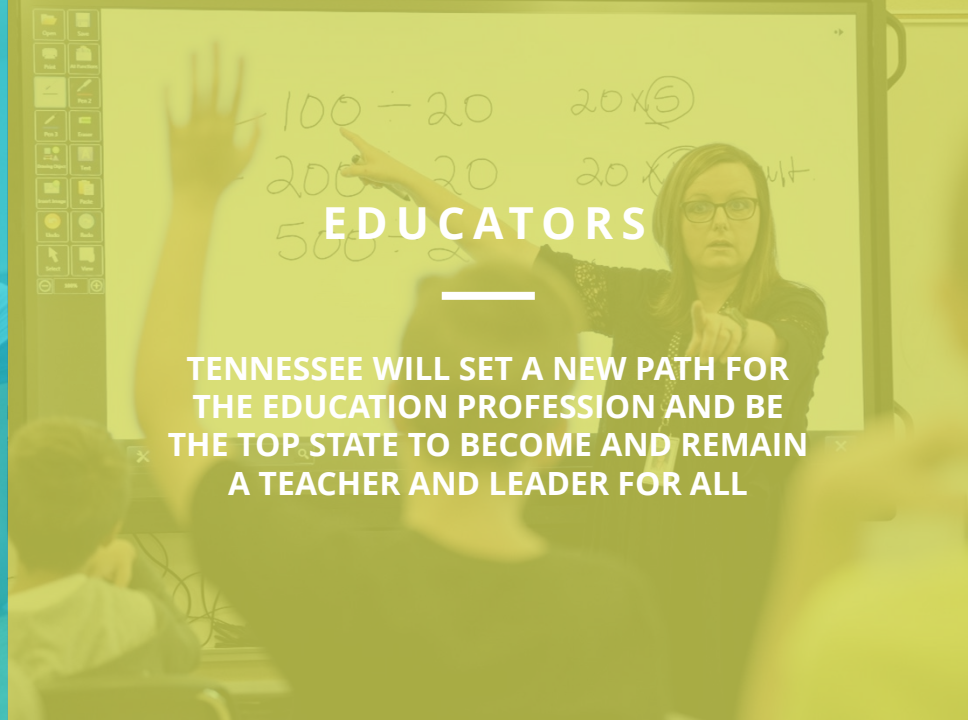
STUDENT READINESS

TENNESSEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BE EQUIPPED TO SERVE THE ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS IN THEIR CAREER PATHWAYS



EDUCATORS

TENNESSEE WILL SET A NEW PATH FOR THE EDUCATION PROFESSION AND BE THE TOP STATE TO BECOME AND REMAIN A TEACHER AND LEADER FOR ALL



Agenda



- Nonpublic Schools
 - Category descriptions
 - Statutory Requirements
 - TDOE Oversight
- Home Schools
 - Home schooling paths in Tennessee
 - Reporting and Education Information System (EIS) coding
 - FAQs from parents and homeschool coordinators

Agenda (continued)

- Virtual Schools
 - Virtual education laws and regulations
 - Process of opening or changing a virtual school
 - EIS coding for virtual education
 - Attendance requirements for virtual education
 - Reporting requirements for virtual schools



Nonpublic Schools



Nonpublic School Quick Facts

- There are five categories of nonpublic schools in Tennessee. [SBE Rule 0520-07-02](#)
- Currently there are 595 nonpublic schools in Tennessee.
- Nonpublic schools currently serve more than 130,000 students in Tennessee.
- Nonpublic school enrollment has more than doubled in the past 5 years.



What Laws and Rules Govern Nonpublic Education in Tennessee?



Tennessee State Statutes

- *T.C.A. § 49-50-801: Church-related schools*
- *T.C.A. § 49-50-802: Nonpublic school vaccinations*
- *T.C.A. § 49-6-3001: School age, Entrance, Withdrawal*
- *T.C.A. § 49-6-3007: List of students, Attendance*

Tennessee State Board of Education (SBE) Rules

- [**SBE Rule 0520-07-01**](#): *Non-Public Schools Administrative Rules*
- [**SBE Rule 0520-07-02**](#): *Non-Public School Categories*

Nonpublic Schools Definitions

“**Nonpublic school**” means a church-related school, home school, or private school.

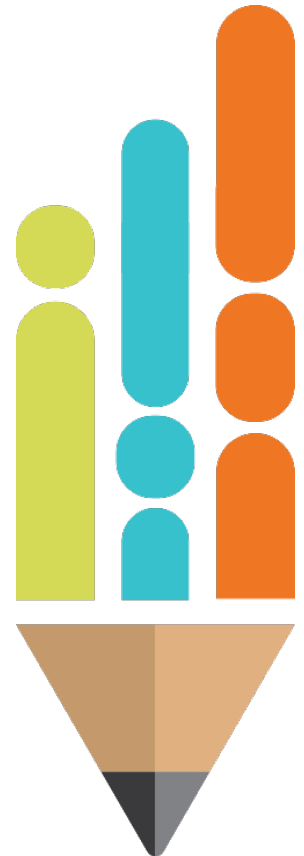
“**Church-related school**” means a school operated by denominational, parochial, or other bona fide church organizations that are required to meet the standards of accreditation or membership of the following:

- Tennessee Association of Christian Schools
- Association of Christian Schools International
- Tennessee Association of Independent Schools
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Tennessee Association of Non-Public Academic Schools
- Tennessee Association of Church Related Schools
- Association of Classical and Christian Schools
- Tennessee Alliance of Church Related Schools
- a school affiliated with Accelerated Christian Education, Inc.



Nonpublic Schools Definitions

- “**Home school**” means a school conducted or directed by a parent or parents or a legal guardian or guardians for their own children.
- “**Private**” means a school accredited by, or a member of, an organization or association approved by the state board of education as an organization accrediting or setting academic requirements in schools, or that has been approved by the state, or is in the future approved by the commissioner in accordance with rules promulgated by the state board of education.



Nonpublic Schools: Category Descriptions



- **Category I:** Schools approved by the Tennessee Department of Education. These schools must follow many of the same rules and regulations as public schools.
 - **Category I-SP:** Special purpose schools that provide education for students while they receive short-term medical or transient care.
- **Category II:** Schools approved by an accrediting agency that has been approved by the Tennessee State Board of Education.
- **Category III:** Schools that are regionally accredited.
- **Category IV:** Schools which are church-related and exempt from regulations regarding faculty, textbooks and curriculum. Category IV schools can be home school umbrellas and brick and mortar schools.
- **Category V:** Schools acknowledged for operation by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Category I Nonpublic Schools



- Schools are required to have licensed teachers to provide instruction; in Category I-SP schools, at least one (1) teacher must have an endorsement in special education.
- Category I and I-SP schools must submit annual compliance reports to the Division of School Choice addressing teacher licensure, school calendars, and school data information.
- The Tennessee Department of Education monitors Category I & I-SP schools.
- There are 50 category I and 54 category I-SP nonpublic schools serving 5,177 students across Tennessee.

Category II Nonpublic Schools



- Nine accrediting agencies have been approved by the State Board of Education. These approved agencies can be found on the Tennessee Department of Education [nonpublic schools' website](#).
 - Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
 - Association of Classical & Christian Schools, Inc.
 - Catholic Diocese of Nashville (CDN)
 - Christian Schools International Accreditation Services (CSI)
 - Mississippi Private School Association (MPSA)
 - National Lutheran School Accreditation
 - Southern Union Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church (SDA)
 - Tennessee Association of Christian Schools (TACS)
 - Tennessee Association of Nonpublic Academic Schools (TANAS)

Category II Nonpublic Schools

- There are 121 approved Category II nonpublic schools serving 31,392 students across Tennessee.
- Category II accrediting agencies are approved on a five-year cycle.
 - The last application cycle occurred in 2018-19. The period of approval for those agencies spans school years 2019-20 through 2023-24.
 - The next application cycle will occur in 2023-24.



Category III Nonpublic Schools



- There are eleven approved Category III accrediting agencies. These can be found in Tennessee State Board of Education Rule [0520-07-02](#).
 - Cognia (formally AdvancED)
 - Cognia (Formally Northwest Accreditation Commission [NWAC])
 - Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS)
 - Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)
 - National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
 - National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPISA)
 - New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
 - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School improvement (SACS-CASI)
 - Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS)
 - The Northern Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA-CASI)
 - Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS-WASC)

Category III Nonpublic Schools

- Category III accredited online schools are another option for home school parents. This list is located on the Tennessee Department of Education [home school webpage](#).
- There are 171 accredited Category III nonpublic schools serving 65,240 students across Tennessee.



Category IV Nonpublic Schools



- There are 7 approved category IV membership agencies.
 - Accelerated Christian Education (ACE)
 - Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
 - Association of Classical & Christian Schools, Inc.
 - Tennessee Association of Christian Schools (TACS)
 - Tennessee Association of Church-Related Schools (TACRS)
 - Tennessee Alliance of Church-Related Schools
 - Tennessee Association of Nonpublic Academic Schools (TANAS)
- There are 251 recognized Category IV nonpublic schools serving 80,983 students across Tennessee.
- Category IV nonpublic schools may be home school umbrellas or brick-and-mortar schools.

Category V Nonpublic Schools



- All teachers must have a bachelor's degree.
- Category V schools must submit annual compliance reports addressing areas such as teacher credentials, school calendar, school data, and assurances.
- Category V schools must administer a nationally standardized achievement test for grades 3 through 12.
- The Tennessee Department of Education monitors Category V schools.
- There are 33 acknowledged Category V nonpublic schools serving 689 students across Tennessee.

Statutory Requirements



- All nonpublic schools must offer the same amount of instruction as public schools (6 ½ hour school days and 180 instructional days). Kindergarten instruction must be at least four (4) hours.
- Students enrolling in a nonpublic school must meet the same minimum age requirements as for public schools (students must be five years old before August 15 to begin Kindergarten).
- Transfers to public schools:
 - Category I, II, or III nonpublic school students may transfer back into public schools without loss of credit for completed work.
 - Students who transfer from categories IV and V nonpublic schools back into public schools may be tested for placement.

Required Yearly Nonpublic Reports



- Category I and I-SP schools must submit annually to the Division of Choice:
 - July 15: 200-day accountability report.
 - October 1:
 - T file (teacher file),
 - S file (student file), and
 - Nonpublic school directory data form.
 - December 15: Compliance report.

Required Yearly Nonpublic Reports

- Category V schools must submit annually by October 1 to the Division of Choice:
 - Category V nonpublic school reporting form and
 - Nonpublic school directory data form.
- Category II, III, and IV schools are not required to send annual reports to the Tennessee Dept. Of Education, Division of Choice.
- All nonpublic schools are required to submit the [Nonpublic Reporting Form](#) to the director of schools, where each student resides, within thirty (30) days after the beginning of the school year. T.C.A. § 49-6-3007.
- All forms are located on the Tennessee Department of Education's [nonpublic webpage](#).



Home Schools



Home School Quick Facts

- There are three (3) types of home school options for parents in Tennessee.
 - Independent Home School
 - Accredited Online School (falls under nonpublic category III)
 - Church-related Umbrella (falls under nonpublic category IV)
- Currently there are 13,645 independently home-schooled students across Tennessee.
- Each public and special school district has a designated home school coordinator.



Independent Home School



Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3050:

- Parent(s) are required to submit the following to the local director of schools or designee (Local home school coordinators).
 - Intent to home school form
 - High School Diploma, GED, or HiSET
 - Immunization records. T.C.A. § 49-6-5001
- Parent(s) are required to home school at least four (4) hours a day, 180 days a year.

Independent Home School



- Parents are required to submit the intent to home school form yearly to their local home school coordinator.
- If parents place their students back into public school, the principal, at their discretion, can administer an evaluation test for placement.
- Diplomas issued by home school parent(s) are recognized by state and local government entities. T.C.A. § 1-3-118

Accredited Online Schools



- Parents must submit evidence to the LEA's home school coordinator showing their student(s) are enrolled in one of the approved schools located on the [Category III Accredited Online School List](#).
- If parent(s) decide to transfer their student(s) back into public school, the credits from the accredited online school will transfer. [SBE Rule 0520-07-01](#)
- Diplomas issued by category III accredited online schools are fully-recognized diplomas.

Church-Related Umbrella



T.C.A. § 49-50-801

- Parents may choose to enroll their children in a category IV church-related umbrella school which would allow them to educate their children at home. These umbrella schools are approved by one of the membership agencies listed in law and regulation. The Tennessee Department of Education [nonpublic schools' website](#) provides a list of nonpublic schools with approved home school umbrellas.
- Parents teaching students in grades 9-12 in a home school umbrella school must possess a high school diploma, GED, or HiSet. T.C.A. § 49-6-3050
- Diplomas issued by church-related umbrellas are recognized by state and local government entities. T.C.A. § 1-3-118

Questions from Home School Coordinators and Parents



- Can a step-parent home school their child?
 - Yes, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3050, a step-parent may home school their children if the step-parent holds legal guardianship of the children.

- Is a parent with a special education diploma eligible to independently home school their child?
 - Yes, a special education diploma is acceptable as the law does not currently limit it to a regular high school diploma. Homeschooling eligibility requirements can be found on the [TDOE Homeschool website](#).

Questions from Home School Coordinators and Parents (Cont.)



- Can parents home school their student(s) year-round?
 - Yes, if the parent meets the minimum attendance requirements pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3050 which are to provide instruction for at least four (4) hours per day for the same number of instructional days as are required by state law for public schools (180 days).

- Is the covid vaccine required for homeschooled students?
 - No, Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3050, parents must provide proof of vaccination as established in T.C.A. § 49-6-5001. This statute does not require that student receive a vaccination for COVID-19.

Questions from Home School Coordinators and Parents (Cont.)



- Can parents place their student part-time in a nonpublic school and part-time in independent home school?
 - No, students cannot enroll in both an independent home school and a nonpublic school.

- Can grandparents home school their grandchildren?
 - Yes, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3050, a grandparent may home school their grandchildren if the grandparent holds legal guardianship of the children.

Questions from Home School Coordinators and Parents (Cont.)



- Are homeschooled students eligible for Tennessee Scholarships?
 - Yes, parents can contact Robert Biggers (Robert.Biggers@tn.gov) or Jana McCall (Jana.McCall@tn.gov) with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) for more information.

- What recourse does an LEA have if parents do not submit their attendance calendars or intent to home school forms (yearly)?
 - T.C.A. § 49-6-3006 states that enforcement of attendance laws are the responsibility of the local board of education and the designated attendance supervisor. Families participating in non-public school options, including home school, must comply with these laws and could be subject to consequences as described in T.C.A. § 49-6-3009.

Questions from Home School Coordinators and Parents (Cont.)



- Are student(s) required to be Tennessee residents to homeschool in Tennessee?
 - Yes, for independent home school. If the student is a legal resident in another state, then that state's laws would apply.

- Are home school and category IV church related school diplomas recognized by Tennessee state agencies?
 - Yes, pursuant to T.C.A. § 1-3-118, a high school diploma awarded by a school as defined by § 49-50-801 or § 49-6-3050 in recognition of completion of secondary educational requirements shall be considered by all departments, agencies, commissions or other such entities of state and local government as having all the rights and privileges of a high school diploma awarded by a public school system.

Virtual Education





Virtual Education Quick Facts

- Tennessee has 57 virtual schools spanning 41 counties and 49 districts.
- Enrollment as of October 1st is 17,264 as compared to 4,037 in 2019-2020.
- Enrollment increased over 300% from 2019-2020 to 2021-2022.
- Number of schools increased from 17 to 57 between 2019 and 2021.
- Most Tennessee LEAs have implemented a virtual education program.

How is Virtual Education Defined?



- **Virtual School:** A public school in which the school uses technology in order to deliver a significant portion of instruction to its students via the internet in a virtual or remote setting.
- **Virtual Education Program:** A course or series of courses offered through the use of technology by an LEA or public charter school to provide students a broader range of educational opportunities, including any of the following:
 1. Academic remediation or enrichment, or providing students access to a wider range of courses.
 2. Continuity of educational service for students who are homebound pursuant to [0520-01-02-.10](#) or [0520-01-09-.07](#).
 3. Continuity of educational service for students who are quarantined pursuant to [0520-01-13-.01](#).
 4. Continuity of educational service for students enrolled in an alternative school pursuant to [0520-01-02-.09](#).

What Laws and Rules Govern Virtual Education in Tennessee?



Virtual Schools

- *Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-16-201 – 49-16-216*
 - Tennessee General Assembly passed Public Chapter 492 the “Virtual Public Schools Act” in 2011.
- *SBE Rule [0520-01-03-.05\(1\)](#)*

Virtual Education Programs


- *Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-16-101 – 49-16-105*
 - Tennessee General Assembly passed Public Chapter 1096 in 2008.
- *SBE Rule [0520-01-03-.05\(2\)](#)*

Opening a Virtual School

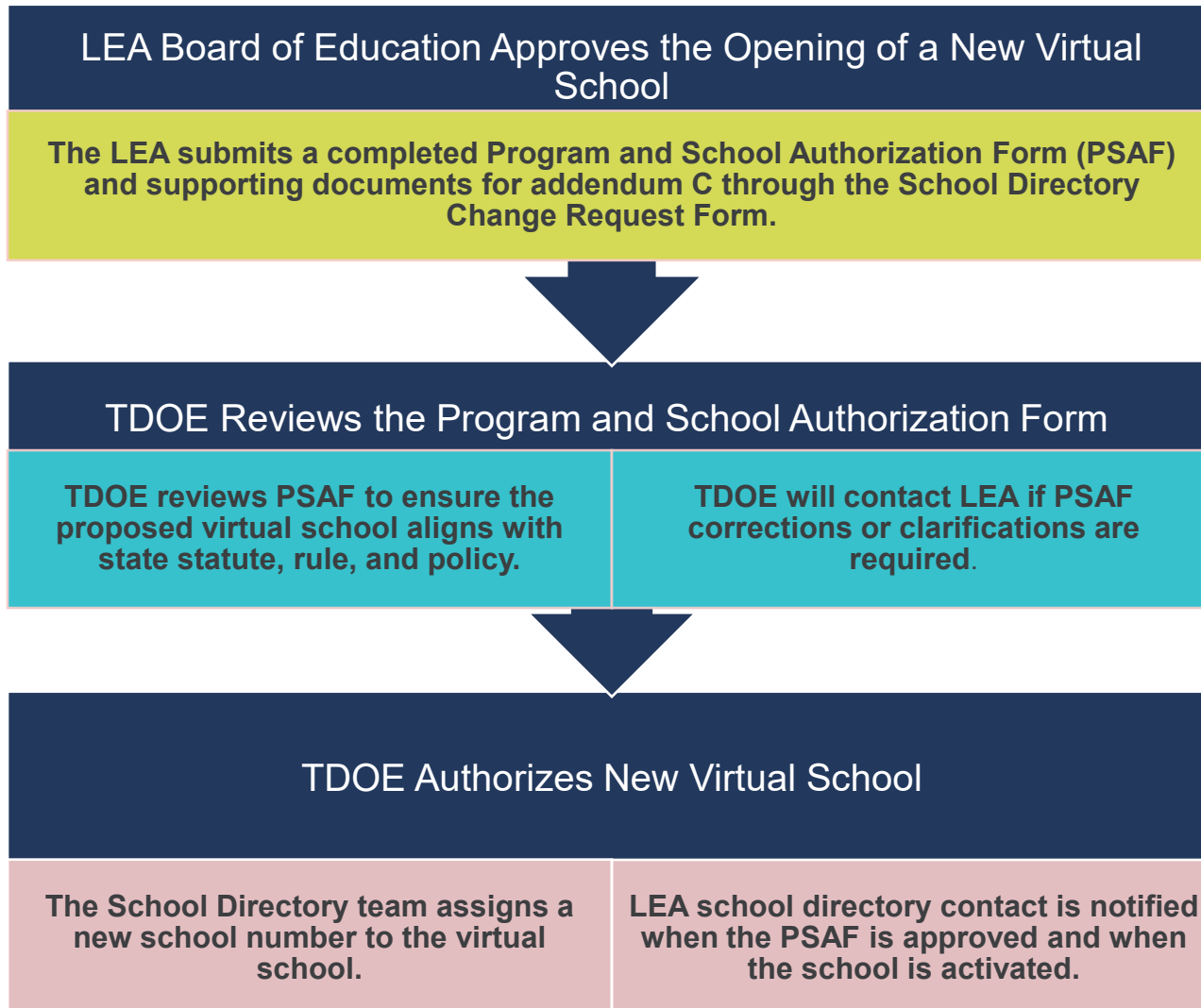




Timelines

- The window for submitting the PSAF to open or change a virtual school is currently open and will remain open until June 1.
 - Standard turnaround time is 10 business days to review a submitted PSAF and provide an initial response.
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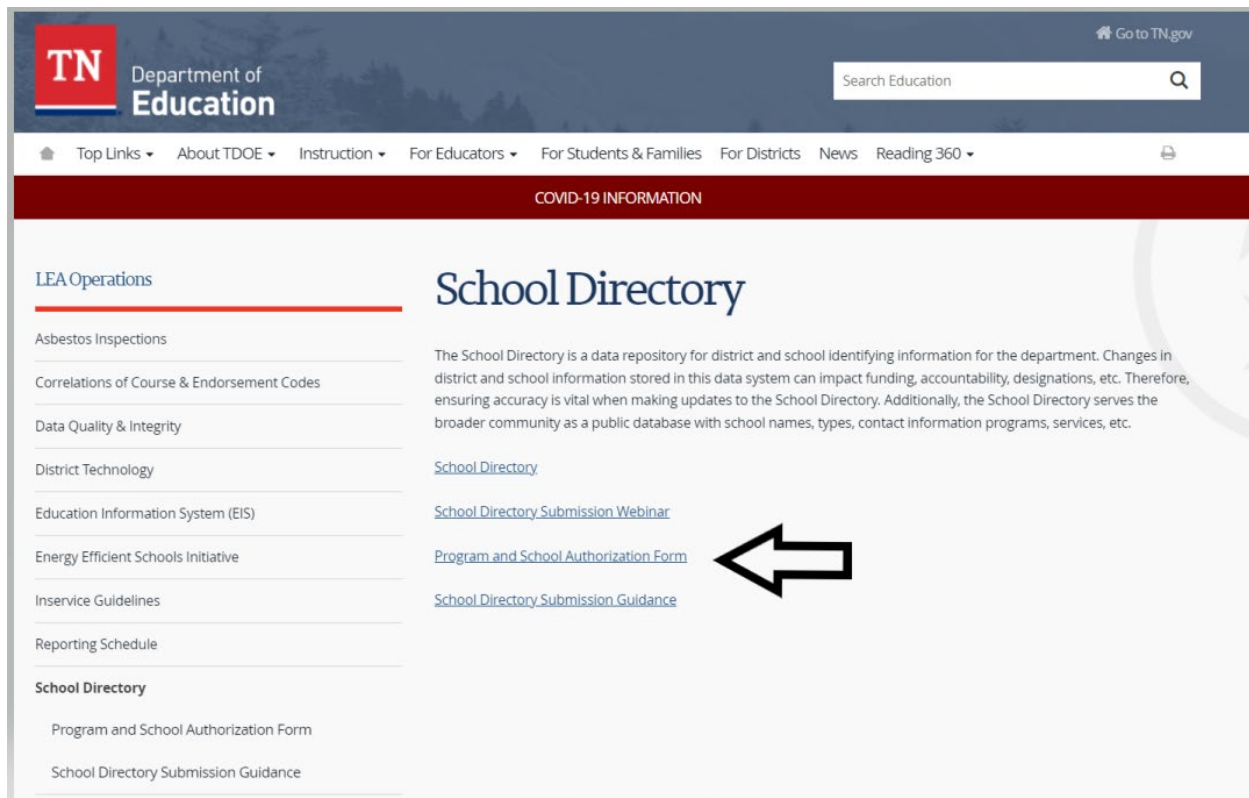
Overview of Opening a New Virtual School



Finding the PSAF

You can find the PSAF and School Directory Change Request Form here:

- <https://www.tn.gov/education/lea-operations/school-directory.html>

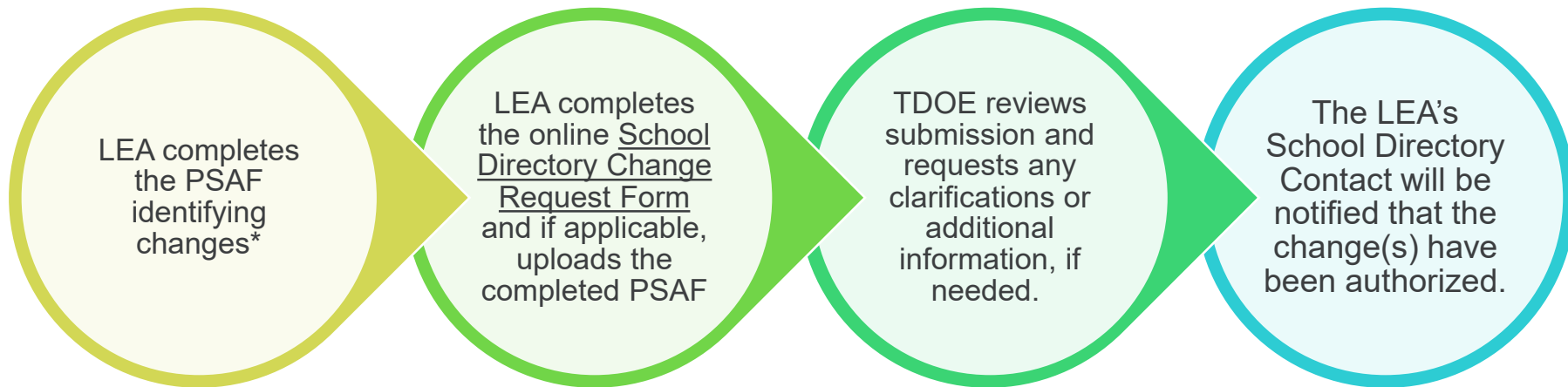


The screenshot shows the TN Department of Education website. The header includes the TN logo, the text 'Department of Education', a search bar, and a 'Go to TN.gov' link. A navigation menu contains links for 'Top Links', 'About TDOE', 'Instruction', 'For Educators', 'For Students & Families', 'For Districts', 'News', and 'Reading 360'. A red banner below the navigation menu reads 'COVID-19 INFORMATION'. The main content area is titled 'School Directory' and includes a description: 'The School Directory is a data repository for district and school identifying information for the department. Changes in district and school information stored in this data system can impact funding, accountability, designations, etc. Therefore, ensuring accuracy is vital when making updates to the School Directory. Additionally, the School Directory serves the broader community as a public database with school names, types, contact information programs, services, etc.' Below the description are four links: 'School Directory', 'School Directory Submission Webinar', 'Program and School Authorization Form', and 'School Directory Submission Guidance'. A large black arrow points to the 'Program and School Authorization Form' link. On the left side of the page, there is a sidebar menu with categories: 'LEA Operations' (with a red underline), 'Asbestos Inspections', 'Correlations of Course & Endorsement Codes', 'Data Quality & Integrity', 'District Technology', 'Education Information System (EIS)', 'Energy Efficient Schools Initiative', 'Inservice Guidelines', 'Reporting Schedule', and 'School Directory'. Under the 'School Directory' category, there are two links: 'Program and School Authorization Form' and 'School Directory Submission Guidance'.

Changing a Virtual School



Making Changes to a Virtual School



** Only applicable to changes that require TDOE approval.*



Changes that Do Not Require TDOE Approval

- District/school leader name
 - School email address
 - School website
 - School physical address or mailing address
 - School phone or fax number
-
- LEA must use the School Directory Change Request Form to notify the TDOE of the requested change.
https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/school_directory_change_request



Changes That Do Require TDOE Approval

- School name change
 - Grade configuration (adding or removing grades)
 - Up to three grades can be added or removed each school year.
 - School openings or closings
-
- Complete the following sections of the Program and School Authorization Form (PSAF).
 - Complete the following sections:
 - Request Checklist
 - District Information
 - Assurances
 - Request Type and Applicable Sections

 - Submit through the School Directory Change Request Form

Overview of Change Types and Deadlines



Type of Change	Needs TDOE Authorization	Required Forms	Submission Deadlines
School name change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	June 1 st of each year
School, instructional, or program type change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
School grade change	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
School openings	✓	PSAF, Addendum C docs*, & SDCRF	
School closings	✓	PSAF & SDCRF	
District and school contact changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/school leader name • Email address • Website • Physical address • Phone number 		SDCRF	Can be submitted throughout the year

Note: PSAF – Program and School Authorization Form; SDCRF – School Directory Change Request Form

***Addendum C documents are only needed when applying to open a virtual school**

Virtual Education Coding and Reporting



EIS Coding for Virtual Education



Attendance Coding – 049 Record

- Use the same EIS codes as a brick-and-mortar school for normal attendance tracking and reporting.
- Use the “D - Distance Learning/Virtual Classrooms Due to Quarantine” code when students pivot to remote/virtual learning due to COVID-19.
- There is no need to withdraw or drop a student from their courses/classes when students pivot from traditional instruction in a brick-and-mortar school to temporary remote/virtual instruction due to COVID-19.

EIS Coding for Virtual Education



Teaching Method Coding – 030 Record

- Codes for School Year 2021-2022
 - **O - Online Course:** class section is taught primarily or entirely online.
 - **D - Distance Learning Course:** a course offered primarily or entirely in-person within a brick-and-mortar location taught by an instructor from outside the student’s school of primary enrollment. Distance learning courses are not online/virtual; however, students may leverage video/teleconferencing technology while present in a brick-and-mortar setting.
 - **T - Traditional:** a course offered in-person within the brick-and-mortar school that holds the student’s primary enrollment.

EIS Coding for Virtual Education



Teaching Method Coding – 030 Record

- Codes for School Year 2022-2023
 - **O - Online Course:** No longer used as of 2022-2023
 - **D - Distance Learning Course:** a course offered primarily or entirely in-person within a brick-and-mortar location taught by an instructor from outside the student’s school of primary enrollment. Distance learning courses are not online/virtual; however, students may leverage video/teleconferencing technology while present in a brick-and-mortar setting.
 - **T - Traditional:** a course offered in-person within the brick-and-mortar school that holds the student’s primary enrollment.

EIS Coding for Virtual Education



Teaching Method Coding – 030 Record

- Codes for School Year 2022-2023
 - **A - Asynchronous Virtual Course:** a fully online/virtual course in which a student can progress independently through the coursework and does not require students to attend regularly scheduled (daily/every other day) virtual classes with a teacher.
 - **B - Bisynchronous Virtual Course:** a fully online/virtual course utilizing a mixture of asynchronous and synchronous instruction.
 - **H - Hybrid Virtual Course (utilized by a public virtual school only):** a course that offers primarily virtual instruction (asynchronous, synchronous, or bisynchronous) and requires students to periodically attend class in-person within a brick-and-mortar location.
 - **S - Synchronous Virtual Course:** a fully online/virtual course in which a student can progress independently through the coursework and requires students to attend regularly scheduled (daily/every other day) virtual classes with a teacher.

Attendance Reporting for Virtual Education



Attendance

Schools operating as a virtual school or offering a virtual education program are responsible for complying with all compulsory attendance requirements and must monitor and report daily attendance.

Methods for confirming student attendance:

- Students participating in a phone call (video/audio call) with a teacher, with parent or legal guardian support as appropriate for the age of the student;
- Students participating in synchronous virtual instruction;
- Students completing work in a learning management system;
- Students submitting work via hard-copy or virtual formats; or
- Other method the LEA or public charter school identifies as appropriate.

Enrollment Report



- Virtual schools must notify LEAs of the enrollment of students residing within another LEA's jurisdiction by August 1 each year.
- After the initial 8/1 report, virtual schools must report new enrollments within two weeks of the students' enrollment.
 - Confirming the student's home LEA upon enrollment will facilitate this reporting.
 - LEA email addresses and physical addresses are listed in the [Tennessee School Directory](#).

Virtual School Monitoring Report



- LEAs must monitor their virtual school on a yearly basis.
- The TDOE will provide resources and training to complete this monitoring process in the upcoming months.
- LEAs will begin monitoring their virtual schools using the TDOE provided framework in the Fall of 2022-23.
- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-16-213 and SBE Rule [0520-01-03-.05\(b\)\(6\)](#) outline these requirements.

Resources



Statute and Regulation Resources

- **Tennessee Code – Lexis Law Link:**
<https://www.tncourts.gov/Tennessee%20Code>
- **Tennessee State Board of Education Rules, Policies, and Guidance:**
<https://www.tn.gov/sbe/rules--policies-and-guidance.html>

TDOE & SBE Websites

- **TDOE Nonpublic Schools Website:** <https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/nonpublic-schools.html>
- **TDOE Home School Website:** <https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/home-schooling-in-tn.html>
- **TDOE Virtual School Website:** <https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/virtual-schools.html>

Questions?

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How was the session?

**Please take a moment and complete
the Nonpublic, Home, and Virtual
School Overview survey.**



https://bit.ly/TDASC_CHOICE

