



NEWS RELEASE

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Emerald Academy Scholars Close Achievement Gaps and Outperform Peers in Knox County and Across State

EA's assessment scores exceed pre-pandemic proficiency

Knoxville, Tenn. – Emerald Academy scholars are closing achievement gaps and outperforming their peers in reading and math, according to recently released 2021-2022 statewide assessment data. Emerald Academy, Knoxville's only K-8 public charter school, saw its overall proficiency rate rise more than three percentage points compared to the 2020-2021 school year.

With this increase, Emerald Academy achievement levels have not only recovered, but exceeded, pre-pandemic proficiency. Scholars at Emerald Academy had faster growth in math when compared to their district peers in Knox County.

"We are very proud of the success our scholars achieved," said Carlissa Martin, school director of Emerald Academy. "This is a testament not only to their hard work but also to parents, faculty and staff who are working to prepare them for college and community leadership. These significant gains are critical as we continue to scaffold and build toward our goal of becoming a Reward School."

Additionally, Emerald Academy was named a Changemaker Charter School by the Tennessee Charter School Center. This distinction is for schools that are in the top 25% of all public schools in the state for an increase in the percent of students proficient over pre-pandemic (2019) scores in English Language Arts (ELA) and/or Math, along with Tennessee Value-Added System scores (academic growth) of Level 3 or above in the same areas.

Emerald Academy serves a diverse population of scholars, with a majority economically disadvantaged. According to the TNReady data, Emerald Academy's economically disadvantaged scholars outperformed their peers in every major metropolitan district in Tennessee: Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville.

"These results are the reason I came to work at Emerald Academy," said Megan Cohan, a sixth-grade teacher whose scholars achieved some of the highest results in school history and outperformed the district average. "We believe all children can achieve at a high level, and I, along with the rest of the teachers in the building, come to work every day to help make that a reality. These results show that we are closing the achievement gap and are on the right trajectory to grow these results even further," Cohan said.

Other highlights from the 2021-2022 statewide assessment data include:

- Emerald Academy's Black scholars outperformed their 3rd – 8th grade peers across every major metropolitan district in Tennessee in both reading and math.
- Emerald Academy is the top-performing urban middle school in Knox County for the second year in a row, based on the percentage of students performing on or above grade level.
- The increase in Emerald Academy's math proficiency over the last three years was in the 91st percentile among all public schools in the state of Tennessee.
- Emerald Academy continues to boast a strong faculty, with more than 90 percent of teachers scoring at Level 3 or higher in 2021-22 – indicating that their scholars grew academically by at least one year over the course of the school year.

Emerald Academy's mission is to increase the number of Knoxville students who graduate eighth grade well-prepared for high school and the college of their choice. The faculty and staff at Emerald Academy focus on academic excellence, effective teaching, a highly relational culture grounded in high expectations and robust parent and community engagement.

Any Knox County resident with a rising kindergarten through eighth-grade student is eligible to apply to Emerald Academy, a tuition-free, public, college preparatory school. There are no additional criteria for admittance, and if interest outnumbers available seats, a blind lottery will be conducted to determine admission. For more information about the application process, visit the school's website at emeraldacademy.org or call Emerald Academy at 865-249-7223 weekdays between 7:45 a.m. and 4:00 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. Supporting opportunities are available. For more information about the school and how to become involved, visit www.emeraldacademy.org.

Founded in 2014, Emerald Charter Schools is a non-sectarian, 501(c)(3) organization that operates Emerald Academy. Learn more at www.emeraldcharterschools.org.

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