



A Roadmap to Success:

A Plan to Make Tennessee Schools #1 in the Southeast Within Five Years

A Report By

T E N N E S S E E

S C  R E

State Collaborative on Reforming Education

Senator Bill Frist, Chairman

OCTOBER 2009



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October 22, 2009

Dear Fellow Tennesseans,

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to improve our schools. As I travel across Tennessee, I sense an urgency among parents, students, and educators about the state of our schools. Everyone realizes far too many of our students are not being adequately prepared for the future, and we are all committed to doing whatever we can to address this problem. But what do we need to do?

Over the past nine months, the Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) has held eight statewide meetings in Nashville with education reform leaders from around the country and over 60 town hall meetings across the state with educators, parents, students, policy experts, and state and local officials. In these meetings, we have heard about the challenges facing our schools and some of the solutions being used to address these challenges. We have also conducted hundreds of one-on-one interviews and performed exhaustive research. Our research now culminates in this report—a plan to make Tennessee schools #1 in the Southeast within five years.

The specific recommendations contained in this report represent a consensus of education, political, business, and community leaders across the state. These recommendations are based on the notion that no one person or idea can solve the problems we face. Instead, these recommendations emphasize that a collaborative effort is required for real, lasting change to occur. As you will see, our report lays out a clear vision for what must happen over the next five years, the specific actions each stakeholder must take to make this vision a reality, and a detailed and realistic timeline by which these actions can occur.

Starting today, SCORE will begin working diligently with our partners to implement this plan. For this to happen, we need your help. On pages 20 through 29, we outline the specific ways each stakeholder can help our plan become a reality. If you are a state or local elected official, we need your assistance ensuring the right policy environment exists for our schools to succeed. If you are a business or community leader, we need your resources, time, and energy. If you are a superintendent or principal, we need your leadership. And if you are a teacher or parent, we need your continued hard work to ensure our children understand the importance of education and have every possible opportunity to succeed.

I hope each of you will turn to the section of this report most applicable to you and consider what you can do to improve our schools. Working together, we can make Tennessee schools #1 in the Southeast, and, in doing so, ensure that all Tennessee children receive the opportunity they deserve.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Frist". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William H. Frist, M.D.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Today, the opportunity for education reform in Tennessee is greater than it has been in the last twenty years and greater than it will likely be for the next twenty years. As Tennesseans, we have an obligation to seize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

As many Tennesseans have realized, the world has changed. Gone are the days when students could drop out of high school and get a good job on a farm or complete high school and get a good job at the factory. Traditional blue-collar manufacturing jobs are being outsourced to countries like China, India, and Mexico and replaced by jobs in services, healthcare, telecommunications, and high-tech industries that require a higher level of education and skill. The state's newest manufacturers—Volkswagen, Wacker Chemical Plant, and Hemlock Semiconductor—require a highly skilled workforce. Volkswagen representatives have repeatedly said the company is adamant about hiring individuals who possess at least an associate's degree.¹ For Tennessee's children to succeed in today's world and in the future, the state must develop a world-class education system.

Tennessee has a long way to go in achieving this goal. Today, Tennessee ranks 41st on national achievement tests, behind all other Southeastern states except Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. On these same assessments, 77 percent of Tennessee 8th graders score below proficient in math and 75 percent score below proficient in reading.² Of every 100 Tennessee ninth graders, only 72 will graduate high school within four years and only 17 will graduate college within six years of leaving high school.³ As Tennesseans continue to struggle with the current economic downturn, it is those with less education who are suffering the most. Since 2006, the unemployment rate rose by 10 percent for individuals without a high school diploma, whereas it only rose by 2 percent for individuals with a college degree. In 2008 alone, nearly 28,000 Tennessee students dropped out of high school. Only 22 percent of Tennesseans over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree.⁵ These statistics are troubling for our state and even more troubling for our children.

However, there are at least three pieces of good news. First, we know where Tennessee needs to be, and we can measure our progress toward this goal. Workforce projections show that over the next ten years 63 percent of Tennesseans will need either a two- or four-year postsecondary degree in order to meet the needs of employers. Today, only 27 percent of Tennesseans have such a degree. According to research, the best way to predict whether high school students will receive a two- or four-year postsecondary degree is by students' ACT scores. If students score a 21 or above on the ACT, they are much more likely to complete a postsecondary degree than if they score below 21. This means we need 63 percent of our students scoring at least a 21 on the ACT within ten years in order to meet the needs of the state's employers. Today, only 48 percent of Tennesseans taking the test are doing so—we have a long way to go.⁶

The second good piece of news is that Tennessee is poised to undertake meaningful education reform that can help the state meet this 63 percent goal. Among the reasons Tennessee is well positioned are:

- The Tennessee Diploma Project is creating a sense of urgency among educators, parents, and students that something must be done to improve our schools.

- Tennessee is a strong candidate to receive significant competitive funding from both the federal government and national foundations.
- The General Assembly and State Board of Education are ready to take on a meaningful education reform agenda.
- Business and community leaders from across the state are committed to advocating and supporting bold education reform efforts.
- Superintendents, principals, and teachers are eager to help their students succeed and are willing to make the changes necessary for this to occur.
- Parents want their children to succeed, and students are willing to work hard if the community sets high expectations for them.

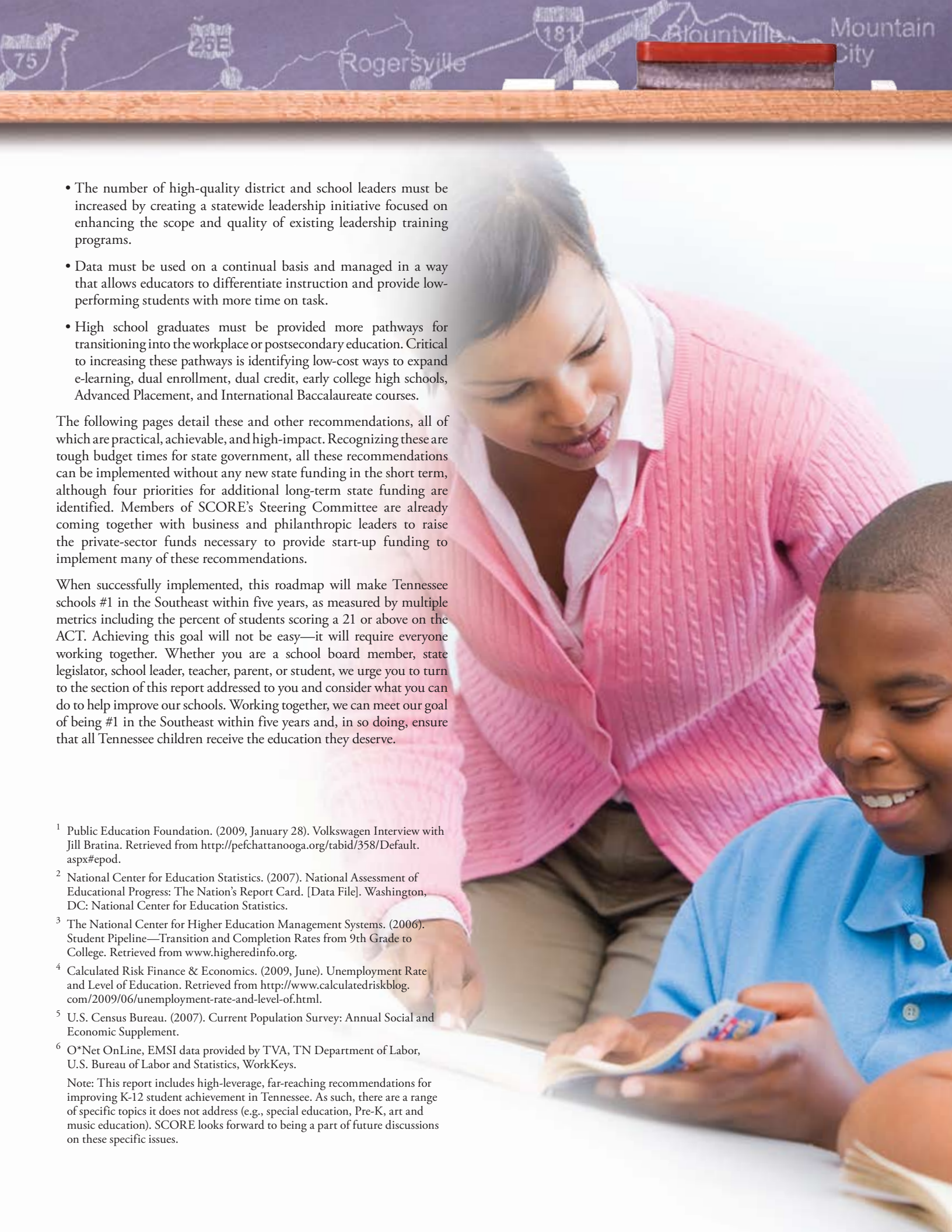
Third, and perhaps most importantly, SCORE has been working for the past nine months to develop a plan for improving Tennessee's education system. Led by a steering committee of 25 education, political, business, and community leaders from across the state, SCORE has spent the last nine months talking with educators, parents, students, policy experts, and state and local elected officials to learn about the challenges facing our schools and the solutions different schools and districts are using to address these challenges. Through its eight statewide meetings, over 60 town hall meetings, hundreds of one-on-one conversations, and extensive research, SCORE has gathered input from all stakeholders across the state.

Utilizing this input, this report lays out a detailed roadmap for how Tennessee schools can become #1 in the Southeast within five years. This roadmap contains four key strategies:

- Embrace high standards
- Cultivate strong leaders
- Ensure excellent teachers
- Utilize data to enhance student learning

The following pages contain more than sixty detailed recommendations for pursuing these four strategies. These detailed recommendations include the following transformational ideas:

- Tennesseans must embrace the state's more rigorous assessments and higher academic standards. Everyone from state legislators to school boards to superintendents to parents must help create a culture of high expectations for students.
- Teachers must be given the support they need to elevate classroom instruction to meet these higher expectations. Critical to this effort is enabling schools to create professional learning communities that provide opportunities for teachers to learn from one another and work together to improve their teaching.
- We must recruit the best and brightest into teaching by ensuring traditional teacher preparation programs focus more energy on recruitment and by expanding high-quality alternative licensure programs, especially programs focused on recruiting teachers in shortage areas such as math and science. We must ensure we keep the best teachers in the profession by fundamentally rethinking our evaluation, tenure, and compensation systems and connecting them to student learning.



- The number of high-quality district and school leaders must be increased by creating a statewide leadership initiative focused on enhancing the scope and quality of existing leadership training programs.
- Data must be used on a continual basis and managed in a way that allows educators to differentiate instruction and provide low-performing students with more time on task.
- High school graduates must be provided more pathways for transitioning into the workplace or postsecondary education. Critical to increasing these pathways is identifying low-cost ways to expand e-learning, dual enrollment, dual credit, early college high schools, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate courses.

The following pages detail these and other recommendations, all of which are practical, achievable, and high-impact. Recognizing these are tough budget times for state government, all these recommendations can be implemented without any new state funding in the short term, although four priorities for additional long-term state funding are identified. Members of SCORE's Steering Committee are already coming together with business and philanthropic leaders to raise the private-sector funds necessary to provide start-up funding to implement many of these recommendations.

When successfully implemented, this roadmap will make Tennessee schools #1 in the Southeast within five years, as measured by multiple metrics including the percent of students scoring a 21 or above on the ACT. Achieving this goal will not be easy—it will require everyone working together. Whether you are a school board member, state legislator, school leader, teacher, parent, or student, we urge you to turn to the section of this report addressed to you and consider what you can do to help improve our schools. Working together, we can meet our goal of being #1 in the Southeast within five years and, in so doing, ensure that all Tennessee children receive the education they deserve.

¹ Public Education Foundation. (2009, January 28). Volkswagen Interview with Jill Bratina. Retrieved from <http://pefchattanooga.org/tabid/358/Default.aspx#epod>.

² National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). National Assessment of Educational Progress: The Nation's Report Card. [Data File]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

³ The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. (2006). Student Pipeline—Transition and Completion Rates from 9th Grade to College. Retrieved from www.higheredinfo.org.

⁴ Calculated Risk Finance & Economics. (2009, June). Unemployment Rate and Level of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.calculatedriskblog.com/2009/06/unemployment-rate-and-level-of.html>.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (2007). Current Population Survey: Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

⁶ O*Net OnLine, EMSI data provided by TVA, TN Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, WorkKeys.

Note: This report includes high-leverage, far-reaching recommendations for improving K-12 student achievement in Tennessee. As such, there are a range of specific topics it does not address (e.g., special education, Pre-K, art and music education). SCORE looks forward to being a part of future discussions on these specific issues.

THE GOAL



#1 in the Southeast Within Five Years

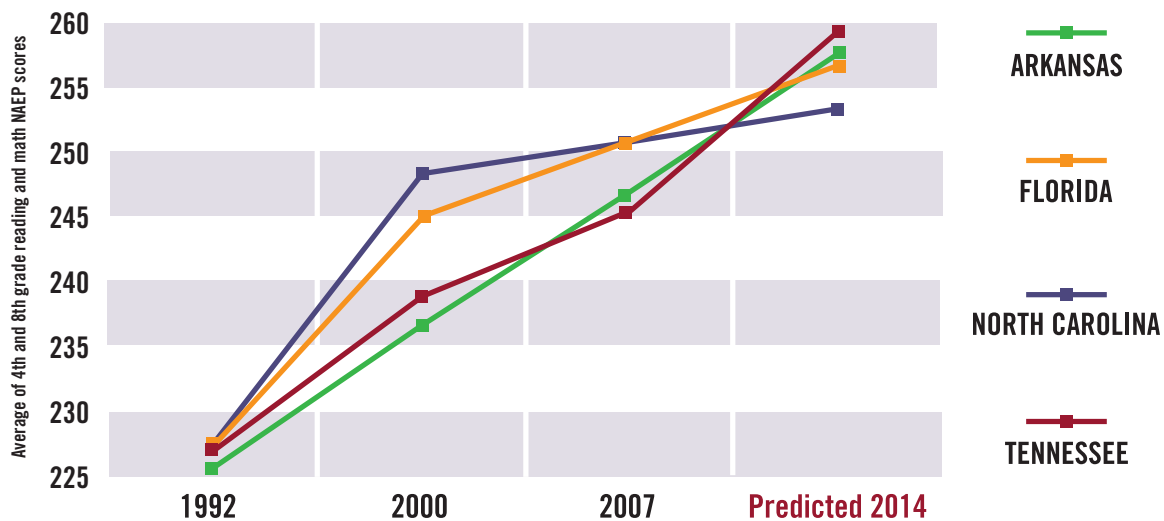
There are many different ways to measure educational success. However, no matter what metric one examines, Tennessee rarely ranks above the national average and frequently ranks in the bottom quarter of states. Even among states in the Southeast, Tennessee consistently ranks behind several other Southeastern states including Kentucky, North Carolina, and Florida. For example, Tennessee ranks 41st in fourth grade reading and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) while Florida ranks 21st, North Carolina 29th, and Kentucky 32nd. Similarly, Tennessee ranks 40th in eighth grade reading and math NAEP scores while North Carolina ranks 30th, Kentucky 33rd, and Florida 35th.⁷ When one examines the percent of 18-24 year-olds enrolled in college, Tennessee ranks 37th while North Carolina ranks 16th, Kentucky 21st, and Florida 32nd.⁸ Clearly, Tennessee has a long way to go before it is first in the Southeast.

However, we know Tennessee can get there—and we know Tennessee can get there within the next five years. The graph below illustrates the average fourth and eighth grade math and reading NAEP scores. Over the past 15 years, NAEP has been the only assessment for which there is reliable longitudinal data that is comparable across states. As the graph below indicates, in 1992 Tennessee students scored the same as students in Florida and North Carolina on national assessments. However, during the 1990s, Florida and North Carolina experienced explosive gains, while Tennessee's gains were much more modest. However, if other states stay on their current trajectories and Tennessee makes the kind of progress that Florida and North Carolina made in the 1990s, Tennessee will become #1 in the Southeast within five years.

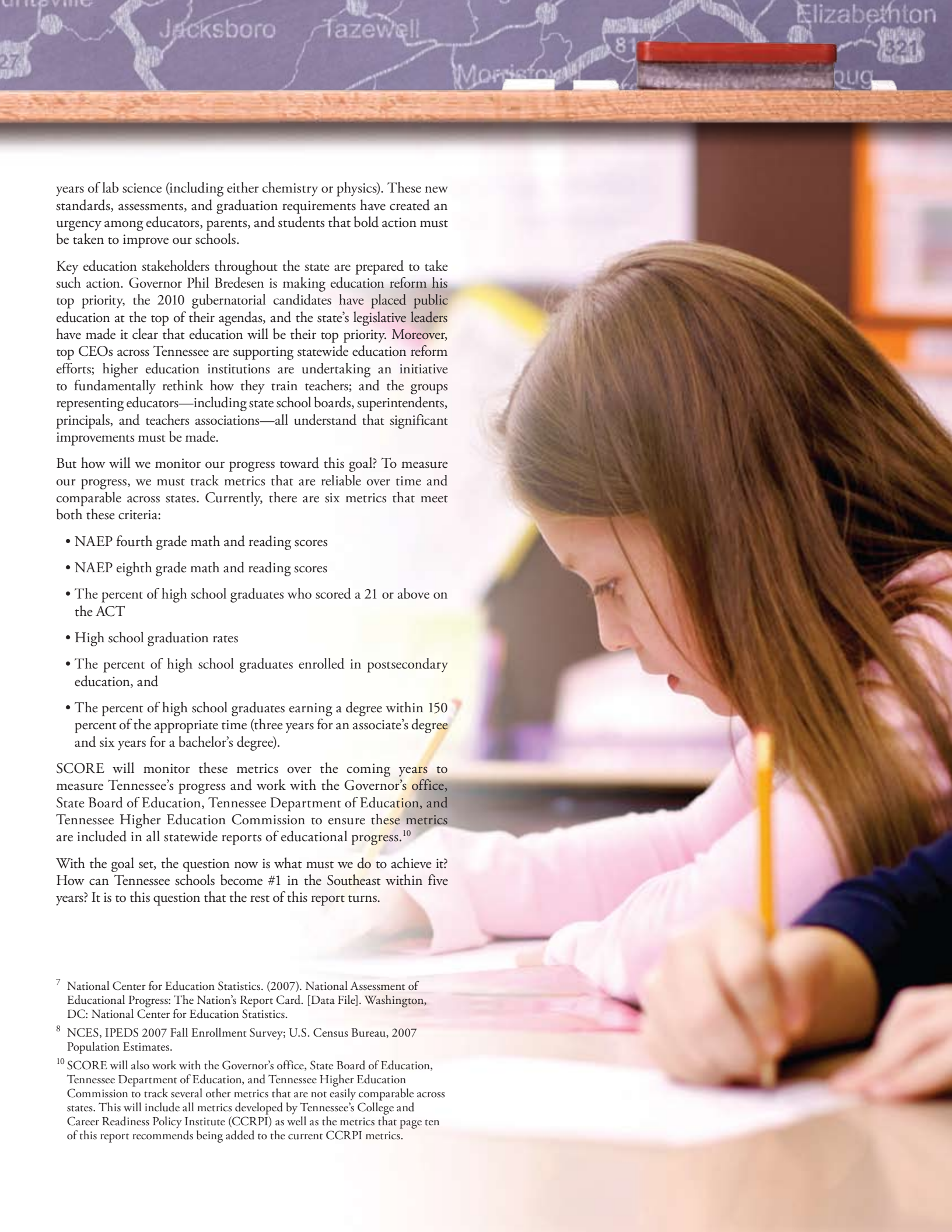


Several factors are coming together to create a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that could lead to unprecedented growth in student achievement within Tennessee. One of the most important factors is the Tennessee Diploma Project, which has raised the rigor of our state's standards and assessments. Starting with this year's ninth grade class, all high school students must complete a more rigorous sequence of courses in order to graduate, including four years of math and three

NAEP Student Achievement



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). National Assessment of Educational Progress: The Nation's Report Card. [Data File]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.



years of lab science (including either chemistry or physics). These new standards, assessments, and graduation requirements have created an urgency among educators, parents, and students that bold action must be taken to improve our schools.

Key education stakeholders throughout the state are prepared to take such action. Governor Phil Bredesen is making education reform his top priority, the 2010 gubernatorial candidates have placed public education at the top of their agendas, and the state's legislative leaders have made it clear that education will be their top priority. Moreover, top CEOs across Tennessee are supporting statewide education reform efforts; higher education institutions are undertaking an initiative to fundamentally rethink how they train teachers; and the groups representing educators—including state school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers associations—all understand that significant improvements must be made.

But how will we monitor our progress toward this goal? To measure our progress, we must track metrics that are reliable over time and comparable across states. Currently, there are six metrics that meet both these criteria:

- NAEP fourth grade math and reading scores
- NAEP eighth grade math and reading scores
- The percent of high school graduates who scored a 21 or above on the ACT
- High school graduation rates
- The percent of high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education, and
- The percent of high school graduates earning a degree within 150 percent of the appropriate time (three years for an associate's degree and six years for a bachelor's degree).

SCORE will monitor these metrics over the coming years to measure Tennessee's progress and work with the Governor's office, State Board of Education, Tennessee Department of Education, and Tennessee Higher Education Commission to ensure these metrics are included in all statewide reports of educational progress.¹⁰

With the goal set, the question now is what must we do to achieve it? How can Tennessee schools become #1 in the Southeast within five years? It is to this question that the rest of this report turns.

⁷ National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). National Assessment of Educational Progress: The Nation's Report Card. [Data File]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

⁸ NCES, IPEDS 2007 Fall Enrollment Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Population Estimates.

¹⁰ SCORE will also work with the Governor's office, State Board of Education, Tennessee Department of Education, and Tennessee Higher Education Commission to track several other metrics that are not easily comparable across states. This will include all metrics developed by Tennessee's College and Career Readiness Policy Institute (CCRPI) as well as the metrics that page ten of this report recommends being added to the current CCRPI metrics.



Embrace and support the high academic standards that have been adopted through the Tennessee Diploma Project and create rigorous educational pathways to help students successfully transition from high school into the workforce or some form of postsecondary education.

Articulate clear goals and standards for what students should know at each grade level, ensure those goals and standards are communicated effectively to all key stakeholders, and continuously measure progress toward those goals and standards.

- Encourage all elected officials, State Board of Education members, and other policymakers to hold steadfastly to higher academic standards in the state of Tennessee, even if and when the resulting student outcomes do not appear as favorable.
- Define TCAP proficiency in each subject as being on pace to meet the ACT college-ready benchmark in that subject. Define this proficiency threshold prior to students taking the assessments in the spring of 2010.
- Require students score at least basic on select end-of-course tests for high school graduation with appropriate alternative assessment opportunities for special education students and English Language Learners. Implement this recommendation over time as the reliability of each end-of-course assessment is validated. Ideally, the State Board of Education's Middle Grades Policy would be implemented concurrently.
- Monitor the progress of the National Governors Association/Council of Chief State School Officers Common Core Standards project. If the project identifies specific areas where Tennessee's standards could be improved, adopt these specific improvements. Otherwise, continuously modify Tennessee's standards to ensure they are internationally benchmarked by regularly reviewing and updating all standards.
- Launch a statewide communications campaign to emphasize the importance of the Tennessee Diploma Project and the importance of education more generally. As part of this campaign, provide concrete examples of how parents can help their child succeed.
- Enhance Tennessee's College-and-Career Ready Policy Institute metrics by: (1) making goal #2 track both 4th and 8th grade student college-readiness (2) replacing metric #3 with the percent of students who score at or above proficient in reading and math on the 4th and 8th grade TCAP and NAEP assessments and the gap between the percent proficient on the two tests (3) adding dual credit and International Baccalaureate programs to metric #7 and (4) adding a new metric to track the percent of first time postsecondary students completing degrees within 150 percent of normal degree program time (e.g., three years for associate's degree and six years for bachelor's degree).
- After these changes have been made, align metrics tracked by the State Board of Education and metrics tracked in the Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee with the College-and-Career Ready Policy Institute report so that all entities involved in education are tracking a single set of outcome metrics.

Ensure there are sufficient resources and supports available to districts, schools, and teachers to implement the Tennessee Diploma Project successfully by providing TDP-aligned instructional materials and course designs; strong professional development for principals, teachers, and guidance counselors; and meaningful interventions to support low-performing students, schools, and districts.


- The Tennessee Department of Education should continue to focus its professional development efforts on helping principals, teachers, and guidance counselors successfully implement the Tennessee Diploma Project. As part of this effort, the Department of Education should use the Electronic Learning Center as a method for delivering this training and a forum for teachers to collaborate and share resources.
- Launch a three-month task force to develop a comprehensive plan for how all students in the state can be given access to low-cost online courses, especially courses that meet the new high school graduation requirements. Include e⁴TN, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, the Niswonger-Bristol online learning program, and other online course providers as members of this task force.

RECOMMENDATION #1:


Embrace High Standards

Embrace and support the high academic standards that have been adopted through the Tennessee Diploma Project and create rigorous educational pathways to help students successfully transition from high school into the workforce or some form of postsecondary education.

- Ensure the current extended contract funding is continued on a recurring basis. Over time, expand this funding to adequately support implementation of the State Board of Education's Middle Grades Policy. Encourage this funding be used to expand time on task for students falling behind grade level, especially through before-school, during-school, after-school, weekend, and summer interventions.
- Provide models of how Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes can meet the new high school graduation requirements, especially the higher-level math and lab science requirements. Ensure these models are widely distributed to district leadership.
- To ensure continued student access to CTE classes, raise the class size cap in certain CTE classes (e.g., marketing) where there is no physical safety risk. Class size would still have to comply with existing grade level class size caps, and associated funding formulas would be adjusted to ensure this change remains budget neutral.

- 
- Identify ways for improving the effectiveness of interventions for low-performing schools and districts by enhancing evaluation mechanisms of current support programs (e.g., Exemplary Educators, AGE, and STAT teams), and better segmenting schools by the type of interventions they need. For example, survey principals and teachers in schools receiving interventions as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions and consider dividing Exemplary Educators into two groups, one who assists schools that missed AYP on only one or two subgroups and a second who assists schools that missed AYP on most subgroups.

Create more tools and pathways to transition high school graduates into postsecondary institutions or the workforce.

- Launch a task force to identify the best ways to use the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship to most effectively increase access to and completion of postsecondary degrees including funding innovative programs that increase the number of high school students participating in postsecondary coursework (e.g., dual credit, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and early college high schools).
 - Create minimum quality standards for dual credit and dual enrollment courses.
 - Track postsecondary remediation rates and costs of recent high school graduates back to each high school and district on the Tennessee Department of Education Report Card.
 - Ensure all high school students have access to and utilize high-quality career advising resources (e.g., college counselors, KUDER, www.collegeforTN.org) to help plan their high school elective focus, develop their post high school plans, and navigate the college application and financial aid process.
 - Develop a network of non-profit, higher education, school district, and Tennessee Department of Education programs that are currently assisting students in applying to postsecondary institutions. This network would provide these programs with opportunities to share best practices, resources, and training opportunities.
 - Hold charter schools accountable by ensuring all existing charter schools are of a high-quality by supporting existing efforts to create a statewide charter school incubator to support local charter school leaders and by actively recruiting high-quality national charter school providers to the state.
 - Promote the exchange of successful school improvement strategies among all public schools, including charters, in order to build upon proven best practices for public schools.
- 

THE PLAN



Ensure there is a pipeline of high-quality superintendents and principals to lead our districts and schools and that existing superintendents and principals are well supported.

Launch a three-year Statewide Leadership Initiative to make Tennessee's superintendent and principal training and support programs the best in the nation. The initiative would be led by a board of representative stakeholders including professional associations, higher education institutions, non-profits, district and school leaders, and the business and philanthropic community. The initiative would be staffed by renowned leadership experts recruited from both around the country and across the state. The initiative would focus on implementing the recommendations below over the next three years and then working with other organizations (e.g., the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, the Tennessee School Boards Association, the Tennessee Department of Education, and higher education institutions) to ensure the recommendations were sustainable after the three-year initiative was complete.

Create a network of regional high-quality school leadership programs that recruit, train, and support highly effective school leaders.

- Assist both higher education and district school leadership programs in effectively implementing the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership Policy by creating a pool of shared resources (e.g., a common curriculum, online professional development tools, and a list of top instructors on specific topics who are willing to teach across the state) and providing opportunities for school leadership programs from across the state to share best practices with one another.
- Create a process by which alternative providers can be granted the authority to certify principals.
- Create a report card for school leadership programs similar to the one the State Board of Education currently has for teacher preparation programs. Include metrics such as how many graduates from each program actually become administrators, the distribution of TVAAS scores of schools led by graduates from each program, and superintendents' and principals' satisfaction with each program. Ensure this report card is distributed widely.
- Develop an initiative to recruit, select, and train an adequate number of expert evaluators to implement the school leadership program approval process in a way that is consistent with the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership policy and that encourages programs to set high standards and undertake continuous improvement.
- Ensure that Tennessee Academy for School Leaders' academies and programs are connected to and supported by ongoing professional development opportunities in local school districts and higher education institutions.

Enhance the current statewide program for developing new superintendents and improve professional development opportunities for both new and experienced superintendents.

- Enhance and expand the Prospective Superintendents Academy currently run by the Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and Niswonger Foundation.
- Support the recently launched new superintendent mentorship program run by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Association of Independent and Municipal School Districts.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Cultivate Strong Leaders

Ensure there is a pipeline of high-quality superintendents and principals to lead our districts and schools and that existing superintendents and principals are well supported.

- Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Tennessee Department of Education to ensure existing professional development opportunities for superintendents are sufficiently focused on increasing student achievement rather than operational issues. For example, ensure superintendents in districts with high achievement gains have the opportunity to share best practices with their colleagues and that all superintendents receive professional development around how to effectively conduct principal evaluations and connect them to performance contracts.
- Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Tennessee Principals Association to enhance online professional development opportunities for superintendents and principals.

Create a system for identifying, rewarding, and retaining high-performing superintendents and principals.

- Create a statewide principal evaluation tool that is user friendly and that districts can use to create performance contracts between superintendents and principals.
- Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, Tennessee Department of Education, Association of Independent and Municipal School Districts, and Tennessee School Boards Association to create several examples of tools for evaluating superintendents.

- Require all principals to receive an annual performance evaluation.
- Apply for a federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant to fund performance bonuses for high-performing school leaders.
- The Tennessee Department of Education and professional associations should annually recognize the top-performing superintendents and principals in the state based on objective criteria (e.g., student achievement data, value-added scores, graduation rates).



THE PLAN



Ensure that an effective teacher is at the front of every classroom in Tennessee by recruiting talented new teachers, providing more support to increase the capacity of existing teachers, and creating an environment that makes high performing teachers want to remain in the classroom.

Continuously develop, support, and retain effective existing teachers while counseling or evaluating out low-performing teachers who do not improve over time.

- Embrace teacher collaboration and teacher leadership as demonstrated strategies to continuously improve instructional quality and educational productivity.
- Fund districts' differentiated pay plans and encourage districts to use significant portions of these plans to fund teacher mentoring programs and the creation of professional learning communities within individual schools. The state can fund these differentiated pay plans by maintaining the existing career ladder funding at its current level and using these monies to fund differentiated pay plans as existing career ladder teachers retire.
- Develop, pilot, and roll out a statewide teacher effectiveness measure based on multiple measures including student achievement gains and potentially principal evaluations, peer review, and parent and student surveys. Ensure a significant component of this measure is based on a combination of student achievement and student achievement gains for as many teachers as possible. SCORE and the Tennessee Education Association would jointly lead the creation of this new measure, working closely with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-funded teacher effectiveness initiative.
- After this teacher effectiveness measure is created, connect it to both tenure and compensation; specifically:
 - Restructure the state salary schedule to include new elements such as multiple career paths (e.g., beginning, professional, and master teachers). Also consider incentivizing select inputs (e.g., credentials in high-needs subject areas, appropriate graduate degrees, placement in high-needs schools, teacher leadership roles) and outputs (e.g., performance on the new teacher effectiveness measure).
 - Directly link tenure decisions to the teacher effectiveness measure, allowing student achievement gains to be included as one component of the teacher effectiveness measure before a final tenure decision must be reached. This may require a rethinking of the current tenure timeframe and structure.
- Conduct a survey of teacher working conditions and provide resources to assist schools in using the survey to improve the work environments of individual schools.
- Allow all school districts to use administrative law judges to settle tenured teacher dismissal proceedings.
- The Tennessee Department of Education and professional associations should annually recognize the top-performing teachers in the state based on objective criteria (e.g., performance on the new teacher effectiveness measure).

Increase efforts to recruit high-quality candidates into teaching, especially in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects.

- Expand programs focused on recruiting high-quality candidates into teaching, especially in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects (e.g., Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, Teach Tennessee, Distinguished Professionals, Chattanooga / Knoxville / Memphis Teacher Residencies, UTeach, Math and Science Scholarships).
- Launch a task force to assist higher education institutions in recruiting higher quality candidates into teaching. As part of this task force, develop common recruitment tools and update the Tennessee Teacher Employment Resources website. Members of the task force would include representatives from the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Education Association, Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative, higher education institutions, Teach Tennessee, Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and other key stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

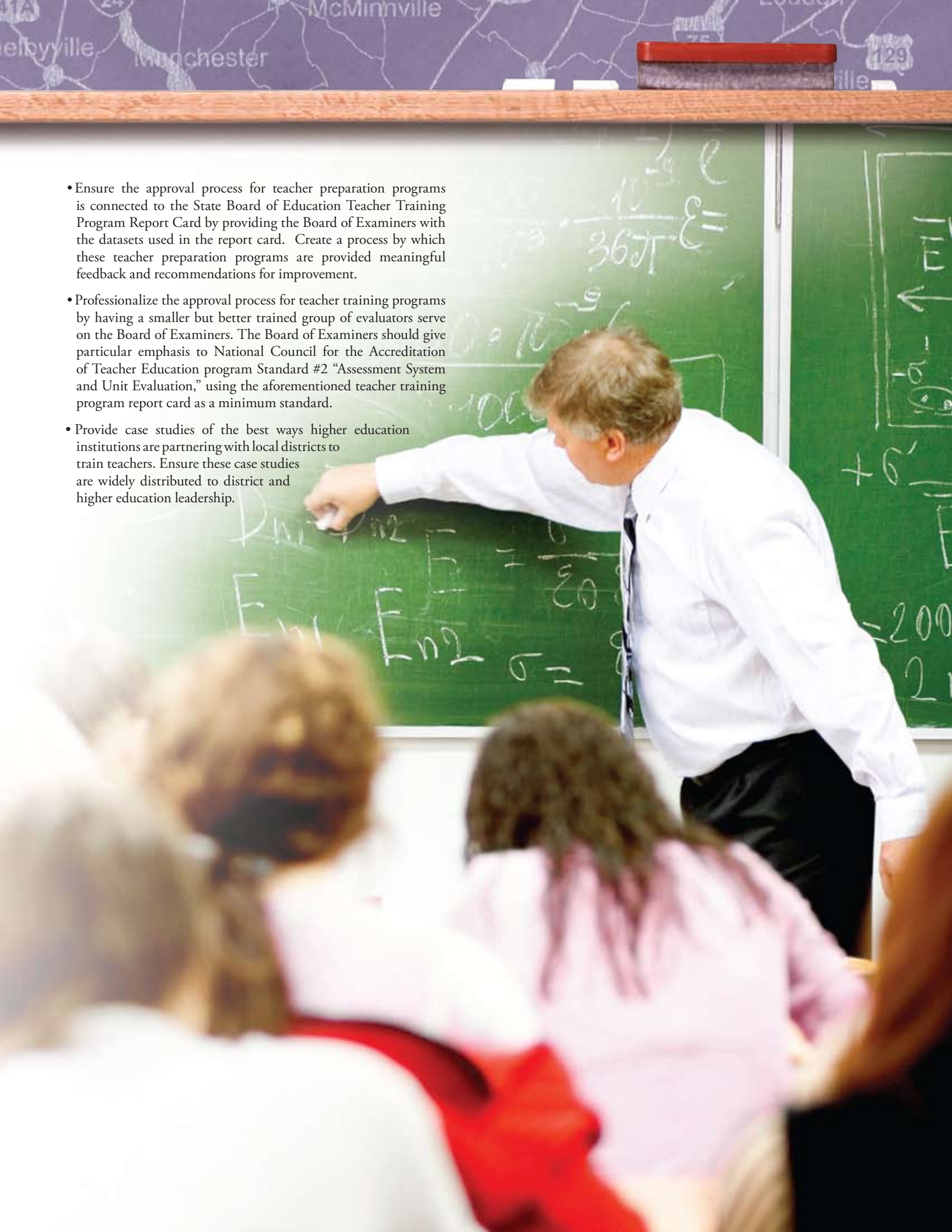
Ensure Excellent Teachers

Ensure that an effective teacher is at the front of every classroom in Tennessee by recruiting talented new teachers, providing more support to increase the capacity of existing teachers, and creating an environment that makes high performing teachers want to remain in the classroom.

Ensure teacher training programs produce high-quality teacher candidates who meet the needs of local school districts.

- Either remove the Praxis I as an option for gaining entry into teacher training programs or raise the performance requirements on the Praxis I to make them equivalent to current ACT and SAT score requirements.
- Traditional teacher training institutions should jointly create a performance measure for teacher candidates that includes assessments of content knowledge, classroom management skills, and other teaching skills. This measure should build on the work of the Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative and be connected to the new statewide teacher effectiveness measure discussed above.
- Launch a task force to revise the State Board of Education's Teacher Training Program Report Card. Include additional metrics such as the average ACT scores of teacher candidates, teacher TVAAS scores, the subjects teachers are trained in, and retention rates. Ensure alternative providers and each degree program at higher education institutions are evaluated individually on this report card. Ensure this report card is distributed widely.

- Ensure the approval process for teacher preparation programs is connected to the State Board of Education Teacher Training Program Report Card by providing the Board of Examiners with the datasets used in the report card. Create a process by which these teacher preparation programs are provided meaningful feedback and recommendations for improvement.
- Professionalize the approval process for teacher training programs by having a smaller but better trained group of evaluators serve on the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners should give particular emphasis to National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education program Standard #2 "Assessment System and Unit Evaluation," using the aforementioned teacher training program report card as a minimum standard.
- Provide case studies of the best ways higher education institutions are partnering with local districts to train teachers. Ensure these case studies are widely distributed to district and higher education leadership.



THE PLAN



Create a data-driven environment that equips policymakers, superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents with the information and tools they need to advance student learning and success.

Ensure superintendents, principals, and teachers are provided timely data and the support to effectively use this data to improve student achievement.

- Develop a single statewide pre-K through postsecondary data warehouse containing data from multiple existing sources including student performance and demographic databases, teacher identification and demographic databases, financial databases, and formative and summative assessment databases. The data warehouse must provide information that is easily accessible and user friendly to principals, teachers, counselors, administrators, school board members, higher education institutions and (as appropriate) parents and students.
- Reconfigure existing TVAAS, teacher effect, and other student achievement data reports to ensure they are transmitted electronically and easy for teachers to understand.
- Ensure the Tennessee Department of Education directly provides all principals and teachers log-in information to the appropriate portions of the TVAAS database.
- Provide additional online and in-person training to superintendents, principals, guidance counselors and teachers about how TVAAS works and how it and other assessment tests (e.g., PLAN and EXPLORE) can be effectively used to improve classroom instruction.
- Identify options for reducing the turnaround time for grading assessment tests to allow TCAP and end-of-course exams to be given during the last four weeks of school.
- Identify best practices for school readiness assessments for students in grades K-2. Over time, provide state funding for these new assessments and add an additional metric to the CCRPI report tracking student readiness on these assessments.
- Negotiate a statewide contract for K-12 formative assessments that districts can purchase at a reduced price. Over time, provide state funding for these formative assessments.

Assist schools with efforts to engage parents and help parents better understand how they can help their child succeed.

- Create an easy-to-understand printout of each child's student achievement data that includes projections of how a child is likely to perform in the future and ensure this printout is given to each child's guardian.
- Provide best practices from across the state of ways individual schools are successfully increasing parental involvement. Ensure these best practices are widely distributed to superintendents and principals.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Utilize Data to Enhance Student Learning

Create a data-driven environment that equips policymakers, superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents with the information and tools they need to advance student learning and success.

Provide high-quality information and data to inform the decisions of state and local political leaders, especially state legislators, local school boards, and county commissioners.

- Ensure all 2010 gubernatorial candidates have a strong background on education reform efforts in Tennessee by holding one-on-one briefings with all candidates and hosting a gubernatorial candidates forum focused on education.
- Work with the chairs and vice chairs of the House and Senate education committees to provide non-partisan policy briefings on education topics that are likely to come up in the next legislative session.
- Work with local civic organizations and local business leaders to hold education policy information sessions for 2010 legislative and school board candidates.
- Provide information on education reform efforts in Tennessee at Tennessee County Commissioners Association meetings and other meetings of state and local elected officials.
- Expand and strengthen both online and in-person professional development opportunities for school board members in partnership with the Tennessee School Boards Association.





Additional funding alone is not the answer to Tennessee's educational challenges. As discussed in SCORE's interim report, there is no conclusive evidence demonstrating that district per pupil spending is correlated with either student achievement levels or student achievement gains. Many of the recommendations presented in the previous sections do not require any additional funding in either the short or long term. Several others could certainly be funded by more closely examining ways in which existing funds are being used and reallocating those funds to more effectively improve student achievement. However, there are a small number of recommendations for which new funds will certainly be required in the long term. We discuss both the short term and long term funding needs below.

Short Term

Tennessee is facing one of its most severe budget crises of the past twenty years. When federal stimulus funds run out in 2011, the state's budget situation will likely only be more severe. While this is not the time to expect new state funding, it is important to lock existing funding in place and ensure it is used more effectively. Specifically, the current extended contract, career ladder and professional development funding should be maintained at their present levels. The extended contract money should be redirected into evidence-based interventions (e.g., expanded learning time) for students scoring below basic on the TCAP as well as for gifted students, while the career ladder money should be used to fund district's differentiated pay plans, especially differentiated pay plans that support teacher mentoring programs and the creation of professional learning communities within individual schools.

The state should also aggressively apply for all available competitive federal grants and align these grants with the priorities outlined in



this report. Specifically, Tennessee's Race to the Top application should include the Race to the Top priorities outlined on page 20. The state's Teacher Incentive Fund application should help pilot district mentoring programs, fund the implementation of district's existing differentiated pay plans, and provide performance bonuses to high-performing principals. The state should also utilize funds from the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant program to develop and sustain the Pre-K through postsecondary data warehouse recommended on page 16.

Finally, the philanthropic and business community should make a one-time investment to fund a SCORE five-year implementation effort and to scale up successful programs across the state. Although this private and philanthropic funding cannot sustain recurring costs, it can be critical to initiating and replicating innovative programs and providing start-up funding for new initiatives in this challenging economic time.

Long Term

Education funding should be the most important priority in the state budget. Although the current economic climate makes it impossible to allocate funds to new programs in the short term, there are four areas in which the state should make strategic investments as funding becomes available. We believe it would be more strategic for the state to invest in these four areas rather than to provide across-the-board education funding increases. The four areas are:

1. Strategies for improving teacher instruction including teacher mentor programs, instructional coaches, and the development of professional learning communities.
2. Evidence-based interventions (e.g., expanded learning time) for at-risk students who are performing below grade level.

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3. K-2 diagnostic assessments and K-12 formative assessments for all districts as well as aligned professional development opportunities that help administrators and teachers use these assessments to improve classroom instruction.
 4. Strategies for making the transition between high school and postsecondary education more seamless including early college high schools, online learning, dual enrollment, dual credit, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs.
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STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES



RACE TO THE TOP PRIORITIES

Standards and Assessments

1. Provide all districts with both formative and summative assessments for grades K-12.
2. Launch a statewide public relations campaign to emphasize the importance of education and that getting a job that pays well today requires a different level of education than before. Underscore that the Tennessee Diploma Project is a first step in this process and provide concrete examples of how parents can help their child succeed.
3. Fund professional development opportunities focused on helping teachers and guidance counselors successfully implement the Tennessee Diploma Project. The Electronic Learning Center should be a key part of this effort and used for both delivering training and providing a forum for teachers to collaborate and share resources.
4. Working with e⁴TN, the Niswonger-Bristol online learning program, and Oak Ridge Associated Universities, fund the statewide expansion of online learning opportunities, especially for high school math, science, and foreign language courses.
5. Provide start-up funding for programs that help make the transition between high school and postsecondary education more seamless including early college high schools, online learning, dual enrollment, dual credit, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs.

Teachers and Leaders

1. Fund the expansion of Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, Teach Tennessee, Chattanooga/Knoxville/Memphis Teacher Residencies, Distinguished Professionals, Teach Tennessee, and UTeach to increase the pipeline of teachers in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects, especially math and science.
2. Fund a year-long process to create both a teacher effectiveness measure that can be the basis of all teacher evaluation, tenure, and compensation decisions and a principal effectiveness measure that can be the basis of all principal evaluation, tenure, and compensation decisions.
3. After this teacher effectiveness measure is created, connect it to both tenure and compensation; specifically:
 - Restructure the state salary schedule to include new elements such as multiple career paths (e.g., beginning, professional, and master teachers). Also consider incentivizing select inputs (e.g., credentials in high-needs subject areas, appropriate graduate degrees, placement in high-needs schools, teacher leadership roles) and outputs (e.g., performance on the new teacher effectiveness measure). All new teachers would fall under the new salary schedule while existing teachers could opt-in.
 - Directly link tenure decisions to the teacher effectiveness measure, allowing student achievement gains to be included as one component of the teacher effectiveness measure before a final tenure decision must be reached.
4. Create a competitive state fund to support high-quality district mentoring, professional development, and differentiated pay programs

that are part of a district's comprehensive human capital strategy (e.g., Benwood Initiative and Teacher Advancement Program).

5. Create a network of regional high-quality school leadership programs that recruit, train, and support highly effective school leaders.

Data Systems

1. Develop a single statewide pre-K through postsecondary data warehouse containing data from multiple existing sources including student performance and demographic databases, teacher identification and demographic databases, financial databases, and formative and summative assessment databases. The data warehouse must provide information that is easily accessible and user friendly to principals, teachers, counselors, administrators, school board members, higher education institutions and (as appropriate) parents and students.
2. Fund online and in-person training for superintendents, principals, and teachers about how TVAAS works and how it and other assessment tests (e.g., PLAN and EXPLORE) can be effectively used to improve classroom instruction.

Low-Performing Schools

1. Launch a comprehensive initiative to focus on developing interventions for low-performing schools, especially in rural areas.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2010 Agenda:

Policy Recommendations

1. Emphasize that education is your top priority and that every child can succeed.
2. Hold steadfastly to higher academic standards, even if and when the resulting student outcomes do not appear as favorable.
3. Pass a legislative package that:
 - Ensures the Tennessee Department of Education directly provides all principals and teachers log-in information to the appropriate portions of the TVAAS database.
 - Ensures higher education teacher training programs and alternative certification providers have access to aggregate TVAAS data on graduates from their programs.
 - Requires all principals to receive an annual performance evaluation.
 - Raises the class size cap in certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes (e.g., marketing) where there is no physical safety risk. Class size would still have to comply with existing grade level class size caps, and associated funding formulas would be adjusted to ensure this change remains budget neutral. This would assist districts in continuing to offer CTE classes while still implementing the Tennessee Diploma Project.
 - Allows all school districts to use administrative law judges to settle tenured teacher dismissal proceedings.



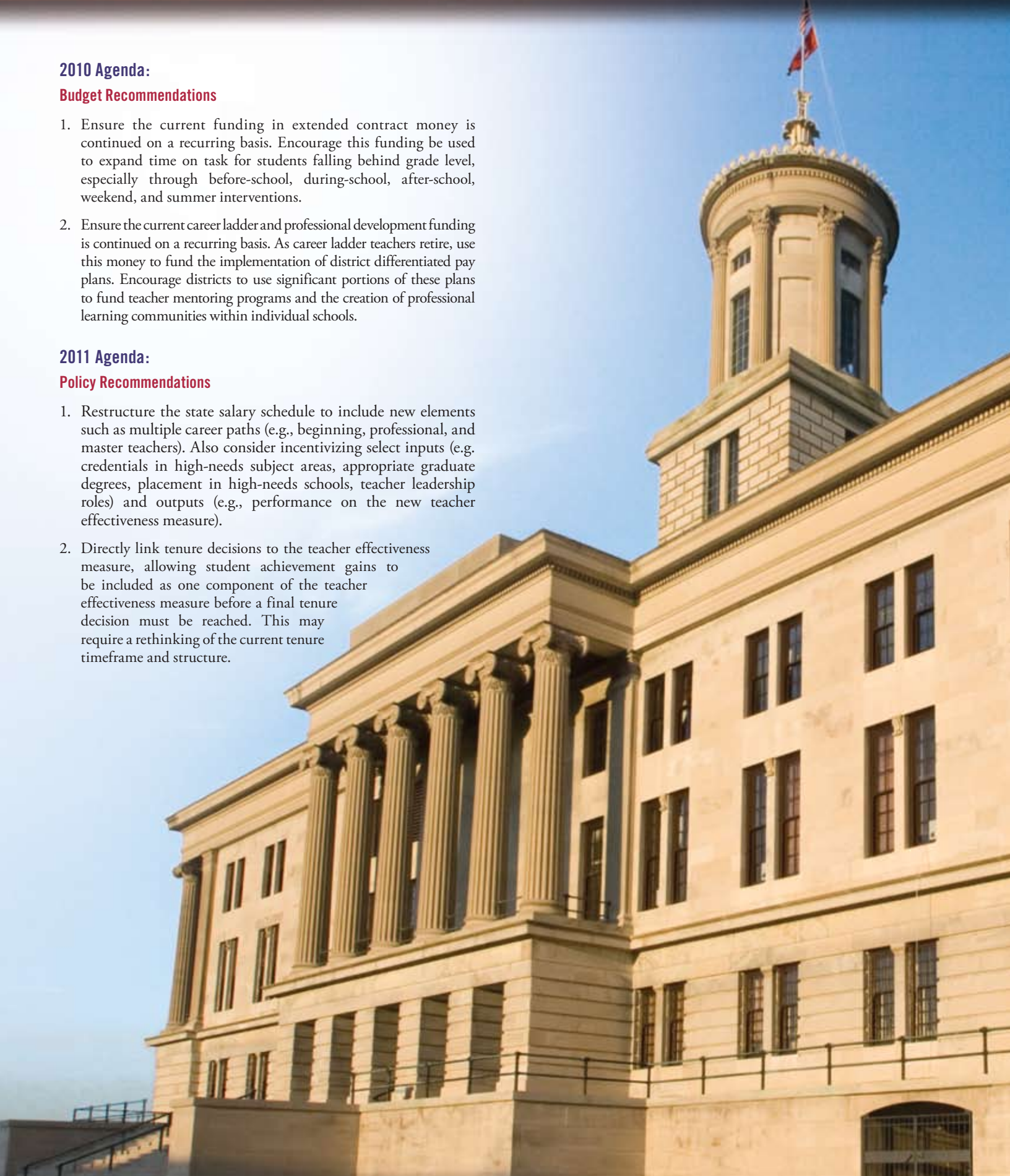
2010 Agenda:

Budget Recommendations

1. Ensure the current funding in extended contract money is continued on a recurring basis. Encourage this funding be used to expand time on task for students falling behind grade level, especially through before-school, during-school, after-school, weekend, and summer interventions.
2. Ensure the current career ladder and professional development funding is continued on a recurring basis. As career ladder teachers retire, use this money to fund the implementation of district differentiated pay plans. Encourage districts to use significant portions of these plans to fund teacher mentoring programs and the creation of professional learning communities within individual schools.

2011 Agenda:

Policy Recommendations

1. Restructure the state salary schedule to include new elements such as multiple career paths (e.g., beginning, professional, and master teachers). Also consider incentivizing select inputs (e.g. credentials in high-needs subject areas, appropriate graduate degrees, placement in high-needs schools, teacher leadership roles) and outputs (e.g., performance on the new teacher effectiveness measure).
 2. Directly link tenure decisions to the teacher effectiveness measure, allowing student achievement gains to be included as one component of the teacher effectiveness measure before a final tenure decision must be reached. This may require a rethinking of the current tenure timeframe and structure.
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STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. Ensure a culture of high expectations underlies every single policy you develop.
2. Hold steadfastly to higher academic standards in the State of Tennessee, even if and when the resulting student outcomes do not appear as favorable.
3. Monitor the progress of the National Governors Association/ Council of Chief State School Officers Common Core Standards project. If the project identifies specific areas where Tennessee's standards could be improved, adopt these specific improvements. Otherwise, continuously modify Tennessee's standards to ensure they are internationally benchmarked by regularly reviewing and updating all standards.
4. Define TCAP proficiency in each subject as being on pace to meet the ACT college-ready benchmark in that subject. Define this proficiency threshold prior to students taking the assessments in the spring of 2010.
5. Create a process by which alternative providers can be granted the authority to certify principals.
6. Require students score at least basic on select end-of-course tests for high school graduation with appropriate alternative assessment opportunities for special education students and English Language Learners. Implement this recommendation over time as the reliability of each end-of-course assessment is validated. Ideally, the State Board of Education's Middle Grades Policy would be implemented concurrently.
7. Either remove the Praxis I as an option for gaining entry into teacher training programs or raise the performance requirements on the Praxis I to make them equivalent to current ACT and SAT score requirements.
8. Participate in a task force to revise the existing Teacher Training Program Report Card and to create a School Leadership Program report card.
9. Propose enhancing the Tennessee's College-and-Career Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI) progress report by: (1) making goal #2 track both 4th and 8th grade student college-readiness (2) replacing metric #3 with the percent of students who score at or above proficient in reading and math on the 4th and 8th grade TCAP and NAEP assessments and the gap between the percent proficient on the two tests (3) adding dual credit and International Baccalaureate programs to metric #7 and (4) adding a new metric to track the percent of first time postsecondary students completing degrees within 150 percent of normal degree program time (e.g., three years for associate's degree and six years for bachelor's degree).
10. After these changes have been made, align metrics tracked by the State Board of Education and metrics tracked in the Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee with the College-and-Career Ready Policy Institute report so that all entities involved in education are tracking a single set of outcome metrics.




TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Data and Assessment

1. Identify best practices for school readiness assessments for students in grades K-2. Over time, provide state funding for these new assessments and add an additional metric to the CCRPI report tracking student readiness on these assessments.
2. Negotiate a statewide contract for K-12 formative assessments that districts can purchase at a reduced price. Over time, provide state funding for these formative assessments.
3. Directly provide all principals and teachers log-in information to the appropriate portions of the TVAAS database.
4. Reconfigure existing TVAAS, teacher effect, and other student achievement data reports to ensure they are transmitted electronically and easy for teachers to understand.
5. Create an easy-to-understand printout of each child's student achievement data that is clearly connected with projections of how a child is likely to perform in the future and ensure this printout is given to each child's teacher.
6. Track postsecondary remediation rates and costs of recent high school graduates back to each high school and district on the Tennessee Department of Education Report Card.

Professional Development and Accountability

1. Focus professional development efforts on (1) helping principals, teachers, and guidance counselors successfully implement the Tennessee Diploma Project and (2) training superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and teachers how TVAAS works and how it and other assessment tests (e.g., PLAN and EXPLORE) can be effectively used to improve classroom instruction. Use the Electronic Learning Center as a method for delivering this training and a forum for teachers to collaborate and share resources.
2. Identify ways for improving the effectiveness of interventions for low-performing schools and districts by enhancing evaluation mechanisms of current support programs (e.g., Exemplary Educators, AGE, and STAT teams) and better segmenting schools by the type of interventions they need. For example, survey principals and teachers in schools receiving interventions as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions and consider dividing Exemplary Educators into two groups, one who assists schools that missed AYP on only one or two subgroups and a second who assists schools that missed AYP on most subgroups.
3. Ensure the approval process for teacher preparation programs is connected to the State Board of Education Teacher Training Program Report Card by providing the Board of Examiners with the datasets used in the report card. Create a process by which these teacher preparation programs are provided meaningful feedback and recommendations for improvement.

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4. Partner with SCORE's Leadership Initiative to recruit, select, and train an adequate number of expert evaluators to implement the school leadership program approval process in a way that is consistent with the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership policy and that encourages programs to set high standards and undertake continuous improvement.
 5. Partner with SCORE's Statewide Leadership Initiative to ensure the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders' academies and programs are connected to and supported by ongoing professional development opportunities in local school districts and higher education institutions.

Miscellaneous

1. Create a culture of high expectations among all Tennessee Department of Education employees. The Department should be a resource that assists districts and schools in ensuring every child succeeds.
2. Annually recognize the top-performing superintendents, principals, and teachers in the state based on objective criteria (e.g., new teacher effectiveness measure, student achievement data, value-added scores, graduation rates).
3. Partner with the Tennessee Education Association to conduct a survey of teacher working conditions and provide resources to help individual schools use the survey to improve their work environment.



LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

1. Encourage a culture of high expectations for students, educators, and schools in your area. Emphasize that no matter a student's background, he or she can succeed.
2. Make education a top priority in your community. Work to make parents, community leaders, faith-based organizations, and businesses understand the importance of education, and make education your local government's top funding priority.
3. Support local school systems as they work to implement the Tennessee Diploma Project. Help educate the public about the Diploma Project, including why it is important for your local economy and all the individuals who live there.
4. Hold your local school system accountable by actively engaging in education issues at the district level and educating the community about key school outcomes. Ensure your engagement is focused on providing schools the support they need to succeed.
5. Create public-private partnerships to support local schools. For example, invest in afterschool programs for at-risk students, support the creation of programs that help recruit high-quality candidates into teaching, and provide special recognition for excellent teachers.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES



College and Career Ready Advocacy Campaign

1. Coordinate a communications effort across all key stakeholder groups to emphasize that getting a good paying job today requires a different level of education than before and that Tennessee schools can become #1 in the Southeast within the next five years. Emphasize the Tennessee Diploma Project is a first step in this process. As a critical part of this campaign, provide concrete examples of how parents can help their child succeed.
2. Ensure all 2010 gubernatorial candidates have a strong background on education reform efforts in Tennessee by holding one-on-one briefings with all candidates and hosting a gubernatorial candidates forum focused on education.
3. Provide information on education reform efforts in Tennessee at Tennessee County Commissioners Association meetings and other meetings of state and local elected officials.
4. Work with local civic organizations and local business leaders to hold education policy information sessions for 2010 legislative and school board candidates.

Legislative Research and Support

1. Work with the chairs and vice chairs of the House and Senate education committees to provide non-partisan policy briefings on education topics that are likely to come up in the next legislative session.

Quick Win Projects

1. In spring 2010, launch a three-month task force to develop a comprehensive plan for how all students in the state can be given access to low-cost online courses, especially courses that meet the new high school graduation requirements. Include e⁴TN, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, the Niswonger-Bristol online learning program, and other online course providers as members of this task force.
2. In spring 2010, launch a three-month task force to identify options for reducing the turnaround time for grading assessment tests to allow TCAP and end-of-course exams to be given during the last four weeks of school.
3. In spring 2010, launch a six-month task force to revise the State Board of Education's Teacher Training Program Report Card. Include additional metrics such as the average ACT scores of teacher candidates, teacher TVAAS scores, the subjects teachers are trained in, and retention rates. Ensure alternative providers and each degree program at a higher education institution are evaluated individually on this report card. Ensure this report card is distributed widely.
4. In fall 2010, launch a six-month task force to identify how the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship can be used most effectively to increase access to and completion of postsecondary degrees. As part of this task force, consider innovative programs (e.g., dual credit, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and early

college high schools) that increase high school students' participation in post secondary coursework.

5. In fall 2010, launch a six-month task force to assist higher education institutions in recruiting higher quality candidates into teaching. As part of this task force, develop common recruitment tools and update the Tennessee Teacher Employment Resources website. Members of the task force would include representatives from the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Education Association, Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative, higher education institutions, Teach Tennessee, Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and other key stakeholders.
6. Provide models of how Career and Technical Education classes can meet the new high school graduation requirements, especially the higher-level math and lab science requirements. Ensure these models are widely distributed to district leadership.
7. Provide case studies of the best ways higher education institutions are partnering with local districts to train teachers. Ensure these case studies are widely distributed to district and higher education leadership.
8. Provide best practices from across the state of ways individual schools are successfully increasing parental involvement. Ensure these best practices are widely distributed to superintendents and principals.
9. Promote the exchange of successful school improvement strategies among all public schools, including charters, in order to build upon proven best practices for public schools.

Teacher Effectiveness Measure Task Force

1. Develop, pilot, and roll out a statewide teacher effectiveness measure based on multiple measures including student achievement gains and potentially principal evaluations, peer review, and parent and student surveys. Ensure a significant component of this measure is based on a combination of student achievement and student achievement gains for as many teachers as possible. SCORE and the Tennessee Education Association would jointly lead the creation of this new measure, working closely with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-funded teacher effectiveness initiative.

Leadership Initiative

1. Launch a three-year Statewide Leadership Initiative to make Tennessee's superintendent and principal training and support programs the best in the nation. The initiative would be led by a board of representative stakeholders including professional associations, higher education institutions, non-profits, district and school leaders, and the business and philanthropic community. The initiative would be staffed by renowned leadership experts recruited from both around the country and across the state. The initiative would focus on implementing the recommendations below over the next three years and then working with other organizations (e.g., the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, the Tennessee School Boards Association, the Tennessee Department of Education, and higher education institutions) to ensure the recommendations were sustainable after the three-year initiative was complete.

2. Assist both higher education and district school leadership programs in effectively implementing the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership Policy by creating a pool of shared resources (e.g., a common curriculum, online professional development tools, and a list of top instructors on specific topics who are willing to teach across the state) and providing opportunities for school leadership programs from across the state to share best practices with one another.
3. Work with the State Board of Education to create a report card for school leadership programs similar to the one the State Board of Education currently has for teacher preparation programs. Include metrics such as how many graduates from each program actually become administrators, the distribution of TVAAS scores of schools led by graduates from each program, and superintendents' and principals' satisfaction with each program. Ensure this report card is distributed widely.
4. Partner with the Tennessee Department of Education to recruit, select, and train an adequate number of expert evaluators to implement the school leadership program approval process in a way that is consistent with the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership policy and that encourages programs to set high standards and undertake continuous improvement.
5. Enhance and expand the Prospective Superintendents Academy currently run by the Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and Niswonger Foundation.
6. Support the recently launched new superintendent mentorship program run by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Association of Independent and Municipal School Districts.
7. Create a statewide principal evaluation tool that is user friendly and that districts can use to create performance contracts between superintendents and principals.
8. Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, Tennessee Department of Education, Association of Independent and Municipal School Districts, and Tennessee School Boards Association to create several examples of tools for evaluating superintendents.
9. Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Tennessee Department of Education to ensure existing professional development opportunities for superintendents are sufficiently focused on increasing student achievement rather than operational issues. For example, ensure superintendents in districts with high achievement gains have the opportunity to share best practices with their colleagues and that all superintendents receive professional development around how to effectively conduct principal evaluations and connect them to performance contracts.
10. Work with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Tennessee Principals Association to enhance online professional development opportunities for superintendents and principals.
11. Expand and strengthen both online and in-person professional development opportunities for school board members in partnership with the Tennessee School Boards Association.



STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES



P-16 COUNCILS AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

1. Create a culture of high expectations among your teacher training and school leadership programs. Individuals entering these programs must be of the highest quality and the programs themselves must ensure they are producing educators who believe every child can succeed.
2. Partner with SCORE to launch a task force to identify how the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship can be used most effectively to increase access to and completion of postsecondary degrees. As part of this task force, consider innovative programs that increase high school students' participation in postsecondary coursework (e.g., dual credit, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and early college high schools).
3. Building on the Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative, partner with SCORE to launch a task force to assist higher education institutions in recruiting high quality candidates into teaching. As part of this task force, develop common recruitment tools and update the Tennessee Teacher Employment Resources website. Members of the task force would include representatives from the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Education Association, Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative, higher education institutions, Teach Tennessee, Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and other key stakeholders.
4. Create a performance measure for teacher candidates that includes assessments of content knowledge, classroom management skills, and other teaching skills. This measure should build on the work of the Tennessee Teacher Quality Initiative and be connected to the new statewide teacher effectiveness measure.
5. Work with the SCORE Statewide Leadership Initiative to help both higher education and district school leadership programs in effectively implementing the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership Policy by creating a pool of shared resources (e.g., a common curriculum, online professional development tools, and a list of top instructors on specific topics who are willing to teach across the state) and providing opportunities for school leadership programs from across the state to share best practices with one another.
6. Create minimum quality standards for dual credit and dual enrollment courses.
7. Participate in a task force to revise the existing Teacher Training Program Report Card and to create a School Leadership Program report card.
8. Update metrics being tracked in the Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee to reflect the metrics developed by Tennessee's College-and-Career Ready Policy Institute, including incorporating the changes to the CCRPI metrics recommended on page 10 of this report.



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

1. Create a culture of high expectations among your members that every child can succeed.
2. The Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and Niswonger Foundation should partner with SCORE's Statewide Leadership Initiative to enhance and expand the Prospective Superintendents Academy.
3. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and Association of Independent and Municipal Schools should continue to support the recently launched new superintendent mentorship program.
4. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents and the Tennessee Department of Education should partner with SCORE's Statewide Leadership Initiative to ensure existing professional development opportunities for superintendents are sufficiently focused on increasing student achievement rather than operational issues. For example, ensure superintendents in districts with high achievement gains have the opportunity to share best practices with their colleagues and that all superintendents receive professional development around how to effectively conduct principal evaluations and connect them to performance contracts.
5. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, Tennessee Principals Association, Tennessee Education Association, and Tennessee School Boards Association should partner with SCORE's Statewide Leadership Initiative to enhance online professional development opportunities for superintendents, principals, and school board members.
6. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, Association of Independent and Municipal School Districts, and Tennessee School Boards Association should partner with SCORE's Statewide Leadership Initiative to create several examples of tools for evaluating superintendents.
7. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Principals Association, and Tennessee Education Association should annually recognize the top-performing superintendents, principals, and teachers in the state based on objective criteria (e.g., new teacher effectiveness measure, student achievement data, value-added scores, graduation rates).
8. The Tennessee Education Association should partner with SCORE to develop, pilot, and roll out a statewide teacher effectiveness measure based on multiple measures including student achievement gains and potentially principal evaluations, peer review, and parent and student surveys. Ensure a significant component of this measure is based on a combination of student achievement and student achievement gains for as many teachers as possible.
9. The Tennessee Education Association should partner with the Tennessee Department of Education to conduct a survey of teacher working conditions and provide resources to assist schools in using the survey to improve the work environments of individual schools.



BUSINESS AND PHILANTHROPIC COMMUNITY

1. Be a strong voice for education reform efforts and the Tennessee Diploma Project.
2. Invest in SCORE's five-year implementation plan.
3. Invest in expanding programs focused on recruiting high-quality candidates into teaching, especially in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects (e.g., Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, Teach Tennessee, Distinguished Professionals, Chattanooga / Knoxville / Memphis Teacher Residencies, UTeach, Math and Science Scholarships).
4. Invest in expanding high performing schools, including high-performing charter schools.
5. At the request of the Tennessee Department of Education, school districts, and individual schools, provide advice on business management principles to state, district, and school administrators.
6. Encourage your employees to volunteer in their local school, use your employee newsletter to emphasize the importance of education, and provide special recognition for excellent teachers (e.g., awards, coupons).

FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

1. Encourage a culture of high expectations for students, educators, and schools in your area. Emphasize that no matter a child's background, they can succeed. Underscore the importance of the Tennessee Diploma Project in setting high expectations for students.
2. Craft before-school, after-school, weekend and summer programs with the state and district's academic goals and standards in mind.
3. Support school systems and be a resource for parents and families. Local non-profits can help a school meet the emotional, physical, and social needs of its students and their parents.
4. One non-profit should take the lead on developing a network of non-profits, higher education institutions, school districts, and Tennessee Department of Education programs that are currently assisting students in applying to postsecondary institutions. This network should provide these programs with opportunities to share best practices, resources, and training opportunities.

SCHOOL BOARDS

1. Create high expectations for every employee and student in your district. Believe that every child can succeed and make sure everyone in the district believes the same.
2. Develop a district strategic plan and connect mandated district and school improvement plans with this strategic plan. The district's strategic plan, guided by a strong mission statement, should ultimately lead to improved instruction, student learning, and student achievement.
3. Create policies for your district that are consistent with your strategic plan. Leave the implementation and management of these policies to your superintendent, but hold your superintendent accountable for improving student achievement.
4. Pass a resolution supporting the higher standards of the Tennessee Diploma Project to illustrate your commitment to working over time to ensure students meet these standards. Communicate the importance of these standards within your district and to the general public.
5. Make it a priority to recruit, develop, support and retain highly effective principals and teachers.
6. Use data to inform all your policy decisions and help all employees in your district do the same.

SUPERINTENDENTS

1. Create high expectations for every employee and student in your district. Believe that every child can succeed and make sure everyone in the district believes the same.
2. Develop a district strategic plan and connect mandated district and school improvement plans with this strategic plan. The district's strategic plan, guided by a strong mission statement, should ultimately lead to improved instruction, student learning, and student achievement.
3. Ensure all principals, teachers, and guidance counselors in your district have opportunities to learn about the state's new standards and provide opportunities for principals and teachers to learn from one another about how they are implementing these new standards.
4. Make it a priority to recruit, develop, support and retain highly effective principals and teachers.
5. Ensure principals have access to high-quality professional development that teaches them how to provide meaningful feedback and evaluations to teachers and how to develop professional learning communities within their schools.
6. Observe principals periodically throughout the year and provide them with constructive feedback. Provide principals with meaningful annual evaluations that highlight their strengths and weaknesses. Meet with principals throughout the year to discuss their progress.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

7. Use data to inform your decisions and help your employees do the same. Make sure all principals and teachers have access to the TVAAS database and have received training on how to use data to improve instruction. If principals and teachers have not received training, guide them to the free training available on the Electronic Learning Center.
8. Encourage principals and teachers to reach out to and involve parents in their child's education. For example, encourage teachers to provide parents with easy-to-understand printouts of their child's student achievement data and talk with parents about how they can help their child succeed.
9. Coordinate with faith-based and community organizations about ways they can assist schools in your district.
10. Ensure all high school students in your district have access to and utilize available career advising resources (e.g., KUDER, www.collegefortn.org) to help plan their high school elective focus, develop their post high school plans, and navigate the college application and financial aid process. Work within your budget and with local postsecondary institutions to maximize the number of dual credit, dual enrollment, and AP courses available to students.
11. Reexamine how you use extended contract money to ensure it is being used as effectively as possible.

PRINCIPALS

1. Create high expectations for teachers and students. All school staff should believe every student can succeed and should be focused on helping every student meet his or her full potential. Clearly communicate and advocate for what is needed for all students to meet high expectations.
2. Ensure all of your teachers have opportunities to learn about the state's new standards and provide opportunities for teachers to learn from one another about how they are implementing these new standards in their classroom.
3. Create professional learning communities in your school by identifying mentor teachers and doing your best to provide collaborative planning time for your teachers.
4. Encourage teachers to work with parents to understand the achievement data of their child.
5. Observe teachers periodically throughout the year and provide them with feedback on their instructional techniques. Provide teachers with meaningful annual assessments that highlight each teacher's strengths and weaknesses. Meet with teachers throughout the year to discuss their progress.
6. Use this data to inform your decisions and help your teachers do the same. Make sure all teachers in your school have access to all the available student achievement data (e.g., the TVAAS database) and have received training on how to use data to improve instruction. If teachers have not received training, guide them to the free training available on the Electronic Learning Center.

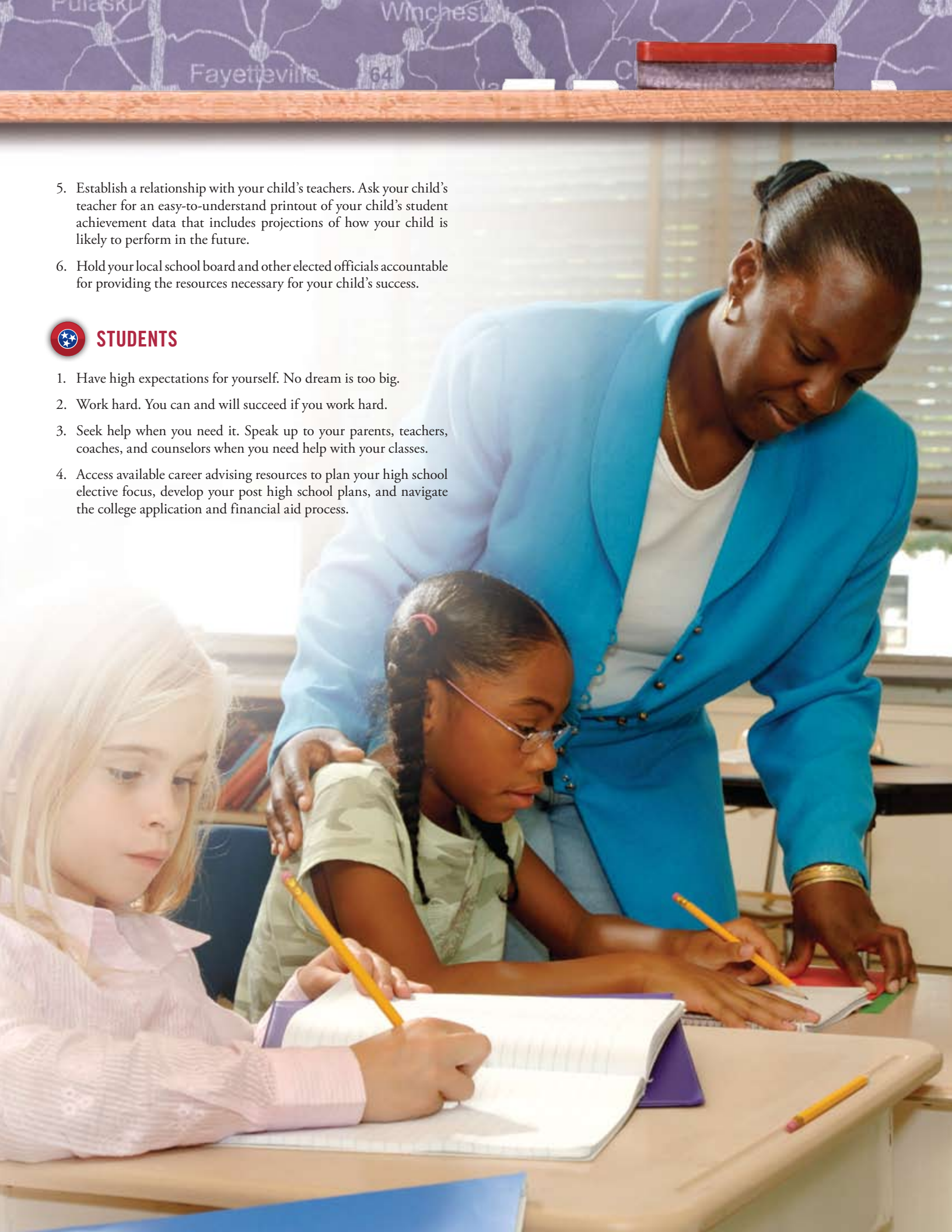
7. Insist your superintendent give you meaningful and frequent feedback, and use this feedback as an opportunity to assess your own performance and identify ways to improve.
8. If you are a high school principal, ensure all high school students have access to and utilize available career advising resources (e.g., KUDER, www.collegefortn.org) to help plan their high school elective focus, develop their post high school plans, and navigate the college application and financial aid process. Also, work within your budget and with local postsecondary institutions to maximize the number of dual credit, dual enrollment, and AP courses available to students.

TEACHERS

1. Create high expectations for every one of your students. Believe that every child can succeed, and make sure all your students know you believe in their abilities.
2. Work diligently to learn about the state's new standards and how they can be implemented most effectively in your classroom.
3. Insist your principal give you frequent and meaningful feedback, and use this feedback as an opportunity to assess your own performance and identify ways to improve.
4. Work with your principal and your colleagues to create a professional learning community in your school where you can continuously learn from and help teach your colleagues.
5. Ensure you use data to inform your classroom instruction. Make sure you have access to all available student achievement data (e.g., the TVAAS database). If you need help understanding the student achievement data you are provided, go to the Electronic Learning Center and take a quick tutorial on how TVAAS and other student achievement data can be used to improve classroom instruction.
6. Develop relationships with your students' parents. Provide parents with easy-to-understand printouts of their child's student achievement data and talk with parents about how they can help their child succeed.

PARENTS

1. Create high expectations for your child by establishing an environment at home that actively encourages learning. Take the time to read with your child. Help your child with their homework.
2. Encourage your child to take challenging coursework.
3. To the extent your work schedule allows, be an active participant in your child's school. Consider volunteering during the school day or becoming an active member of the PTA.
4. Support school leaders and teachers. Understand we are all working towards a common goal.

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5. Establish a relationship with your child's teachers. Ask your child's teacher for an easy-to-understand printout of your child's student achievement data that includes projections of how your child is likely to perform in the future.
 6. Hold your local school board and other elected officials accountable for providing the resources necessary for your child's success.

STUDENTS

1. Have high expectations for yourself. No dream is too big.
2. Work hard. You can and will succeed if you work hard.
3. Seek help when you need it. Speak up to your parents, teachers, coaches, and counselors when you need help with your classes.
4. Access available career advising resources to plan your high school elective focus, develop your post high school plans, and navigate the college application and financial aid process.

TIMELINE

2010 • SPRING

2010 • FALL

Governor's Debate - January 14	ONE-TIME EVENT	
Define TCAP proficiency		
2010 Legislative Agenda		
Negotiate formative assessment contract		
Either remove or raise Praxis I entry requirements into teacher preparation programs		
Identify standards to adopt from NGA/CCSSO Common Core Standards Project		
Launch a network of organizations that assist high school students with applying to college		
Allow alternative providers to license principals		
Enhance CCRPI metrics		
Launch charter school incubator		
E-Learning Task Force	THREE-MONTH PROJECTS	
Task force for reducing assessment test turnaround time		
Launch statewide communications campaign in support of the Tennessee Diploma Project	SIX-MONTH PROJECTS	
Develop statewide principal evaluation		
Develop options for superintendent evaluations		
Develop mechanism for measuring effectiveness of district and school interventions		
Revise Teacher Training Program Report Card		
Reconfigure existing TVAAS printouts for parents and teachers		
Publish models of CTE classes that meet new standards		
Ramp up Tennessee Diploma Project communications campaign		SIX-MONTH PROJECTS
Develop School Leadership Report Card		
Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Task Force		
Publish case studies on strong district-higher education partnerships		
Publish best practices in parental involvement		
Teacher Recruitment Task Force		
Create Pre-K through post secondary data warehouse	YEAR-LONG PROJECTS	
Develop teacher effectiveness measure		
Create minimum standards for dual credit and dual enrollment courses		
Develop performance measure for teacher candidates		
Enhance Prospective Superintendents Academy		YEAR-LONG
Pass tenure and state salary schedule legislation		
Track postsecondary remediation costs on State Report Card		
Revise teacher training and school leadership program approval process		
Conduct Teacher Working Conditions Survey		
Develop online professional development activities for school board members, superintendents and principals		TWO-YEAR
Require passage of end-of-course tests for graduation		
Statewide Leadership Initiative		
Provide non-partisan briefings to legislators, school board members, and county commissioners		
Release Annual Joint Report on Pre-K through Higher Education		
Recognize high-performing superintendents, principals, and teachers		
Conduct regional training for legislative and school board candidates	ONE-TIME EVENT	
Embrace strong academic standards		
Recruit high-quality charter school providers to the state		
Ensure students have access to good career advising resources		
Provide statewide professional development opportunities on the new standards and TVAAS		
Increase state funding for the four long-term strategic priorities outlined on page 18		
Expand programs that recruit high-quality candidates into teaching		



2011 • SPRING

2011 • FALL

2012 • SPRING

2012 • FALL

2013

2014

2015



PROJECT
ONE-TIME EVENT

ONE-TIME EVENT

YEAR-LONG PROJECTS

PROJECT

ONE-TIME EVENT

THREE-YEAR PROJECT

ANNUAL EVENTS

ONE-TIME EVENT

ONE-TIME EVENT

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTS

GLOSSARY

ACT College and Career Ready Benchmarks

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks identify the minimum scores students must achieve on each ACT subject-area test to indicate they have at least a 75 percent probability of earning a C or higher in a typical first-year college course in the corresponding subject. The ACT benchmark scores are 18 in English, 22 in math, 21 in reading, and 24 in science.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Advanced Placement courses are courses and exams offered by The College Board that provide students with an opportunity to take college-level courses and earn credit towards college while in high school. There are more than 30 different AP courses across multiple subject areas.

Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee

A joint report by the Tennessee State Board of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission that provides an annual update on statistics relating to Pre-K through higher education in Tennessee.

Approval Process

The Tennessee Department of Education's Office of Teacher Education and Accreditation is responsible for approving all teacher preparation programs in the state. As part of this approval process, a Board of Examiners conducts on-site visits at each program to determine whether the program meets minimum state requirements.

Charter School Incubator

A nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, staff and administrative support, and other resources to charter schools from the early planning stages through the life of the school.

Data Warehouse

A centralized repository for education data from multiple sources including student performance and demographic databases, teacher identification and demographic databases, financial databases, and formative and summative assessment databases. Data warehouses include user interfaces that provide easily accessible and user friendly information to principals, teachers, counselors, administrators, school board members, higher education institutions and (as appropriate) parents and students.

Differentiated Pay Plan

The State Board of Education's "Guidelines for Differentiated Pay Plans Public Chapter 376" (in compliance with TCA 49-5-611) requires every Local Education Agency (LEA) to develop a plan for differentiated teacher pay, generally through bonuses that are supplemental to the salary schedule. Differentiated pay plans can address the following areas of need: (1) recruitment of teachers to hard-to-staff schools (2) recruitment of new teachers (3) filling LEA-specific academic shortage areas and (4) retention of effective teachers.

Dual Credit

A high school course taught by high school faculty that is aligned with the curriculum of a postsecondary course. Students taking the course can receive postsecondary credit if they have satisfactory performance on an end-of-course assessment designed by the postsecondary institution.

Dual Enrollment

A postsecondary course taught at either the postsecondary institution or high school that allows students to simultaneously earn postsecondary and secondary course credit upon successful completion of the course.

e⁴TN

One of the statewide providers for online and e-learning courses, e⁴TN was created in 2005 with a three-year federal grant to the Hamilton County Department of Education. e⁴TN has developed and beta tested high-quality courses that have received national recognition from the United States Distance Learning Association.

Early College High Schools

Small schools designed specifically to enable students at risk of dropping out of high school to simultaneously earn both a high school diploma and an associate's degree or up to two years of credit towards a bachelor's degree. Early college high schools are frequently located on postsecondary campuses.

Electronic Learning Center

Developed and operated by the Tennessee Department of Education, this interactive, comprehensive website provides educational resources to teachers, students, and parents, including information on content and curriculum, policy changes, scientifically based research, and other educational links.

End-of-course Assessments

As part of the Tennessee Diploma Project, end-of-course exams will be administered in ten core high school subjects with the exam scores being incorporated into the student's final course grade. The subjects with end-of-course tests are: English I, II, and III; Algebra I and II; Geometry; U.S. History; Biology I; Chemistry; and Physics.

Extended Contracts

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) receive state funds for extended contract activities that enable districts to pay teachers for additional months of service to assist with several categories of programs including before and after school programs, talented and gifted programs, and programs for students at risk of dropping out.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are on-going assessments that are intended to provide frequent evaluations of student progress. Formative assessments provide teachers with information teachers can use to modify instruction and improve student learning.

Full-Service Schools

Full-service community schools are designed to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs through partnerships with non-profits and social service agencies that provide services directly to students and parents. These schools use the school building as the central hub for social service provision.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

IB has three different educational programs focused on "international-mindedness." Many postsecondary institutions offer credit for students who complete these programs.

Learning Centered Leadership Policy

Based on recommendations from Tennessee's Education Leadership Redesign Commission, the State Board of Education's Learning Centered Leadership Policy sunsets all existing Master's degree programs in school leadership and requires higher education institutions to develop new programs that provide a "comprehensive system of instructional leadership training, development, licensure and evaluation." Detailed information on the policy can be found on the State Board's website.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The only nationally representative assessment for students in the United States, NAEP tests students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. Results from 4th and 8th grade assessments in mathematics, reading, science, and writing are required to be reported at the state level.

NGA/CCSSO Common Core Standards

The National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have partnered with Achieve, ACT, and the College Board to help states develop a common core of standards for K-12 English-language arts and mathematics education. The research and evidence-based standards will align with college and career expectations as well as international standards. States will have the choice of whether or not to adopt these standards.

Postsecondary Remediation Rates

The percentage of postsecondary students who need to take remedial or developmental courses in order to be ready for college-level coursework.

Prospective Superintendents Academy

This year long program prepares candidates for superintendent positions in Tennessee public schools. The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, the Tennessee School Boards Association, and the Niswonger Foundation developed the academy as a means to create a pipeline of strong superintendents in the state.

Remediation

Remediation programs are targeted interventions designed to help students who are behind grade level catch up. Examples of interventions include one-on-one tutoring, before or after school programs, and weekend classes.

State Salary Schedule

The Tennessee State Board of Education is required to adopt an annual salary schedule for all licensed personnel across all school districts. Under the current salary schedule, a base salary is established each school year with licensed personnel receiving additional

compensation based upon their years of experience and level of education (e.g., Master's degree, Doctorate degree). The state salary schedule provides a minimum salary schedule on top of which individual districts can negotiate additional compensation.

Summative Assessments

Assessments given at a predetermined time (most often the end of an academic year) to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs and make judgments about student competency.

Survey of Teacher Working Conditions

An anonymous survey given to teachers to gain a better understanding of teacher working conditions and how they can be improved. These surveys often focus on categories such as time, empowerment, professional development, leadership, facilities and resources, and mentoring and induction.

Teacher Effectiveness Measure

As proposed under key strategy #3, SCORE and the Tennessee Education Association will jointly create a new measure for assessing teacher effectiveness. This measure will be composed of multiple metrics including student achievement gains and potentially principal evaluations, peer review, and parent and student surveys.

Teacher Training Report Card

The State Board of Education, as directed by TCA 49-5-108, publishes an annual report assessing the effectiveness of teacher training programs in the state based on the performance of the institution's graduates. The report card includes teacher effect data, information on placement and retention rates, and results from PRAXIS and other examinations.

Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL)

Under the Tennessee Department of Education's Office of Professional Development, TASL provides and approves ongoing professional development opportunities for district and school leaders. As mandated by TCA 49-5-5703, school administrators and supervisors must attend 28 hours of TASL-approved professional development every two years.

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

The TCAP assesses students in grades 3-8 in Tennessee and determines levels of proficiency based on test scores. As part of the Tennessee Diploma Project, there will be four levels of proficiency on TCAP: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced.

Tennessee Diploma Project (TDP)

Governor Phil Bredesen and the Tennessee State Board of Education launched the Tennessee Diploma Project in 2007, an offshoot of Achieve's American Diploma Project. TDP's three main components are the redesign of high school graduation requirements, a new TCAP assessment more closely aligned with the new standards, and new end-of-course tests for eighth grade and high school students.

Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

Created in 2004, TELS is the largest college scholarship program in Tennessee and includes five separate scholarship programs. The HOPE scholarship, which is awarded to Tennessee high school students that achieve at least a 3.0 GPA or score at least a 21 on the ACT, is the largest of these five programs. Sixty-five percent of students entering Tennessee's public colleges and universities in 2007 received some form of TELS funding.

Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

A measure of the effect a district or school has on the academic progress or growth rates of individual students and groups of students from year-to-year. TVAAS is based on the statistical methodology of Dr. William Sanders.

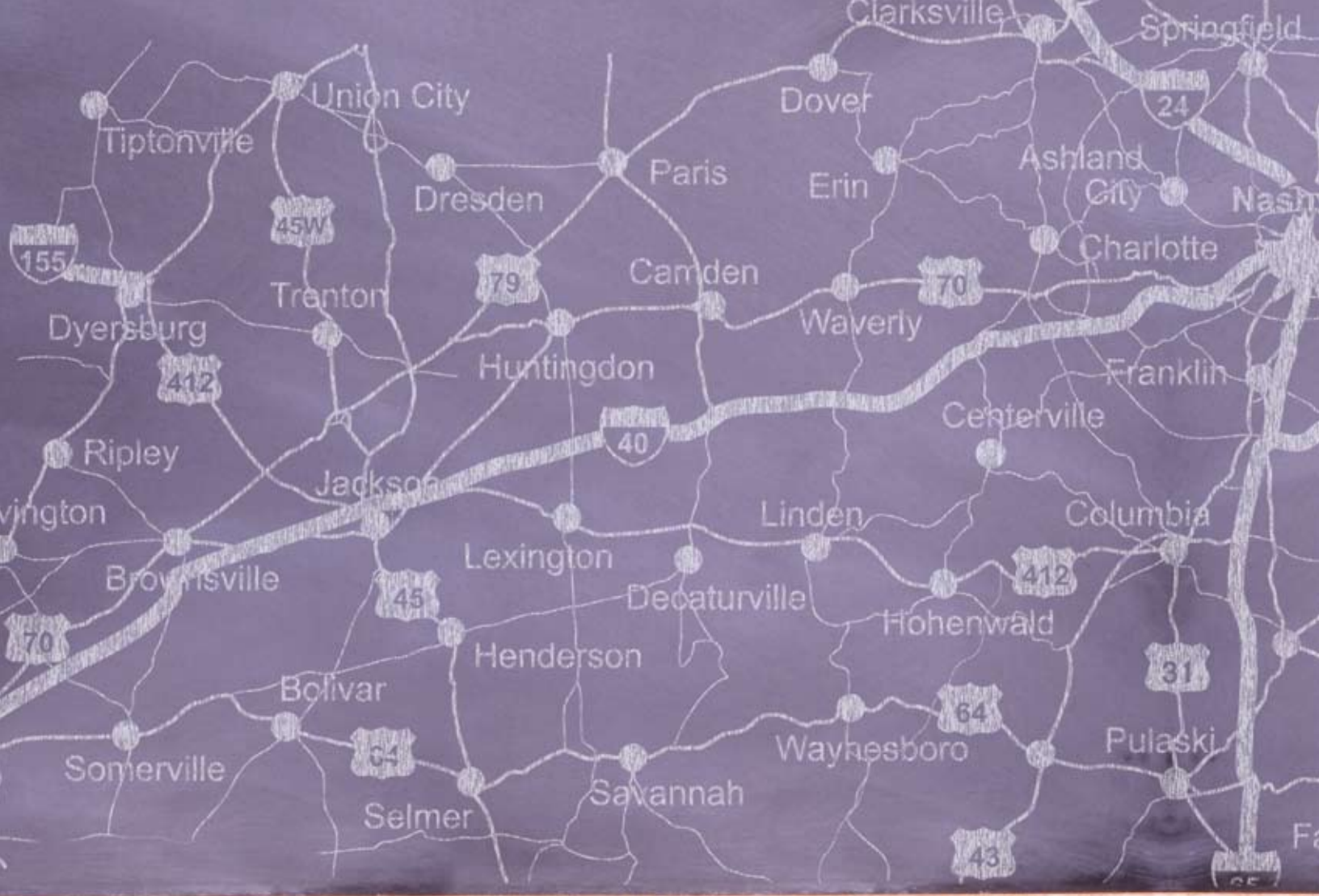
Tenure

Tenure is a status where employees are hired on a permanent basis without periodic contract renewals. Tennessee teachers are eligible for tenure after a three-year probationary period. At the end of this period, the director of schools either recommends the teacher for tenure or denies renewal of the teacher's contract. Once a teacher has been granted tenure, he or she cannot be removed from that district without due process and evidence of "incompetency, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, or insubordination." In practice, it is extremely rare for a tenured teacher to be fired.





$65 + 21 + 28$



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