

MARCH 2024



# Quality Charter Review Recommendation Report 2024

Evaluated By

**Tennesseans for Student Success**

 [tnstudentsuccess](https://www.facebook.com/tnstudentsuccess)

 [@tnstudent](https://twitter.com/tnstudent)

 [www.tnsuccess.org](http://www.tnsuccess.org)

## Tennesseans for Student Success

P.O. Box 680231  
Franklin, TN 37068

For more information about the content of this document, please contact:

[info@tnsuccess.org](mailto:info@tnsuccess.org)

Visit our website at: [www.tnsuccess.org](http://www.tnsuccess.org)

This document was adapted from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Charter School Application Recommendation Report. NACSA is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of public education by improving the performance of charter school organizations. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers and education leaders interested in increasing the number of high-quality schools and improving student outcomes.



# Contents

## This recommendation report includes the following:

<b>Overview</b>	Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.
<b>Recommendation</b>	A fact-based assessment determining if the application meets the criteria for authorization by the local school district including an outline of strengths and needed improvements. <b>A recommendation for approval requires a score of Meets or Exceeds Standard in all three primary application sections.</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>Analysis of the application is informed by the published Tennessee Department of Education Charter Application Scoring Rubric across the three primary application sections:</p> <p>Academic Plan Design and Capacity: School mission and vision, enrollment summary, academic focus and plan, academic performance standards, high school graduation and postsecondary readiness, assessments, school calendar and schedule, special populations, school culture and discipline, recruitment and enrollment, parent and community engagement and support.</p> <p>Operations Plan and Capacity: Governance, start-up plan, facilities, personnel/human capital, professional development, insurance, transportation, food service, additional operations, and waivers.</p> <p>Financial Plan and Capacity: Planning and budget worksheet, and budget narrative.</p>
<b>Rating Characteristics</b>	<p>The following definitions guide evaluator ratings:</p> <p><b>Meets or Exceeds Standard:</b> Responses address the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the application's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.</p> <p><b>Partially Meets Standard:</b> Responses meet the criteria in some respects but lack detail and/or require additional information in one or more areas.</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Standard:</b> Responses are undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrate lack of preparation; is unsuited to the mission of the authorizer or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.</p>



# OVERVIEW

## Sponsor Name

Encompass Community School

## Proposed School Name

Encompass Community School

## Proposed Location

Whites Creek or Pearl Cohn Cluster  
Nashville, TN

## Board Members

Megan Garry (ex officio), Corey Hammonds, Jennifer Hill, Kendra Smith, Johanna Staubitz Ph.D., Serena Sayles, Thomas Rose

## Proposed School Leader

Megan Garry

## Enrollment Projections

Grade Level	Year 1 2025-26	Year2 2026-27	Year 3 2027-28	Year4 2028-29	Year 5 2029-30	At Capacity
K	42	52	52	52	52	52
1	21	52	52	52	52	52
2	21	26	52	52	52	52
3	21	26	26	52	52	52
4		26	26	26	52	52
5			26	26	26	52
6				26	26	52
7					26	52
8						52
9						
10						
11						
12						
<b>Totals</b>	105	182	234	286	338	468

## Anticipated Student Demographics

**Enrollment Demographics:** 76-88% minority students

## Special Population Projections:

18% SWD, 13% ELL, 75% FRL

## Mission and Vision

*Mission: At Encompass Community School we leverage a mastery-based, student-centric approach to ensure all students thrive academically and personally.*

*Vision: All students will receive an educational experience tailored to their strengths and growth areas.*

## Educational Model/Instructional Design

Mastery-based learning, whole-child development, community school model



## RECOMMENDATION: Approve

---

### Application Strengths Summary

- The application demonstrates a strong argument for the proposed enrollment targets given the chronic low academic performance, in particular for students identified as minority and economically disadvantaged, the large percentage of students opting out of current zoned school options in the target area, and future predicted population growth.
- The school will offer individualized, mastery-based learning with a focus on whole-child development.
- The applicant and a community engagement team composed of parents, received input from 280 families and community members about the proposed school by knocking on doors, staffing information booths, hosting listening sessions, and soliciting feedback.
- The school will measure growth and achievement across four domains (academics, social-emotional learning, community engagement and partnership, and parent/caregiver engagement) and the application contains a robust set of goals, metrics, and data analysis cycles to monitor progress.
- Teachers will receive continuous coaching and professional development to enable them to fluidly and consistently teach, gather data on mastery, and make decisions on how to tailor their instruction to each individual student.
- There is a clear outline of the full continuum of services that will be available to support students with disabilities in their least restrictive environment.
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices (RP) will build the foundation of the school's culture.
- The application includes board officer roles and committee descriptions to support the effective oversight of the school.
- Teachers will receive explicit training to develop key skills and mindsets around school culture, receive personalized support and coaching around fidelity of implementation, and analyze outcomes to identify if adjustments are necessary.
- Transportation through a private transport company will be available to all students who need it and the budget assumes 75% of students will participate.

### Application Improvements Summary

- While the application explains the process and responsible parties for vendors selection, it does not yet identify potential vendors for transportation, food services, nursing, or property management.
- The application did not address waivers the school would seek, if any.



# ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

---

## MEETS OR EXCEEDS STANDARD

### Summary

Encompass Community School will serve 468 K-8 students, at capacity, in the Whites Creek and Pearl Cohn Clusters in Nashville, Tennessee. The school will use Morningside Model of Generative Instruction (MMGI) to implement a mastery-based and personalized educational model with an emphasis on whole-child development and community engagement. MMGI is the application of Response to Intervention (RTI) throughout all students' entire school day and has over 40 years of research and outcomes for high student growth and achievement across diverse learners. A combination of research and evidence-based practices will be used to measure learning and adjust instruction on a daily basis. Lessons will embed high rates of student practice and teacher feedback. The school model is responsive to student needs and allows students to move at their own pace.

The school will use a co-teaching model with a flexible, mixed age group approach to personalized instruction. Each core content block will be taught by a certified grade-level or content teacher and a special populations teacher. Key features of the proposed school include:

- Alignment to Tennessee State Standards
- Explicit and direct instruction for foundational skills
- Precision Teaching, an evidence-based instructional method for collecting data to measure learning daily, will be used for fluency practice
- Generative Instruction for real-life application and critical thinking
- Curricula focused on foundational skills that derive from real-world activities and content
- Behavioral and social-emotional supports

The application identifies several potential curriculum options for core content areas including Reading Mastery Transformations, Amplify, Eureka Math, and Core Knowledge History and Geography, but also indicates that teachers will have the ability to adapt curricula to the needs of their classroom as long as there is alignment to state standards, is evidence- and research-based, is rooted in culturally responsive pedagogy and rich in identify-affirming content to ensure that it is well suited for the target population.

Five layers of assessment, including universal screeners, benchmark tests, and progress monitoring, will guide the data collection, analysis, and action planning process that is foundational to personalized and mastery-based instruction. The proposed school leader piloted this instructional approach with three elementary school groups of diverse learners during the 2022-2023 school year and saw strong growth outcomes.

The school will provide a responsive and flexible instructional approach and wrap around services prioritizing strong relationships with students and the community. Overall, the application does a thorough job of describing how the school will use ongoing data analysis to inform and personalize instruction for students. Additionally, the community engagement and initial student recruitment demonstrate strong demand for the proposed school.



# OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

---

## MEETS OR EXCEEDS STANDARD

### Summary

The school's Governing Board will provide oversight of academic achievement, community engagement, growth and enrollment, fiscal health, and regularly compliance and will include individuals with from a broad range of backgrounds and areas of expertise, including education, business, finance, fiscal oversight, real estate, community engagement and outreach, fundraising, marketing, human resources, and strategic planning. The board will also include at least one parent representative whose child is currently enrolled in the school. The board will hire, set compensation for, support, and evaluate the Executive Director. Tennessee's TEAM evaluation will be used to evaluate the Executive Director and develop goals and strategy for growth based on current data.

The proposed school leader has extensive experience serving students with disabilities, multi-language learners, and intellectually gifted students as a special education teacher and school administrator. She has a Master of Education degree in Special Education from Vanderbilt University and recently completed two professional residencies at schools who implement MMGI and mastery-based learning.

The Executive Director will oversee the instructional leadership team, as well as teacher coaching to support teachers in implementing their unique model. Recruitment and hiring will focus on partnerships with local and national agencies to create a talent pipeline in addition to collaborating with the Morningside Teacher's Academy (MTA) to create best practices for hiring for a mastery-based model. All teachers will complete an onboarding training and regular professional development.

The application identifies potential start-up challenges, including facilities, enrollment, recruiting and retaining leadership and talent, funding, and scaling an innovative school model, as well as how the founding team plans to mitigate those risks through partnerships, expertise, and early action steps. The founding board will play a large role in the start-up of the school allowing for a distribution of responsibilities across leadership based on areas of strength.

The school plans to co-locate with a nonprofit or early childhood center which will help keep facility costs low. The board plans to work with Level Field Partners, an organization that has supported over 130 charter school facility projects across 29 states, including many in Nashville and Tennessee. The application includes a clear timeline and process for the facility selection process and has identified 7 viable contingency facilities should a co-location not materialize.

The school plans to partner with several organizations in the community including McGruder Center, Dream Streets, Preston Taylor Ministries, and Royal Table Inc. to provide referrals and support families in the areas of job training, housing security, and hunger relief. The school plans to also recruit organizations that can connect families to medical and wellness services, as well. The application contains letters of support from families, community members, and potential partnering agencies.

Overall, the application demonstrates a clear understanding of school operations and requirements and explains how those will be implemented within this unique educational model.



# FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

---

## MEETS OR EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

### Summary

The Pre-Opening Year budget assumes \$600,000 in revenue from the CSP Startup Grant (\$200,000) and fundraising (\$400,000). These funds will support the staffing of the Executive Director, the Director of Operations and Finance and Community Engagement Coordinator, as well as professional development costs, financial services, and student recruitment and community engagement activities.

Staffing details for Year 1:

- Teacher and staff salaries and benefits are competitive
- 1.5% cost of living salary increase year over year
- TCRS state retirement system will be utilized
- 5 General Education Teachers (1:20 ratio)
- 3 Exceptional Education and/or ELL Teachers
- 2 Instructional Assistants
- 1 social worker
- 1 office manager

The budget dedicates resources to maintaining a Community Engagement Team in order to stay connected to community needs and provide wraparound services that are relevant and responsive to the student and family population, in alignment with the school model. Given the community feedback that transportation was essential, the operating budget allocates ample funds for buses and assumes that a large percentage of the student population will utilize the services.

The school will manage its finances in alignment with the Model Charter school Performance Framework and monitor near term measures such as cash on hand, enrollment variances, compliance with contracts and debt agreements, and current revenue/expense ratio, in addition to sustainability measures including positive cumulative total margin, debt to asset ratio, multiyear cash flow, and debt service ratio.

The budget reflects conservative enrollment projections to ensure that even if targets are not fully met, the budget can support the model. The multi-age grouping structure of the school also allows for a reduction in staff without an impact to the fidelity of implementation of the model. While the school budget contains unsecured funding sources for pre-opening and Year 1, the founding team has already begun engaging in conversations with six different foundations or funding organizations that support charter schools. The team also has extensive experience in both individual fundraising and grant procurement. If needed, the school would consider establishing a line of credit.

Overall, the budget represents reasonable expense and revenue assumptions and includes several contingencies should unknowns, such as facility exceed budget.

