In Tennessee, the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission is the state's appellate authorizer. The commission hears new-start, revocation, amendment, and renewal appeals from across the state and serves as the authorizer and local education agency (LEA) for any school it authorizes upon appeal. In addition, schools exiting the Achievement School District that meet certain performance criteria can apply to the commission directly for authorization.

The Tennessee Public Charter School Commission is composed of nine members—three from each of Tennessee’s three Grand Divisions. All members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. The commission is led by an executive director and has a small staff with both appellate review and LEA management duties.

**COMMISSION TIMELINE**

- **State Board as Appellate Authorizer** 2014
- The Tennessee General Assembly designates the State Board of Education as the state’s appellate authorizer in school districts with a priority school in their area.

- **Commission Hears First Appeal** 2021
- The commission hears its first charter school appeal, with appellate authorizer responsibilities fully shifted away from the State Board of Education.

- **Public Charter School Commission Created** 2019
- The Tennessee General Assembly creates the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission as an independent appellate authorizer and makes the State Board of Education responsible for evaluating authorizer quality at least every two years.

- **Commission Receives Exemplary Rating** 2022
- The commission is evaluated by the state board and receives an Exemplary rating, receiving 3.9 points on a 4-point scale, the highest of any authorizer in the state of Tennessee.

- **Commission Serves as Authorizer for Sixteen Schools** 2023
- The commission currently serves as the authorizer for 16 schools. Of those, three will open in Fall 2023 and two will open in Fall 2024.

**Commission Leadership**

The Tennessee Public Charter School Commission is composed of nine members—three from each of Tennessee’s three Grand Divisions. All members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. The commission is led by an executive director and has a small staff with both appellate review and LEA management duties.
Since 2021, the commission approved the opening of less than one-third of new-start charter school applicants on appeal.

Source: Tennessee Department of Education, 2023

Authorizer Quality

Per Tennessee law, the State Board of Education conducts an evaluation of each public charter school authorizer at least every two years. Each evaluation includes a thorough review of the authorizer’s practices across 24 standards. In 2022, the commission was awarded an Exemplary rating, receiving 3.9 points on a 4-point scale, the highest of any authorizer in the state of Tennessee.

Performance of Commission Schools

Charter commission schools show minimal achievement gaps compared to the state.

TCAP grades 3-8 proficiency rates for math and ELA by student group for Tennessee Public Charter Commission schools compared to the state average.

Source: Tennessee Department of Education, 2023