



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **AMID PANDEMIC, EMERALD ACADEMY SCHOLARS ACHIEVE LANDMARK ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

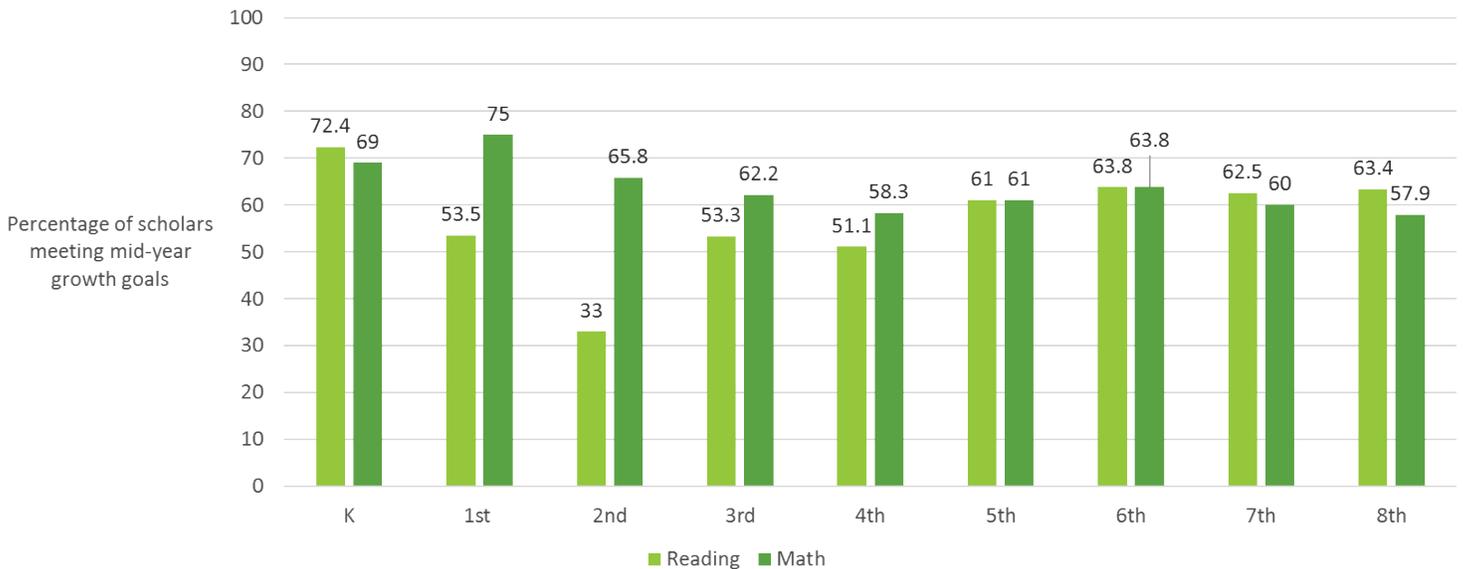
KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – New academic achievement data confirms Knoxville’s first and only public charter school, Emerald Academy, is making significant progress improving learning outcomes for urban youth. This news comes as particularly encouraging during a season when students across the country experienced academic regression due to learning loss during the pandemic.

In addition to the annual TN Ready testing, Emerald Academy completes additional internal assessments throughout the school year to track progress and adjust as needed. These assessments include the Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), which Emerald scholars complete at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year. Although state assessments will not take place for a couple of more months, the school recently completed its midyear assessment to track student progress.

The MAP is a nationally normed test that shows how the performance of scholars at Emerald Academy compares not only to students from across Tennessee, but also how they compare to students across the country in both traditional public schools as well as charter schools. Because of an extensive study to correlate MAP results to TN Ready results, faculty and staff can project each child’s TN Ready results after each MAP assessment.

Highlights of Emerald Academy’s midyear results include the following:

- For the first time in EA’s six-year history, over half of all scholars met their midyear MAP growth goals. This means that over half of scholars had greater academic growth from August through February than projected.
  - 60% of K-8 scholars met their growth goals in reading and math.
  - This is a significant increase from last year’s midyear MAP, when 46% of scholars met their growth goals.
- School leaders also saw encouraging progress from August through February in terms of projected TN Ready results.
  - In reading, the percentage of scholars projected to perform on or above grade level increased for every grade level.
  - In math, the percentage of scholars projected to perform on or above grade level increased for nearly every grade.



These data include all Emerald Academy scholars – those attending the school in person and those participating on the school’s virtual learning platform offered this year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our long-term goal is to be one of the top performing schools in the entire state,” said Steve Diggs, president of Emerald Charter Schools. “These big gains are not only encouraging, but they are also critical steppingstones as we continue to scaffold and build toward reaching higher and higher academic results.”

The school, which opened in 2015, serves scholars in grades K-8. This encouraging data comes during the school’s enrollment period for new families for the upcoming school year. Interested families should apply immediately, and enrollment applications must be submitted online at [emeraldacademy.org](http://emeraldacademy.org) by 5 p.m. on March 26. Translated applications are available.

“When we asked parents why they chose Emerald Academy for their child, an overwhelming 92% indicated that they did so because of our commitment to high academic standards,” said School Director Lauren Moore. “I’m thrilled for our scholars and families that these most recent midyear results show that we are delivering on that commitment. And I’m grateful to our outstanding faculty and staff who led the way.”

Any Knox County resident with a rising kindergarten through eighth grade student is eligible to apply to this tuition-free, college preparatory school. There is no additional criteria for admittance, and if interest outnumbers available seats, a blind lottery will be conducted to determine admission.

For more information about applying, visit [emeraldacademy.org](http://emeraldacademy.org) or call 865-249-7223 weekdays between 7:45 a.m. and 4 p.m. Translation services are available.

**About Emerald Academy & Emerald Charter Schools**

Emerald Academy is a free, independently-operated, K-8 college preparatory school launched by Emerald Charter Schools. Located in the historic Moses School Building at 220 Carrick Street in Old Mechanicsville, Emerald Academy’s mission is to prepare urban scholars for the college of their choice and community leadership. For more information about the school and how to become involved, visit [emeraldacademy.org](http://emeraldacademy.org). Founded in 2014, Emerald Charter Schools is a non-sectarian, 501(c)(3) organization that operates Emerald Academy. Learn more at [emeraldcharterschools.org](http://emeraldcharterschools.org).