



Accountability

Summary of New Accountability Hold Harmless Law

for Legislative and Advocacy Partners

On January 21, 2021, during the 1st Extraordinary Session of the 112th General Assembly, the Tennessee General Assembly took bold action by passing the Accountability Hold Harmless Law (SB7001/HB7003) to hold teachers, students, and schools harmless from negative consequences resulting from the 2020-21 TCAP assessments.

While recognizing the foundational role that high expectations for our students and teachers, Tennessee-specific academic standards, standards-aligned assessments, and accountability have played in improving student outcomes in Tennessee, the COVID-19 pandemic has created the need for common-sense flexibilities regarding educator evaluations and school and district accountability.

The General Assembly extended hold harmless provisions from the 2019-2020 school year to the 2020-2021 school year regarding:

- **Student growth composites:** Excludes student growth data generated by the 2020-2021 TCAP assessments from an educator’s evaluation, unless such inclusion results in a higher final evaluation score for the educator.
- **Alternative growth model evaluations for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects, and pre-K and kindergarten portfolio/portfolio alternatives:** The state shall not require educators in untested grades or subjects to be evaluated using alternative growth models or the pre-k and kindergarten portfolio or portfolio alternatives. If district decides to evaluate educators in non-tested grades and subjects, the evaluations shall not be used in an educator’s final evaluation, unless such use results in a higher final evaluation.
- **Incorporation of TCAP scores in student grades:** For the 2020-2021 school year, each LEA may choose the percentage within the range of 0% to no more than 25% that scores from the TCAP assessments shall count on a student’s final grade.
- **School-level accountability:** Student performance and growth data generated by TCAP assessments administered in the 2020-2021 school year shall not be used to assign a letter grade to schools, to identify a school as a priority school, or to place a school in the achievement school district, so long as the district administers assessments to at least 80% of eligible students or receives a waiver from the Commissioner of Education.