

Accelerating Tennessee

2020-22 REPORT

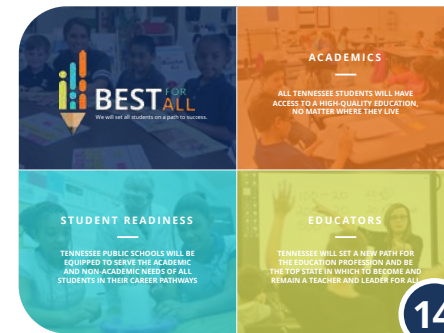


K-12 Public Education
at a glance...



“ The Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement formula will be a powerful tool the state can use to ensure we are putting all students on a path to success. By serving our students well and giving the public greater insight into how their tax dollars are supporting students, the TISA represents an exciting opportunity to improve educational outcomes, strengthen our workforce and propel Tennessee forward.

- **BILL LEE**
Tennessee Governor



CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Welcome	5
Who We Are	6
Leadership Team	6
Strategic Vision	7
What We're Doing	8
Milestones	8
In the News	11
Where We're Going	12
State Overview.....	12
Best for All	14
Academics	16
Student Readiness	30
Educators	38
Supporting Work	44
Conclusion	62
Brief Recap	62
Looking Ahead	63



Tennessee’s students are the future of our state, and we’ve got to be sure our public schools are well-equipped to prepare each and every one of them for lifelong success.

- PENNY SCHWINN
Commissioner of Education

Welcome...

Tennessee continues to take bold action and increase opportunities for students across the state.

Over the past two years, I have witnessed the heroic efforts of our district and school leaders and educators as they rally together to support our kids and ensure the needs of each and every student is met.

To help support early literacy development in Tennessee, **the state leveraged over \$100 million in federal grant funding to launch the Reading 360 initiative** and invest in optional reading resources and supports at no cost to districts. Reading 360 provides optional grants and resources to help more Tennessee students develop strong, phonics-based reading skills by engaging with stakeholders involved in a child’s journey of learning to read, including districts, teachers, and families.

Combining funding and support that is available at the state, district, and community levels, Tennessee has **dramatically increased the amount of learning time children have access to through TN ALL Corps**—high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring programming—helping to mitigate learning loss, accelerate student achievement, and build confidence in content.

Building upon the state’s strong commitment to ensure Tennessee is future workforce ready, Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly made an **historic investment of \$500 million to bring Innovative School Models** to every public high school and middle school in the state to boost opportunities for career readiness and student success.

Tennessee is leading the nation as the first state to have a registered apprenticeship for teaching, the Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship, now recognized by the US Department of Labor. Many states have followed in Tennessee’s footsteps by registering for teacher

apprenticeships. I am particularly excited and proud of this initiative as Tennessee and the rest of the country face growing teacher and staffing shortages. Tennessee is the state in which to become and remain a teacher.

Thanks to the support of Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly, Tennessee made history by overhauling the state’s 30-year-old public education funding formula. **Tennessee now has a new, student-based funding formula – the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA)** – one that increases opportunities for students, accounts for unique needs and other demographics, and provides transparency and increased accountability from all sides.

The TISA will empower each student to read proficiently by third grade, prepare each high school graduate to succeed in the postsecondary program or career of the graduate’s choice, and provide each student with the resources needed to succeed, regardless of the student’s individual circumstances.

Thanks to the incredible engagement of thousands of Tennesseans and community partners this process was successful, and we now have a public school funding formula that will serve the needs of each Tennessee student. I am deeply proud of the work of our Tennessee districts, school leaders, educators, students, and department for **working strategically with a common goal in mind—providing the best for ALL students.** We will remain laser focused on closing gaps, strategically investing in proven initiatives, and accelerating student academic achievement.

Sincerely,

Penny Schwinn, PhD
Commissioner of Education



Leadership Team



Dr. Penny Schwinn
Commissioner



Sam Percy
Deputy Commissioner of Operations



Chelsea Crawford
Chief of Staff



Christy Ballard
General Counsel



Dr. Lisa Coons
Chief Academic Officer



Dr. Eve Carney
Chief of Districts and Schools



Meghan McLeroy
Chief of Statewide Supports (CORE Offices)



Shannon Gordon
Chief Operating Officer



Charlie Bufalino
Assistant Commissioner of Policy & Legislative Affairs



Strategic Vision

The Tennessee Department of Education Best for All strategic plan sets a vision and intention that together as a state, we will set all Tennessee students on a path to success.

BEST FOR ALL
We will set all students on a path to success.

ACADEMICS
ALL TENNESSEE STUDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE

STUDENT READINESS
TENNESSEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BE EQUIPPED TO SERVE THE ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS IN THEIR CAREER PATHWAYS

EDUCATORS
TENNESSEE WILL SET A NEW PATH FOR THE EDUCATION PROFESSION AND BE THE TOP STATE IN WHICH TO BECOME AND REMAIN A TEACHER AND LEADER FOR ALL

The policies, programs, and practices set forth through these initiatives have allowed Tennessee's districts and schools to:



MAKE TARGETED INTERVENTIONS



CREATE INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS



PERMIT A SAFE, HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS



Assessment data reveals these interventions are working to move the needle for students.



Milestones

In Tennessee K-12 public education, the Best for All strategic plan is the guiding light across the state rooted in three priority areas:

ACADEMICS

STUDENT READINESS

EDUCATORS

Over the past two years, the department responded to the COVID-19 global health pandemic quickly and strategically to ensure schools and districts were provided necessary supports to transition between instruction models with a focus on in-person learning, create free, high-quality resources, develop toolkits, provide waivers, and much more.

Governor Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly convened a special legislative session on education in January 2021 to address urgent issues facing Tennessee students and schools as a result of the pandemic, which passed legislation on accountability, learning loss, literacy, and teacher pay.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Tennessee maintained its commitment to an annual statewide assessment to provide reliable data on how students are performing, and this past school year reflects Tennessee schools moving forward with a statewide laser-focus on helping students catch-up from a pandemic and accelerate their learning. Overall, the statewide 2021-22 TCAP student participation rate was 98% with 59 districts having participation higher than 99%.

Results from the 2021-22 TCAP assessments show that elementary students significantly improved their ELA scores and are performing at a level similar to pre-pandemic years. Additionally, improved performance in math was evident for Tennessee students of all ages. Every student group showed an increase in proficiency as demonstrated on the 2022 TCAP assessments.

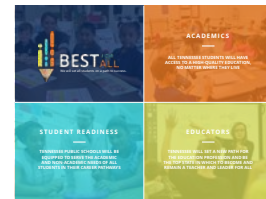
Additionally, the department has leveraged federal and state funding to create a lasting impact for students through strong and strategic academic programs, partnerships, and grant opportunities for school districts. Together, district and school leaders, educators, and families have made tremendous efforts to support children, close gaps, and accelerate learning. Tennessee will continue expanding and improving these strategic initiatives to provide the best for all students.

2019

- OCTOBER 15
Grow Your Own Initiative Announced



- NOVEMBER 5
Best for All Strategic Plan Launch



2020

- MARCH 5
COVID-19 came to Tennessee



- MARCH 25
Partnership with PBS Announcement



- AUGUST 6
Best for All Central Launch



- OCTOBER 5
Grow Your Own Launch (first round of grants)



- DECEMBER 29
Gov. Lee Calls for Special Legislative Session



2021

- JANUARY 4
Reading 360 Launch



- JANUARY 14
Special Session Launch



- MARCH 31
Innovative High School Models



- APRIL 9
Grow Your Own Round 2



- MAY-JULY
Summer Programming



- MAY 12
Reading 360: Decodables Launch



- MAY 17
Innovative School Models Launch (first round of grants)



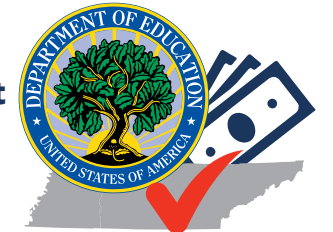
- MAY 26
Free ACT Prep Workshop & Classes



- JUNE 8 - JULY 1
Accelerating TN 2021 Bus Tour



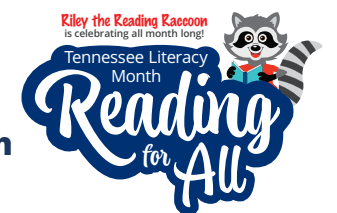
- JULY 15
U.S. Department of Education Approves State Spending Plan



- JULY 22
Best for All Recognition Program Announced



- SEPTEMBER
Tennessee Literacy Month



- SEPTEMBER 9
AP Access for ALL Launch Announcement



- SEPTEMBER 22
Promising Results from Special Legislation Investment



- SEPTEMBER 27
Reading 360: Starting with Sounds Launch



- SEPTEMBER 30
TN ALL Corps Launch






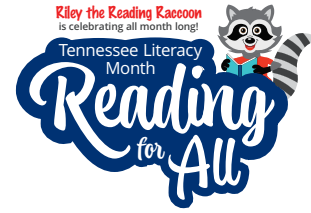
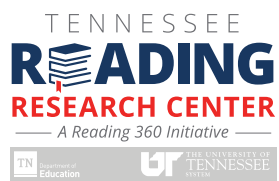




- OCTOBER 8
Funding Engagement Process Announcement



(continued on next page)

WHAT WE'RE DOING

2022

- JANUARY 13
TN Grow Your Own Registered Apprenticeship Announcement 
- FEBRUARY 11
Best for All Districts Announced & Recognition Day 
- FEBRUARY 24
Unveiling of Funding for Student Success: The Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act

- MARCH
TN Literacy Month 
- MARCH 7
Tennessee Reading Research Center Established: A Reading 360 Initiative

- APRIL 28
TISA Act Passes; \$1B More for Public Education in Tennessee 
- MAY
Grow Your Own Month 
- MAY-JULY
Summer Programming 
- MAY 2
TISA Act Signed into Law 

- MAY 16
Tennessee Grow Your Own Center Established 
- JUNE 1-15
Accelerating TN 2022 Summer Bus Tour 
- JUNE 14
Tennessee Releases 2021-22 TCAP State-Level Results 
- JULY
Innovative School Models Month

- JULY 28
TISA Public Rulemaking Hearing 
- AUGUST 2
TISA Rules Public Comment Deadline 
- AUGUST 11
TISA State Board of Education (SBE) Hearing 
- AUGUST 12
TISA Rules Receive Unanimous SBE Positive Recommendation
- SEPTEMBER
TN ALL Corps Month 
- SEPTEMBER 27
TDOE, TSIN Launch "Reach Them All" Initiative to Support Computer Science Education 

In the News

Across the state and country, Tennessee has been highlighted as a national example for our strategic investments and initiatives in alignment with the Best for All Strategic Plan: *Academics, Student Readiness, and Educators.*

CBS NEWS

Tennessee residency program trains new teachers and combats shortages

"The first-of-its-kind program allows teaching candidates to work full-time in the classroom while pursuing their degree — a win for future teachers and schools."

- CBS News, February 2022

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Schools Are Back and Confronting Severe Learning Losses

"Tennessee is among a handful of states that have taken aggressive action and managed to lift statewide results above 2021 levels."

- The Wall Street Journal, September 2022

The New York Times Magazine

American Schools Got a \$190 Billion Covid Windfall. Where Is It Going?

"...developed clear, research-driven recommendations for initiatives to catch students up from pandemic learning loss."

- The New York Times Magazine, September 2022

U.S. News & World Report

Helping Students Catch Up on Unfinished Learning

"Tennessee is also expanding summer and after-school programming, and ensuring that the additional learning connects to the regular classroom."

- U.S. News & World Report, March 2022

npr

6 things we've learned about how the pandemic disrupted learning

"We want to accelerate learning."

- NPR All Things Considered, June 2022

Forbes

Tennessee's Pioneering Teacher Apprenticeship Program

"This new 'Grow Your Own' model provides a sorely needed alternative to existing K-12 licensure systems."

- Forbes, January 2022

The74

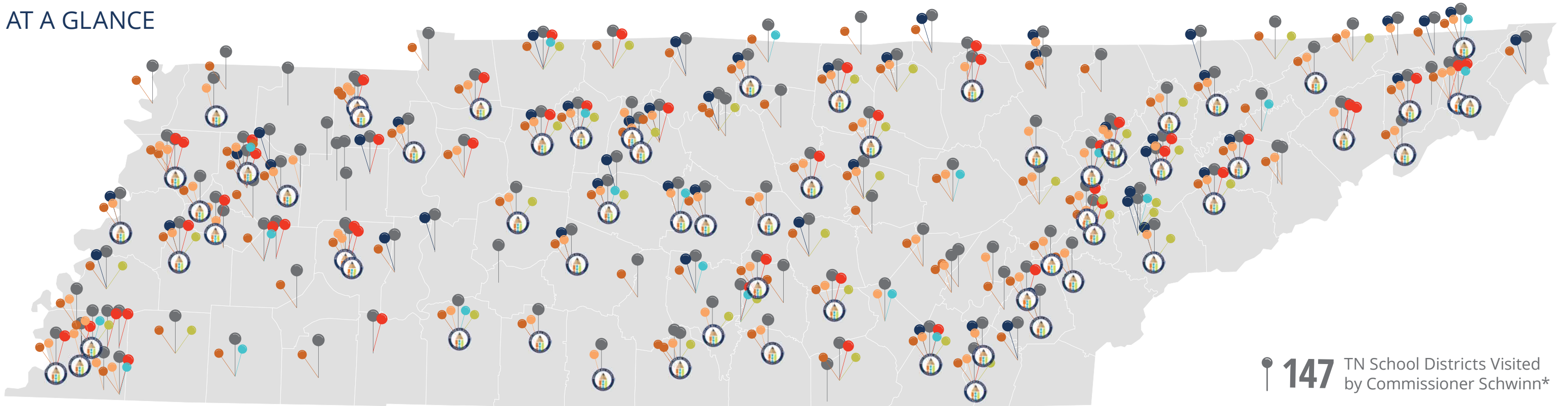
Fueled by Grants States Bet Innovative Career Training Programs Will Lure Disengaged Youth Back to School After COVID Starting in Middle School

"...combination of Perkins' expansion to middle schools and the arrival of federal stimulus funds touched off an explosion of interest."

- The74, November 2021

State Overview

AT A GLANCE



99 **Reading 360**

87 **TN ALLCorps**
Tennessee Accelerating Literacy & Learning Corps

21 **INNOVATIVE SCHOOL MODELS**

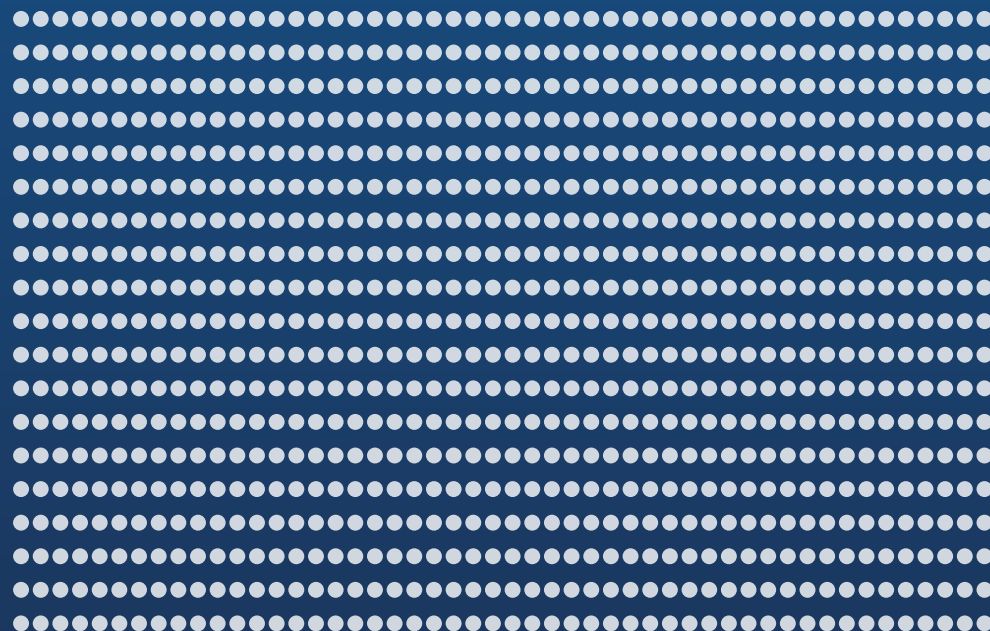
38 **GROW YOUR OWN**

67 **BEST FOR ALL DISTRICT TENNESSEE**

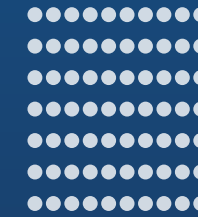
- 147** TN School Districts Visited by Commissioner Schwinn*
- 50** Accelerate TN 2022 Bus Tour Districts
- 50** Accelerate TN 2021 Bus Tour Districts



950,000+
STUDENTS



70,000+
EDUCATORS



4,300+
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

9,000+
SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF



\$4B+
BILLION
IN COVID-19
RELIEF FUNDING



1,800+
SCHOOLS

147
DISTRICTS

\$5.2B+
BILLION
IN STATE FUNDING FOR
PUBLIC K-12 EDUCATION

*Since becoming Tennessee's Education Commissioner in February 2019, Commissioner Schwinn has visited all 147 public schools districts at least once as of November 11, 2021.

TISA

Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement

The TISA public school funding formula updates the way Tennessee funds public education for the first time in over 30 years to empower each student to read proficiently by third grade, prepare each high school graduate for postsecondary success, and provide resources needed to all students to ensure they succeed.



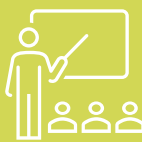
ACADEMICS

Tennessee students will have access to a high-quality education, no matter where they live.



STUDENT READINESS

Tennessee public schools will be equipped to serve the academic and non-academic needs of all students in their career pathways.



EDUCATORS

Tennessee will set a new path for the education profession and be the top state in which to become and remain a teacher and leader for all.



SUPPORTING WORK

Student success will be supported through foundational work.

SCHOOL FUNDING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING, CHOICE, SCHOOL TURNAROUND, ACCOUNTABILITY, ESSER + BEST FOR ALL DISTRICTS

STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder engagement empowers individuals and organizations to become champions for both the implementation of key department initiatives and programs and for advancing student outcomes. Stakeholder engagement includes programs, learning opportunities, professional development opportunities and career support. Stakeholders drive coherence and build community by discussing progress, making recommendations, and providing feedback on the implementation of Best for All and department initiatives, as well as other topics.



STATE



EDUCATORS



LEGISLATORS



FAMILIES



DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS



STUDENTS



ACADEMICS



Tennessee students will have access to a high-quality education no matter where they live by learning to read and reading to learn.

Since 2020, a wide range of academic initiatives and strategic supports have been launched to ensure students receive high-quality daily learning experiences, teachers have the resources and coaching to deliver strong lessons, and districts can effectively design instructional programming that supports the learning of all students.

The department is focused on literacy and high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring as the most research-driven ways to support students who need more individualized supports to reach grade level mastery. To address early literacy and the needs of students not yet on grade level, strategies include providing resources to teachers and parents, professional development to school systems, targeted instruction for students, and strong partnerships with families and communities across the state.

“
The learning opportunities we provide today help our children become prosperous and productive adults for tomorrow.
- MARK WHITE -
House Education Chairman





“ I believe Reading 360 is the bold solution we need to increase reading proficiency for Tennessee students... The program design includes all the right stakeholders at the appropriate level to ensure students are on the path to life-long learning. This is an exciting moment for Tennessee education.

- LILLIAN HARTGROVE, *Chairman, State Board of Education*

In March 2022, the department announced **99 districts have been recognized as Reading 360 Districts** for their commitment to teacher training, leader support networks, and focused work on early literacy.



In December 2020, the department launched **Reading 360, Tennessee's comprehensive literacy initiative**, to provide optional grants, tools, and resources to ensure more Tennessee students develop strong reading skills by supporting districts, teachers, families, and communities.

“ A comprehensive literacy plan that positively affects our students, teachers, and families makes Tennessee a stronger state.

- DR. RUSSELL DYER
*Superintendent
Cleveland City Schools*



Early Literacy Networks

Participating districts received a two-year, \$80,000 grant to coach Pre-K-2 educators and participate in learning communities, encompassing 241 district leaders and 99 districts.

Literacy Implementation Networks

Through a competitive grant process, 48 districts were selected to participate in a five-year focused study to improve K-12 literacy instruction that began during fall 2021. The districts are organized into eight regional networks with a mentor district leading the focus of each region. Each network meets monthly for six months and is developing strong theories of action to focus on K-12 literacy practices.

Reading 360 Summit

In September 2021, the department hosted the Reading 360 Summit, a three-day virtual summit with over 1,900 attendees, 32 local and national presenters, and 27 unique sessions for participants to attend. 92% of attendees indicated they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the learning opportunities presented at Reading 360 Summit, which highlighted best practices for Reading 360 through breakout and roundtable sessions.



#Reading360

Early Reading Training and Secondary Literacy Training

Early Reading Training: During the summer months of 2021, the two-part Early Reading Training was initially administered across the state, with over 12,000 educators participating, representing 67% of Tennessee school districts. The training featured a series of courses designed to improve reading. 97% of participants indicated they intended to implement their new learning when they returned to the classrooms.

Additionally, during the summer months of 2022, the two-part Early Reading Training was administered statewide, with an additional 5,571 educators participating, representing 85% of Tennessee school districts. The training featured a series of courses designed to improve reading. 98% of participants indicated they intended to implement their new learning when they returned to the classrooms.

Participants have stated:

- “ *The training was helpful and beneficial in explaining how foundational literacy lessons can be incorporated in each grade level.* ”
- “ *One of the best PD's our district has offered.* ”
- “ *Loved this workshop!! Would definitely take another part of Reading 360!!* ”



“ As a foundation dedicated to helping more Tennessee students prepare for college and gain the skills needed to be workforce-ready, we strongly support the state's laser-like focus on early literacy. We believe Reading 360 has incredible potential to give every child the opportunity for success. ”

- JANET AYERS, *President, The Ayers Foundation*

Secondary Literacy Training:

During the summer of 2022, the Secondary Literacy Training Course launched with over 3,000 teachers completing week one of the course and over 2,000 completing the second week of the course in its first year. 98% of educators said they plan to implement what they have learned in their classroom in the fall.

Participants have stated:

- “ *A very beneficial training! I appreciate the value of this training. It was a jam packed week with tons of relevant information! I look forward to unpacking my notes and organizing them into a cohesive folder that will readily available for me to synthesize in each of my lessons.* ”
- “ *This was the most insightful, practical, and worthwhile training I've participated in throughout my time as an educator. I am so excited to implement my learning! Every educator should take this course!!!* ”

TENNESSEE
READING
RESEARCH CENTER

— A Reading 360 Initiative —



Tennessee Reading Research Center

In partnership with the University of Tennessee System, the department established the Tennessee Reading Research Center, a Reading 360 initiative, to evaluate and independently analyze how the state's over \$100 million investment of optional literacy supports and grants are improving student literacy rates, increasing the use of sounds-first instruction in Pre-K-3 classrooms, increasing the use of high-quality instructional materials, and preparing future educators for literacy instruction. Additionally, the center will analyze the implementation of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act.

Family Literacy Initiatives

At Home Decodable Book Series: In May 2021, the department launched the At-Home Decodable Book Series for free to all Tennessee families of K-2 children to encourage at-home reading practice to help young learners become stronger readers. Nearly 60,000 families have placed orders, which includes a packet of 7 decodable booklets with 20+ exciting stories full of sounds and words to practice.



“ There is nothing better than seeing the delight and self-confidence students exhibit when they successfully transition to reading stories on their own. As we know, early literacy leads to future success!

- HANNAH CUNNINGHAM & BRANDY PUCKETT
1st Grade Teachers at Indian Springs Elementary School, Sullivan County Schools



Starting with Sounds: In collaboration with Tennessee PBS, the department launched Starting with Sounds in September 2021, a Reading 360 statewide awareness campaign to help Tennessee parents and students understand the importance of reading in an engaging and fun way. Starting with Sounds highlights the importance of early literacy and how families and students can practice reading by watching and listening to national and local musicians, athletes, and champions of student success read their favorite books and sing songs to help build these critical skills.



Getting Ready to Read Backpacks: During the 2021-22 school year, 107 districts, private schools, and community organizations requested and distributed 20,000 “Getting Ready to Read” backpacks to three- and four-year-olds across the state, providing early sounds-first materials for families to engage in at home.

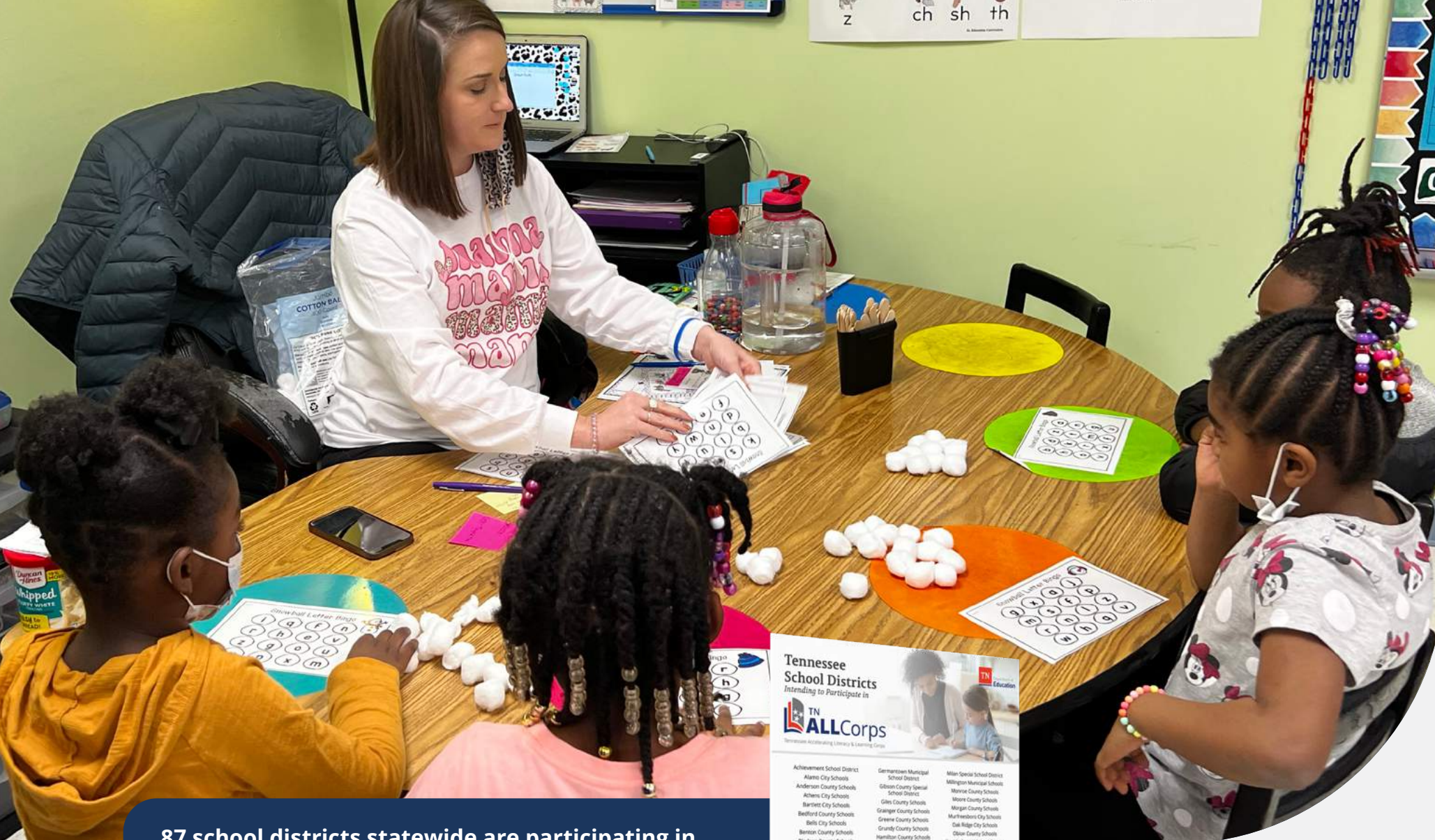


“ Tennessee PBS is committed to delivering impactful educational programming every day via broadcast and online to Tennessee students across the state. We know early literacy achievement is essential for student success, and the Starting with Sounds campaign is an excellent opportunity within the state's Reading 360 literacy initiative for students and families to spend time together focusing on the importance of sounds-based reading.

- BECKY MAGURA, President and CEO, Nashville Public Television



Tennessee Accelerating Literacy & Learning Corps



With 87 school districts statewide participating, the department launched the Tennessee Accelerating Literacy and Learning Corps (TN ALL Corps) **tutoring program for students in grades 1-8 in reading and math to mitigate learning loss and accelerate student achievement.**

provided participating districts with an online mathematics platform, which includes progress monitoring, math lessons that are connected to students' core math learning, and foundational content to support deeper interventions.

While several states and major cities (*Arkansas, Oklahoma, Chicago, Guilford County, and New Mexico*) are working to recruit tutors and launch programs, other states' scale focus on recruiting 500-850 tutors serving several thousand students, **TN ALL Corps strategically serves all prioritized students across the state.** With support from districts, community organizations will provide tutoring in reading and math to accelerate literacy and close gaps in learning loss due to COVID-19 academic disruptions.

TN ALL Corps is a matching grant opportunity to empower districts to implement or strengthen tutoring supports for students in low ratios and at a high dosage, with tutoring occurring for small groups of students in 30-45-minute sessions, two to three times per week. Since the launch in 2021, this approach, in combination with 2 years of summer programming, will have **provided over 200,000 students with 250-500 additional hours of academic instruction by 2024.**

The tutoring content must focus on reading or math for an entire semester. Tennessee school districts have access to free online synchronous high school tutoring in math, free online supplemental math programs for grades 1-8, free online supplemental reading programs for grades 1-6, and more. The department has

In June 2022, the department announced five regional community-based organizations have been awarded a TN ALL Corps Community Partner Grant to launch new tutoring programs in the 2022-23 school year **servicing up to 20,000 students with free tutoring services.**

87 school districts statewide are participating in the TN ALL Corps tutoring program for students in grades 1-8 in reading and math to mitigate learning loss and accelerate student achievement.



“ One-on-one tutoring provides individualized assistance to get our students not only back on track academically but on a successful path for their future. We all want and continue to work towards the **same outcome in education- every student that graduates from a Tennessee school does so with the skills and opportunities for success in life.**

- CAMERON SEXTON
Tennessee Speaker of the House

“ This three-year, high-dosage program will enhance the tools and supports we already have in place to measure, remediate and close the learning gaps caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- DEBRA MOODY
House Education Instruction Chairlady



LEARNING LOSS REMEDIATION CAMPS								
SUMMER 2021 & 2022	6 WEEK	Summer Learning Camp GRADES 1-5	4 WEEK	Learning Loss Bridge Camp GRADES 6-8				
		After School STREAM Learning Mini Camp GRADES 1-5						
SUMMER 2023 & Beyond		4 WEEK		Learning Loss Bridge Camp GRADES 4-8				
RISING GRADE:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Summer Programming

During the 2021 special legislative session on education, the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act was passed, which established learning loss remediation camps focusing on ELA, mathematics and STREAM over the course of two summers, to serve students entering grades 1-8, beginning in 2021.

In the first year of implementation:



Participation: Summer Programming served over 130,000 Tennessee students in elementary and middle schools, with 94,752 1st – 5th grade students, and 38,698 6th – 8th grade students. Over 60,000 (45%) of students served were economically disadvantaged.



ELA Results: Overall, pre- and post-assessment ELA data showed an improvement of 5.97 percentage points, and elementary grades saw a 7.34 percentage point improvement.



Math Results: Overall, pre- and post-assessment math data showed an improvement of 10.49 percentage points, elementary grades saw an improvement of 11.66 percentage points, and middle school grades saw an improvement of 6 percentage points.

Additionally, beginning next summer, the department will launch a permanent bridge program for students entering 4th-8th grades. The permanent program will last 4 weeks each summer to cover literacy and math remediation for students who need additional learning time before the start of the next year.

TENNESSEE UNIVERSAL SCREENER

- Response To Intervention (RTI)
- Dyslexia Screening Requirement
- Literacy & Math Benchmarks
- Alternative Portfolio Assessment for PK-2

TN Universal Reading Screener

As part of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act, Tennessee school districts are required to administer an approved universal reading screener to all students in grades K-3 during three administration windows each school year, and report data to the state department.

In the fall of 2021, the department launched the free Tennessee Universal Reading Screener and started to collect universal reading screening data in grades K-3 to better understand how children are learning to read and what gaps in the ability to read exist statewide. Currently, the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener is being used in 84 districts in the first year.

Accelerating TN Summer Bus Tours

In order to see the summer programming in action, the department partook in the 2022 Accelerating TN Bus Tour, the state's second summer bus tour, visiting 50 school districts spanning over 3,000 miles. This included attending 36 summer learning school visits, hosting 18 district and community roundtables, and observing a Reading 360 Early Reading Training. To highlight these important policies and programs to support students, the tour visited thoughtful integration of rigorous STREAM content with student-built canoes and robotics design, intentional phonics instruction, and strong labor and workforce partnerships while maintaining access and opportunity for all students. Throughout the tour, the department's key initiatives from the Best for All strategic plan— Reading 360, TN ALL Corps, Innovative School Models, and Grow Your Own— were seen in-action.



The second statewide summer bus tour showcased the commitment of Tennessee districts, schools, educators, elected officials, and communities to our collective why— accelerating achievement for students.

Students are benefiting from rich instructional time with their teachers— we observed targeted interventions, innovative block structures, and fun twists for engaging summer learning. It's inspiring to see teachers and districts build such positive momentum as we head into a new school year.

- COMMISSIONER SCHWINN

2,600
TOTAL
MILES

50 DISTRICTS

43 SUMMER LEARNING
SCHOOL VISITS



15 ROUND
TABLES

2 EARLY READING
TRAININGS

#AcceleratingTN2021



#AcceleratingTN2022

3,182
TOTAL
MILES

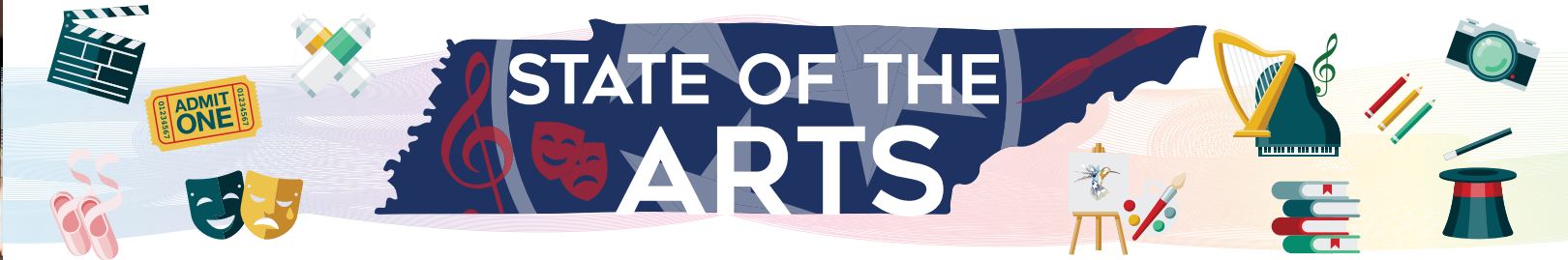
50 DISTRICTS

36 SUMMER LEARNING
SCHOOL VISITS

18 ROUND
TABLES

1 EARLY READING
TRAINING





Special Populations

The Special Populations team focuses on supporting districts as they empower students with disabilities, ages 3-22, and the educators who serve them. These supports are provided via various resources, including the over \$5 million federal grant for Teaching All Students (TAS) that supports high school students with significant cognitive disabilities. Additionally, the Access for All Learning Network empowered Pre-K-12 teachers to improve outcomes for all students through Tier I instruction and behavioral supports for all learners, and Tennessee’s technical assistance network (TN-TAN) is now in place—providing intensive supports to 122 school districts in the areas of complex behavior, autism, preschool services, and RTI2 for academics and behavior.

In addition, during the summer of 2020, TransitionTN offered state-wide virtual academies for middle and high school educators working with transition-age students (14+) to increase knowledge of transition planning to improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. The “Tennessee Talks” project provided communication systems to students with complex needs and supported educators to ensure greater student access to instruction. Finally, to increase the capacity and effectiveness of assessment personnel, the department hosted monthly Communities of Practice (CoP) for assessment specialists and special educators.

Early Childhood

The Early Childhood Division focuses on supporting districts through expanded programming opportunities for the state’s young learners.

Tennessee’s Voluntary Pre-K program met nine of ten National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) benchmarks in the 2020 State of Preschool yearbook, which is a national measure of state-funded preschool programming. As of 2021, 925 voluntary Pre-K classrooms serving 18,500 income-eligible three-and-four-year-old children with or without an IEP are funded throughout the state.

Further, the department is committed to monitoring the progress of voluntary pre-K programs to optimize quality learning and prevent potential achievement gaps in the early years when children’s brains develop the most. CLASS was approved for Pre-K programs, which is an observation and targeted framework designed to better support Pre-K quality classrooms. Ten Pre-K CLASS trainers provided targeted support and training to implement CLASS in all 95 Tennessee’s counties. To date, 800 hours of observations were conducted in Pre-K classrooms to provide strategic, targeted support in areas of need and increase quality interactions taking place in early childhood classrooms.



Fine Arts

Fine arts programming provides support to districts and expanded opportunities focused on arts education.

In October 2021, the department launched the State of the Arts: Arts Education Network as a mechanism to develop and strengthen public-private partnerships to support arts education (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts). To date, 33 districts have joined the network, representing 464,835 students.

Music

In November 2021, the department, in partnership with CMA Foundation and Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation, launched the State of the Arts: Arts Education Network and State of the Arts Study. The goal of the network is to better understand the inequities and barriers affecting the quality of arts education programming in order to better inform policymaking, district strategic planning, development of resources and support systems, and investment/philanthropic activities by conducting a first-of-its-kind statewide arts education landscape study. This analysis will identify the barriers preventing student access to high-quality programming, gaps in sequential K-12 pathways, and identification of the types of support needed at the school, district, and state level that would have the greatest impact on students. Additional grant funding will be utilized for the expansion of the State of the Arts program across the state.



STUDENT READINESS

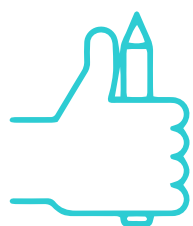
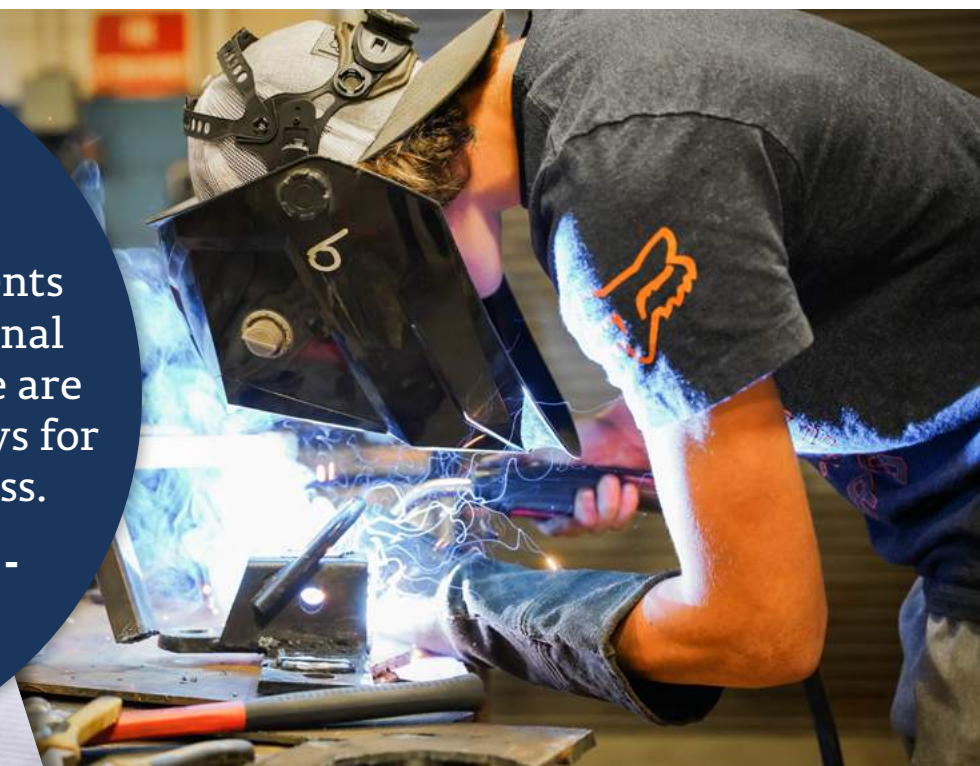
Tennessee public schools will be equipped to serve the academic and non-academic needs of all students in their career pathways.

The department is making investments to provide all students with access to the courses, programs and supports they need to achieve, by tackling achievement gaps, redesigning middle and high schools, and preparing students for post-secondary persistence. By reimagining school experiences through innovative school models and focusing on student supports, Tennessee is ensuring all students are prepared for postsecondary success.

“

Instead of asking all students to conform to one traditional educational experience, we are creating individual pathways for students to achieve success.

- DR. ANNETTE TUDOR -
Director of Schools
Bristol City Schools





INNOVATIVE SCHOOL MODELS

EXEMPLARS

INTRODUCTION

The Innovative School Models grant opportunity expands on the department's initial ESSER investment of \$30 million with an additional \$500 million investment of state funds designed to eliminate structural barriers that exist between middle and high school, workforce, and postsecondary opportunities. These models allow students the ability to seamlessly make connections earlier and graduate high school prepared to successfully complete a postsecondary credential or excel in a career pathway of their choice.

In May 2021, the department awarded 21 school district Innovative High School Model grants, which included an initial investment of \$30 million to foster local community partnerships that boost student readiness. These partnerships have already shown an incredible impact on students' experiences and readiness for the workforce and postsecondary opportunities.

The following districts are exemplars of the initial grant funding for the Innovative School Models Program.

INNOVATIVE SCHOOL MODELS - EXEMPLARS

MILAN, TRENTON, AND DEKALB COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOLS

A partnership between Milan, Trenton, and DeKalb County Special Schools was developed to implement a **Model of Success** program, allowing students to attend high school through a modified school day and participate in workforce training and postsecondary opportunities through the Career Advancement Program. By reimagining the traditional classroom setting, an on-site, on-site model was developed to provide students with the support and resources needed for career success. The project has also made it possible to offer the **Work Support** program, which provides students with transportation to work sites, as well as ensure that students are meeting and exceeding the expectations of their employers. Many students have formed strong relationships with their employers, and several have already been offered future employment opportunities that include a life-saving wage, benefits, and overtime. After only 1 year of implementation, students participating in this Innovative School Model will have **earned over \$400,000**, making an incredible impact on their futures.

Wayne County School System

Wayne County Schools has established a **Model of Success** program, allowing students to attend high school through a modified school day and participate in workforce training and postsecondary opportunities through the Career Advancement Program. By reimagining the traditional classroom setting, an on-site, on-site model was developed to provide students with the support and resources needed for career success. The project has also made it possible to offer the **Work Support** program, which provides students with transportation to work sites, as well as ensure that students are meeting and exceeding the expectations of their employers. Many students have formed strong relationships with their employers, and several have already been offered future employment opportunities that include a life-saving wage, benefits, and overtime. After only 1 year of implementation, students participating in this Innovative School Model will have **earned over \$400,000**, making an incredible impact on their futures.

“ These resources and opportunities have revitalized our focus on our partnerships and are setting up our students for success following graduation.

- DR. CHRISTY SMITH
Director of Schools, Hardeman County Schools

INNOVATIVE SCHOOL MODELS

The Innovative School Models initiative is intended to foster and provide a vision of middle and high schools of the future by reimagining new routines of schooling and supporting novel approaches to increase student postsecondary attainment through groundbreaking partnerships that elevate equity for all students. Students take high school classes at work sites/industry and maximize experiential learning in a variety of fields. Programs include forestry, agriculture, and aviation. In the spring of 2021, the department announced **24 school districts were awarded 21 grants for Innovative High School Model programs to be implemented totaling \$30 million.**

Building upon the state's strong commitment to ensure Tennessee is future workforce ready, Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly made an **historic investment of \$500 million during the 2022 legislative session to expand on the department's initial investment of \$30 million to eliminate structural barriers that exist between middle and high school, workforce, and postsecondary opportunities.** These models allow students the ability to seamlessly make connections earlier and graduate high school prepared to successfully complete a postsecondary credential or excel in a career pathway of their choice.



“ With classes in session, AP Access for ALL is off to a fast start and is now creating new pathways for students to enter college prepared and confident. We are excited to partner with Commissioner Schwinn and the Department of Education on this program and look forward to seeing how access and opportunity through AP Access for ALL will continue to grow and support Tennessee students and families for years to come.

- DR. NANCY DISHNER, *President and CEO, Niswonger Foundation*

Dual Enrollment, Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs), and Work-Based Learning

Across Tennessee, K-12 students are given access to a wide range of early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs), including dual enrollment, to learn about postsecondary pathways and obtain credit upon graduation. Statewide dual enrollment numbers have significantly increased, up 71% (2,400 more students) for the 2021-22 school year compared to 2020-21, with higher numbers than pre-pandemic enrollment. Additionally, work-based learning (WBL) has seen increased enrollment, moving from 7,527 in 2017-18 to 33,263 in 2019-20 and 33,731 for 2021-22.

Furthermore, since being awarded the Pathways to STEM Apprenticeships for high school students, the department registered four grant-related apprenticeships in welding, machining, and IT, and three non-grant-related apprenticeships in culinary arts, maintenance, and mechatronics. The department has also established a tiered rating system for the 157 currently approved industry credentials of recognized, valued, or preferred that more closely aligns with workforce needs.

In January 2022, Tennessee became the first state in the country to have an officially registered apprenticeship for teaching, approved by the U.S. Department of Labor. By creating this new way to develop the educator pipeline, Tennessee is providing students with access to start the journey of becoming a teacher earlier on in their educational career while also addressing teacher shortages.

AP Access for ALL

In April 2021, AP Access for ALL launched in partnership with the Niswonger Foundation to provide all high school students with access to free, online advanced placement (AP) classes not currently offered at their home high school. For the 2021-22 school year, over 1,800 students from 192 high schools statewide enrolled in AP Access for ALL classes.

Across the state, 90% of districts are now enrolled and 56% of students achieved scores considered by the College Board to be “college ready” or better on their AP exams in year one of the program. Participating Tennessee students saved an estimated \$454,000 in potential college fees by allowing them to earn college credit and skip introductory classes.

Statewide, the South Central Region saw an increase of 142% of schools offering AP courses, and the Northwest Region saw a 71% increase. Nationally, Tennessee led the Southeast in AP exam enrollments for the 2021-22 school year.

ACT Prep

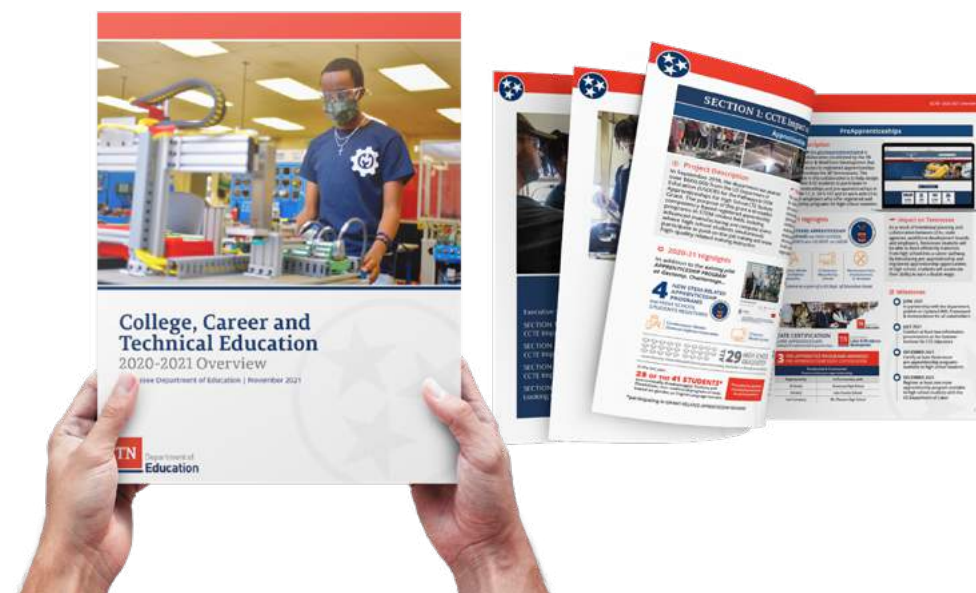
Tennessee was one of only six states with nearly 100% of graduating students participating in the ACT during the 2020-21 school year. While Tennessee did see a drop in the ACT score of 0.2 from 2021 to 2020, our state was still less than the national average drop, all while testing more students than most of the country. Furthermore, the department partnered with UT Martin to offer free online ACT Prep courses to students and teachers, serving 457 students in the Math & Science Workshop, 435 students in the English & Reading Workshop, and 53 students in Mastery Classes. Additionally, 111 teachers were trained to provide ongoing support.

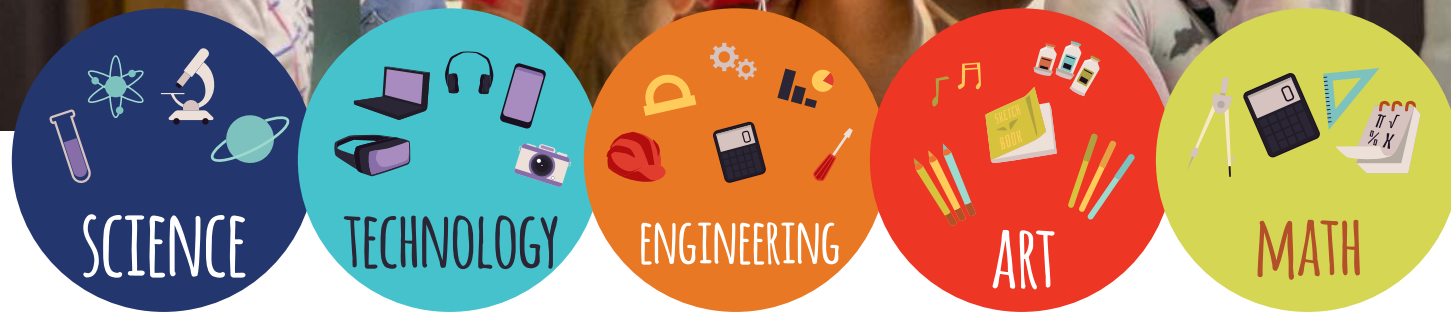
Tennessee’s Career & Technical Education

Tennessee's Career & Technical Education consists of 16 nationally recognized career clusters with the goal of preparing students for success at the postsecondary level and in their chosen careers. Tennessee was one of the first states to host a virtual CTE Institute in summer 2020 with over 2,000 attendees, 152 sessions and over 95% satisfaction rate. In June 2021, \$2 million from The Perkins Grant Reserve (PRG) was dispersed to 38 school districts to boost student readiness and post-secondary success. In November of the same year, two reports from Chiefs for Change were released recognizing Tennessee as one of three states creating rigorous college, career and technical education (CCTE) programming and providing students pathways to those careers.



Recognized Tennessee as one of three states creating rigorous college, career and technical education (CCTE) programming and providing students pathways to those careers.





STE(A)M Education

STE(A)M focuses on the educational approach to Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics which supports critical thinking skills. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the department significantly increased the number of STEM Designated schools across the state from 15 in 2018 to 22 schools in 2020, and almost doubled the number of intents from 44 to 80 between 2018 and 2021. As of May 2022, 27 schools have now received the Tennessee STEM/STEAM School Designation.

In partnership with the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network (TSIN), we offer seasonal resource hubs on Best for All Central to extend and enhance hands-on activities for 3rd – 12th grade students focusing on STEM exploration and careers, with over 70,000 unique visits. Additionally, new STEM CTE teacher training courses were created for all six STEM programs of study, training 301 teachers in two years. With TSIN and Code.org, 493 educators were trained to teach computer science and implement the K-8 Digital Readiness Standards.

Governor’s Civics Seal

In spring 2019, Governor Bill Lee announced the Governor’s Civics Seal recognizing schools and districts that prioritize teaching our nation’s history and civic values. In the 2020-21 school year, 53 schools and three districts earned the 2020-21 Tennessee Excellence in Civics Education and received the Governor’s Civics Seal. These districts and schools were recognized on the State Report Card with the Governor’s Civics Seal of Excellence.

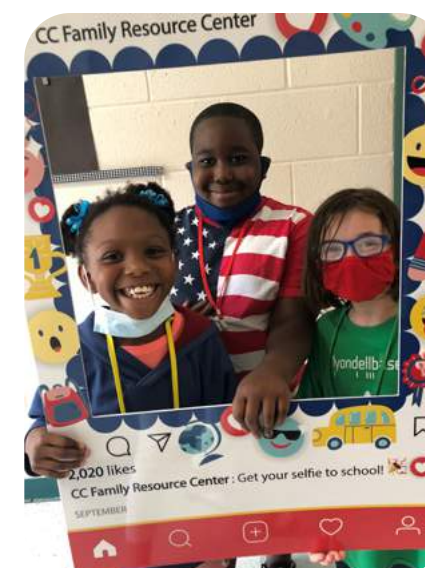


Future Farmers of America

The Future Farmers of America (FFA) introduced the 100% FFA affiliation program that offers all agriculture students access to the resources, career development, and leadership opportunities made available through the organization. As a state, the membership has significantly increased and was recognized at the National Convention in October 2021 as having the largest increase in FFA membership in the country.

Resilient School Communities

Resilient School Communities are implementing approaches to improve school climate, attendance, and teacher satisfaction, in addition to a reduction in suspensions and expulsions, stress for staff and students, and more. These strategies are designed to meet the academic and non-academic needs of their students, to positively impact the environment of the school. In alignment with these efforts, 176 schools were selected for the second cohort of trauma-informed schools in April 2021, more than doubling the original 73 schools launched in the 2018-19 school year.



Family Resource Centers

Tennessee has 100 Family Resource Centers (FRCs) serving 79 school districts representing 65 counties, which serve as resource and support hubs to proactively engage with their communities and empower students and families. Over the last year, FRCs have formed nearly 3,000 community partnerships that aided in unlocking potential for students and families, with an 82% increase in service levels and expanded offerings in response to the pandemic. FRCs also donated school supplies for 30,500 students; clothing and basic necessities for 22,400 students; case management for 15,000 students; mental health services for 27,800 students; parenting skills classes requested by 5,300 parents and guardians. In addition, 34 FRCs served as donation centers for Humphrey’s County residents who were impacted by the tragic flooding at the end of August 2021.

Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grants

To maximize in-person learning days and provide support for schools to detect and prevent the transmission of COVID-19 within schools, 70 school districts and seven non-public schools were awarded over \$147 million in grant funding from the Tennessee Department of Health. Additionally, extended funds can now benefit students through 2023.

EDUCATORS

Tennessee will set a new path for the education profession and be the top state in which to become and remain a teacher and leader for all by providing opportunities to become a teacher for free and build a pathway into the profession.

The department is making investments to address shortages of credentialed teachers and professional development for our educators to ensure all students can get the supports they need.

Grow Your Own programs create pathways to become a teacher for free— enabling future teachers to earn their degree, serve their home communities, maintain employment, and begin day one of teaching with real-world classroom experience.

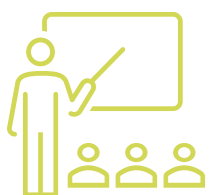
Additionally, the department provides supports to educators related to educator licensure and preparation, professional development and additional endorsement opportunities to ensure all Tennessee educators are provided with resources to succeed in the classroom.



“

Our Tennessee teachers are our state’s most valuable asset because it is they who will ultimately shape our future.

- **RANDY McNALLY** -
Tennessee Lt. Governor





GROW YOUR OWN

Tennessee's Grow Your Own model is *designed to foster partnerships between EPPs and districts to provide innovative, no-cost pathways to the teaching profession by increasing EPP enrollment and growing the supply of qualified teachers.* Through an initial \$20 million investment, there are 65 partnerships between 14 EPPs and 63 school districts operating across the state to strengthen local teacher pipelines, supporting an additional 650 future educators.

In January 2022, Tennessee pioneered a new way to develop the educator pipeline and received approval from the U.S. Department of Labor to officially recognize teaching as an apprenticeship occupation. *Tennessee is the first state in the country to establish a permanent Grow Your Own model,* with Clarksville-Montgomery County School System and Austin Peay State University's Teacher Residency program becoming the first registered apprenticeship program for teaching in the country. This provides permanent funding streams for states and local regions to use labor and workforce dollars to pay for the education and credentialing of future educators and furthers the state's and nation's efforts to extend the teacher pipeline and address teacher shortages.

In the spring of 2022, the department launched the *Tennessee Grow Your Own Center*, in partnership with the University of Tennessee System, designed to develop and recruit candidates, lead technical assistance for teacher apprenticeship models, and provide additional endorsements and generate new leadership pathway models.

Tennessee's Grow Your Own program and additional educator-focused supports can provide pathways for existing paraprofessionals, instructional assistants, or other school-based support staff to seamlessly become licensed teachers.

“

The Grow Your Own program has been incredibly successful in our community. I appreciate the Department of Education's partnership in helping us implement our programs, and I am excited that other communities will now benefit from the resources provided. They will not only support more Tennessee teachers but also solidify the academic foundations of our students.

- GARY HICKS
Tennessee Representative



Strengthening the educator pipeline





Supporting Teacher Preparation and Development

In October 2021, the department awarded over \$600,000 in competitive grants to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Deans for Impact to support the development of literacy- and trauma informed- coursework for use by all Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) in the state, in compliance with the Tennessee Literacy Success Act and State Board of Education rule, to help teacher candidates be prepared to meet the needs of Tennessee students.

These new standards require all K-2 teachers to incorporate the Foundational Literacy Skills Standards, use of high-quality instructional materials, and trauma-informed instruction into their lessons to support early-grade preparation. Additionally, the curriculum resources will cover multiple endorsement areas, including special education and instructional leadership.

Additional Endorsements

To fill essential and hard-to-staff vacancies, Tennessee educators who hold a valid Tennessee educator license may add additional endorsements or teaching areas to their license, such as special education. In September 2021, the department launched a pathway to providing additional endorsements to any existing Tennessee teacher in essential areas like special education, English as a second language (ESL), STEM for free. Since 2021, the department has made more than 5,500 seats available at no cost to educators.

Educator Professional Development Networks

In August of 2021, the department had over 260 participants in the second cohort of the Aspiring Assistant Principal Network (AAPN) and the Diverse Leaders Network (DLN) which provides an avenue for Tennessee's educators to become licensed school administrators and obtain master's degrees and credentials at a partnering higher education institution, at no cost beyond that of the required licensure assessment.

Additionally, the Rural Principal Network launched in September 2022, providing school leaders in rural communities with leadership opportunities to address their unique needs and create connections.

Professional Learning

The department understands the importance of professional development and offers many growth opportunities for educators in Tennessee. For instance, teachers can be a part of the National Board Certification for Professional Teaching Standards which meet rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment, and peer review to become certified. Another opportunity is the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL), which ensures all schools in Tennessee have effective teachers and leaders continuously looking to improve student outcomes. In 2020, the department, in partnership with University of Tennessee, Knoxville, offered free sessions for all principals focusing on supporting teachers and students during remote learning as part of the TN Principal Professional Learning Series.

Educator Recognition Programs

Annually, the department recognizes our hardworking teachers, educators, district and school leaders, and support staff through a number of state-level and federal recognition programs—including the Tennessee Educators of Excellence- Principal, Teacher, and Supervisor of the Year, Milken Educator Award, Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) Award, and Recognizing Inspirational School Employees (RISEO Award).

In April 2022, the Milken Family Foundation recognized two middle Tennessee teachers for the prestigious Milken Educator Award, one of the highest honors in education that has been dubbed the "Oscars of Teaching" by Teacher Magazine. Additionally, three Tennessee teachers were named finalists for the 2022 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), the highest honor for K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teachers.

“

With four EPPs located across the state and UT's presence in all 95 counties through the UT Institute of Agriculture, we are truly able to reach every corner of the state to support student achievement, train high-quality teachers, and engage every school district. We value our strong relationship with TDOE, and are thrilled to be working together to better serve Tennessee students.

- RANDY BOYD
UT System President

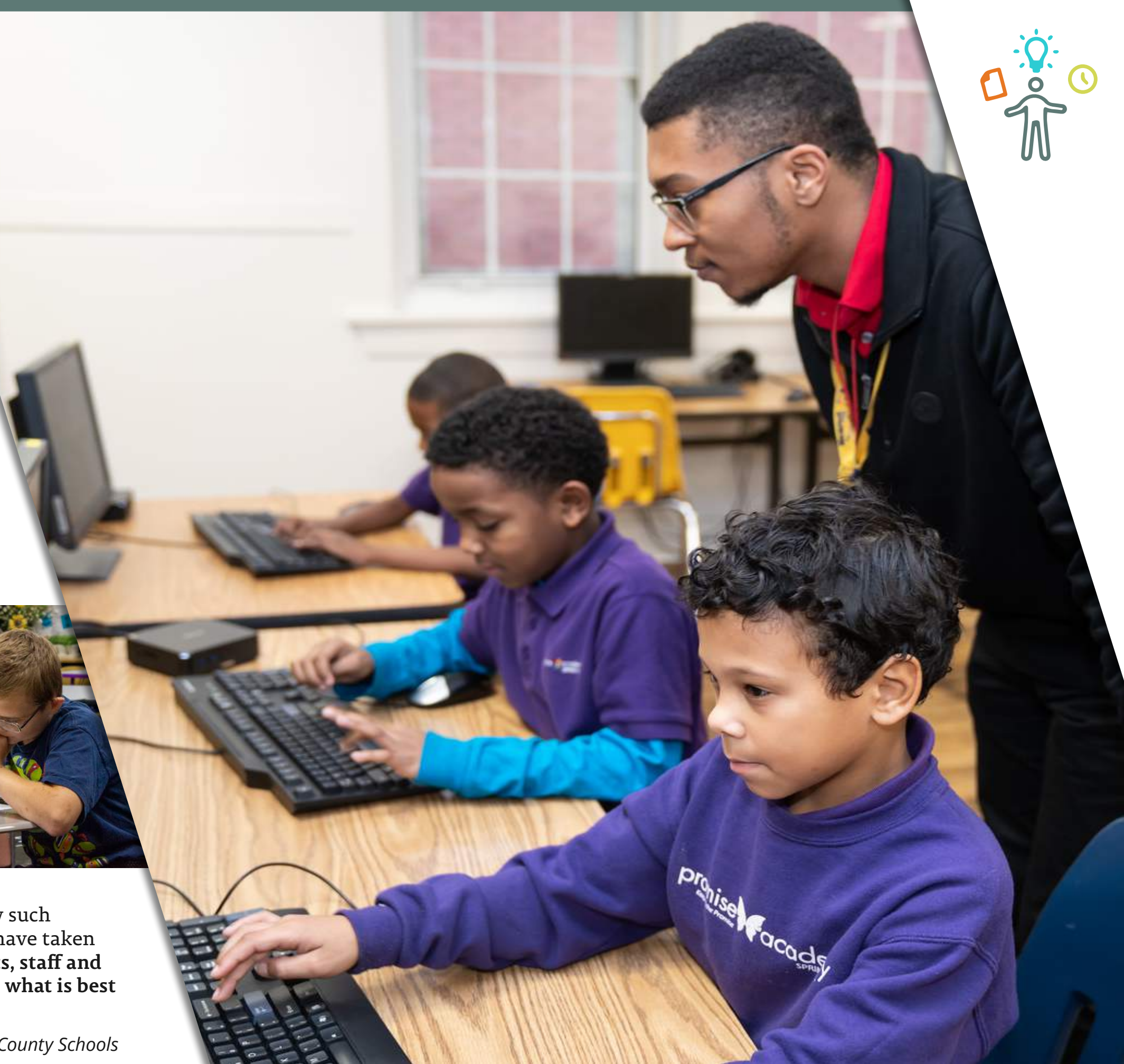
“

I am proud that the Dept. of Labor is partnering with the State of Tennessee on this pioneering teacher Registered Apprenticeship program that will help grow a diverse, local pipeline of educators for years to come.

- MARTY WALSH
U.S. Secretary of Labor

SUPPORTING WORK

Building upon the Best for All strategic plan's priority areas—Academics, Student Readiness, and Educators—the department also maintains essential functions to support districts and schools, including the state's school turnaround district and special school districts, multiple school choice opportunities, efficient online resources, and innovative assessments, technology, facilities and funding.



“ It is very encouraging to see our TCAP results show such positive gains which is proof our quick actions we have taken to address learning loss are paying off. **Our students, staff and teachers all put in the work and really emphasized what is best for all our students.**”

- **JEFF LUTTRELL**, *Director of Schools, Wilson County Schools*



Statewide Supports

The Office of Statewide Supports encompasses three teams (academic support, district support, and Professional Learning and Leadership) that lead a variety of support work for educators, school leaders, and districts. The academic support team, comprised of eight regional Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) teams, provides embedded one-on-one support to Tennessee's school districts in implementing the department's strategic priorities. The district support team has three grand regional CORE directors who work directly with district leaders to support high-level decision-making by providing information about department initiatives and thought partnership. The Professional Learning and Leadership Team facilitates a variety of leadership development opportunities and pathways for teachers and school leaders. CORE partnered with nearly 50% of districts in the state to support 1:1 implementation of the department's strategic priorities.

The department launched the Achievement School District (ASD) 2.0 with a focus on scalable sustainability, performance management, and community engagement.

School Choice

Tennessee offers students and parents school choice for an education which best suits them, including over 1,700 public schools throughout 147 school districts, charter schools, non-public schools, virtual schools, home schools, as well as innovative school choice programs like the Individualized Education Account (IEA) program and the Education Savings Account (ESA) program.

In November 2020, Gov. Lee announced \$5 million in grants to be distributed to charter schools across the state, with a focus on supporting charter schools that demonstrate sustained and significant academic growth. The department also awarded \$4.2 million in Charter Schools Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation funds to support the start-up of new charter schools, resulting in the addition of 4,000 new charter school seats. Together with the GEER funds, the department has supported the addition of 10,000 new charter school seats.

In the summer of 2021, the department approved 29 new virtual schools with a total of 57 in the state seeing 104% increase in submissions and authorizations. The department continues to streamline and clarify processes for charter school applications, based on feedback, and has significantly expanded access for charter schools to state programs, resources, and communication channels.

Since the 2019-20 school year, the department has seen an increase in the number of students participating in the IEA Program. There were 125 new students participating in the program, bringing the total to 291 for the 2020-21 school year, and a 30% increase in the number of schools participating in the IEA program since 2019-20.

In summer of 2022, the ESA program was implemented for the first time. In the first four months of implementation, the department enrolled nearly 300 students in 39 participating non-public schools across the state.



State Special Schools

The department operates four state special schools located across the state, including the Tennessee School for the Blind, Tennessee School for the Deaf, West Tennessee School for the Deaf, and Alvin C. York Institute, which is an agriculture-focused school.



School Turnaround

The School Turnaround Division supports districts and schools by developing and implementing strategies for improvement through ongoing planning, technical assistance, and data collection. In July 2022, the department released a tiered turnaround framework to encompass the full continuum of supports and interventions for schools identified for improvement – whether that is for a specific student group or an entire school, while also encompassing oversight of the Achievement School District (ASD).



ENGAGING WITH DATA

FOR SMART DECISION-MAKING

Data can drive smart decision-making for schools and students, policymakers and education stakeholders. In order to ensure the public is engaged and information is readily available, the department has created online platforms and administers annual surveys to collect data about how students are performing and ways parents, families, educators, elected officials, and community members can partner in the process to ensure all students are set up for success.

“ It is very encouraging to see our TCAP scores recover to pre-pandemic levels... There will always be room for improvement, but **these scores mark a solid foundation for a strong education system that will continue to make gains in the coming years.**

- JACK JOHNSON, *Tennessee Senate Majority Leader*



Setting Goals and Measuring Growth

In Tennessee, we have a strong history of setting measurable goals and using data to monitor if we are improving student academic achievement. As trusted stewards, we collect, secure, analyze and report data in innovative and meaningful ways to inform strategy and inspire purposeful action to improve outcomes for Tennessee students.

Over the last year, the department redesigned processes for research requests and data use to meet and exceed standard industry practices and federal and state laws

related to student privacy. Additionally, the department made improvements to the InformTN data dashboard by adding new CTE indicators and launched a new research-matching site to provide a wider set of program evaluations and research to be conducted to inform state policies and practices.

Additionally, the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener is collecting valuable data in grades K-3 to measure how children are learning to read and where there are gaps to further improve classroom instruction and resources.

Further, the Tennessee Educator Survey (TES) is the most important annual survey used to understand the experience of educators across Tennessee. Each year, the department and Tennessee Education Research Alliance (TERA) gather this information to empower stakeholders and decision-makers across the state to better meet the needs of teachers. Survey feedback provides critical, actionable data that influences strategies and goals at the state, district, and school levels.



TN EDUCATION
RESEARCH
ALLIANCE



Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program TCAP



Assessment

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) has been the state's testing program since 1988. The TCAP includes annual assessments in: math, English language arts, social studies, and science, as well as alternative assessments, like MSA and TCAP-Alt, for students with special needs.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Tennessee maintained its commitment to an annual statewide assessment to provide reliable data on how students are performing by achieving one of the five highest participation rates in the country at 95%. The 2020-21 Spring TCAP testing window included an expanded testing window, maximized available make-up testing opportunities, and allowed for 1,950,372 tests taken by 749,453 unique students. Additionally, the department realized an additional \$7 million in savings, a cost-savings that allowed us to continue to provide statewide formative and additional assessment tools.

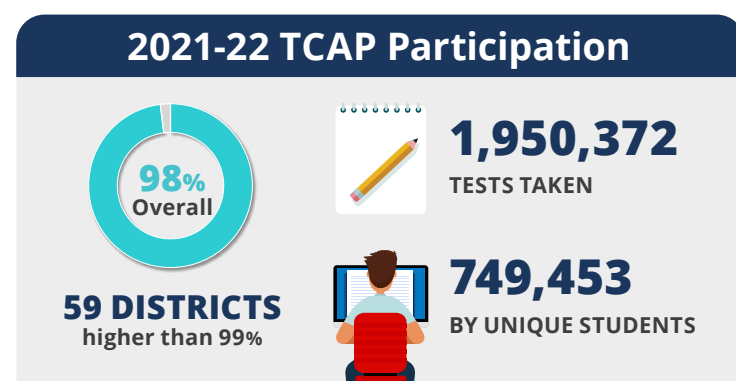
Maintaining this strong commitment to assessments and data-driven decisions, the 2021-22 TCAP results reflect Tennessee schools moving forward with a statewide laser-focus on helping students catch-up from a pandemic and

accelerate their learning. Overall, the statewide 2021-22 TCAP student participation rate was 98% with 59 districts having participation higher than 99%.

Results from the 2021-22 TCAP assessments show that elementary students significantly improved their ELA scores and are performing at a level similar to pre-pandemic years. Additionally, improved performance in math was evident for Tennessee students of all ages. Every student group showed an increase in proficiency as demonstrated on the 2022 TCAP assessments.

Additionally, the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act passed during the 2021 special legislative session a pre- and post-test to be administered to participating students to measure student progress during the summer learning camps, after-school learning mini-camps, and learning loss bridge camps.

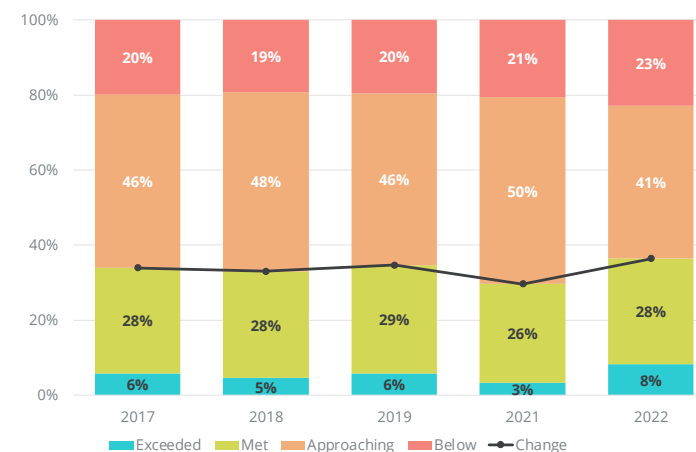
In an effort to both easily assess the impact of the programs, and reduce testing time during the school year, the department established an innovative benchmark assessment pilot program, including free and optional Tennessee Universal Math and Universal Reading Screeners.



ELA OVERVIEW

- **36.4% of Tennessee students are meeting grade level expectations** in English language arts (ELA).
- Proficiency gains were **reflected in all tested grades**.
- Overall proficiency in ELA has largely returned to **pre-pandemic levels, with more students scoring Met and Exceeded than 2019**.
- **State Supports:** Reading 360; *Tennessee Literacy Success Act*; Tennessee ALL Corps; universal implementation of high-quality instructional materials; summer camps; Best for All Central resources

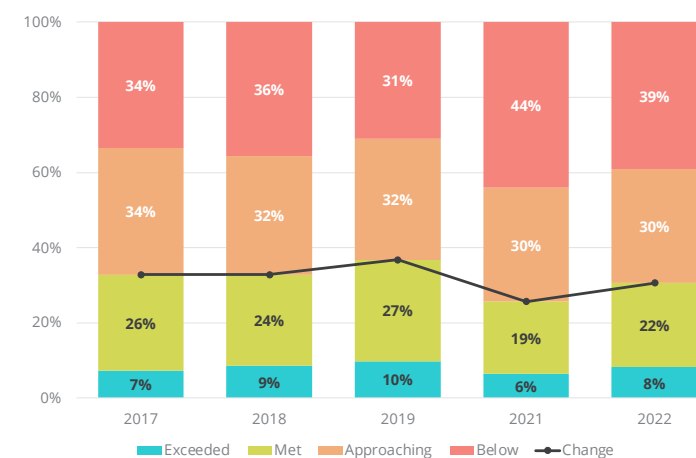
ELA: All Students Overview by Year



MATH OVERVIEW

- **3 in 10 Tennessee students are meeting grade level expectations** in math.
- Based on national projections, **math recovery is expected to recover faster than ELA**.
- Growth in math matched or exceeded gains seen in previous years and is outpacing math projections for pandemic recovery.
- **State Supports:** Tennessee ALL Corps; summer camps; Best for All Central; free online tutoring resources available for all students

MATH: All Students Overview by Year



SUPPORTING WORK

Accountability

Tennessee's accountability system has been foundational to driving student growth and school improvements over the last decade and provides a critical view of how well educators, schools, and districts are serving all students. In alignment with the state Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, the state's model is built on multiple indicators that make districts and schools successful, including:

- GRADUATION RATES
- STATE TEST SCORES AND STUDENT GROWTH DATA
- ENGLISH LEARNER PERFORMANCE
- LOW CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS
- HOW READY STUDENTS ARE WHEN THEY GRADUATE

Student readiness includes having access to early postsecondary opportunities, industry certifications, military readiness and ACT/SAT composites that qualify for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship.

During the 2021 special legislative session on education, the Accountability Hold Harmless Act was passed, which removed negative consequences associated with evaluation and accountability for the 2020-21 school year, so long as the district met at least 80% participation rate for TCAP assessments or received a waiver. All 147 Tennessee school districts met the 80% participation rate, with 80% of districts having met the federal 95% participation rate. Assessment scores from the 2020-21 school year were only incorporated into evaluations or accountability measures if it benefited the teacher, school, or district.

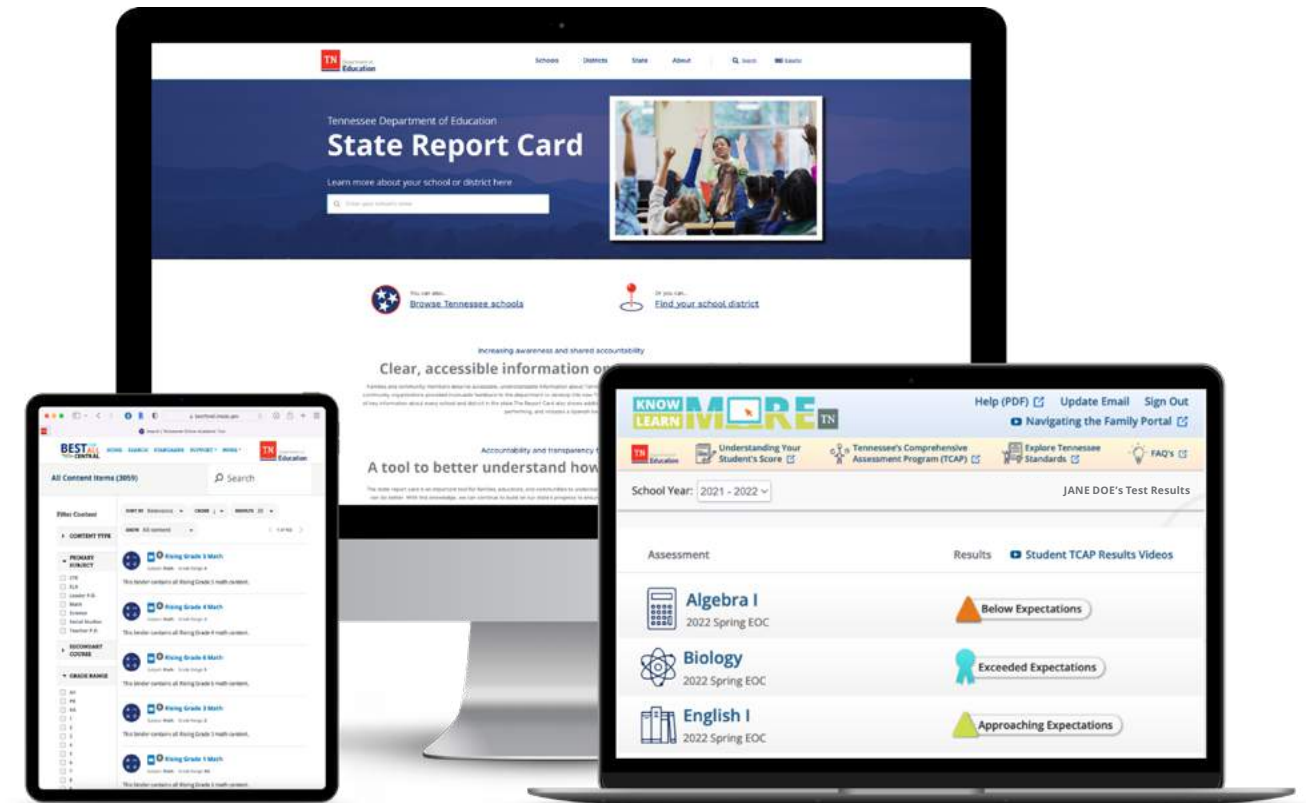
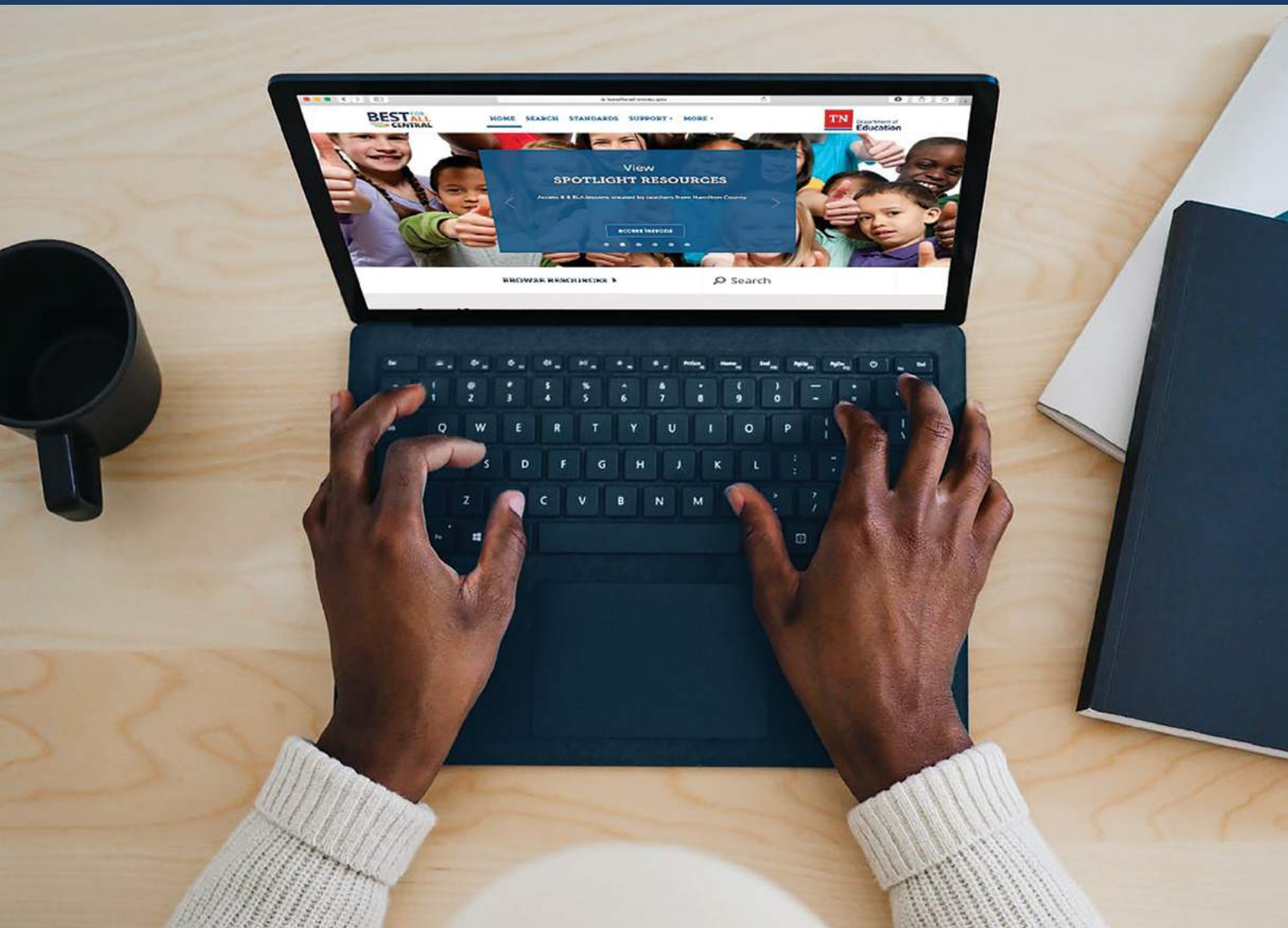
In 2016, the Tennessee General Assembly enacted T.C.A. 49-1-228 which requires the department to develop an A-F school letter grade system. Implementation of school letter grades was intended to begin in the 2017-18 school year. However, testing administration errors and accountability hold harmless provisions delayed implementation of school letter grades.



“ You have done an amazing job on this tool for all stakeholders. I taught 37 years in Montgomery County. My son was a teacher and administrator in this county, my daughter is a teacher here now, and my daughter-in-law taught in this district as well.

Amazing lessons, rigorous and well-paced. You should market this for the entire country. Good job Department of Education.

- Former TN Teacher & Best for All Central User



Best for All Central

In the spring of 2020, the department launched the Best for All Central Hub to provide online, free access to high-quality resources to all stakeholders in the K-12 education environment statewide.

Since the launch of Best for All Central, there have been visitors from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Resources on Best for All Central include general information, English language arts, science, professional development, health and wellness, fine arts, and career and technical education.

TCAP Family Portal

The TCAP Family Portal provides Tennessee parents and families with on-demand access to student TCAP scores and free resources. Specifically, the Family Portal has been redesigned to improve user friendliness, offer clarity of the printed state score report, and provide more actionable resources for families and includes several new features—personalized student video reports in five languages, sample questions, questions for parents to engage with their student’s teacher about their scores, and historical data to track student achievement over time.

State Report Card

The State Report Card provides stakeholders with information about how Tennessee schools and districts are performing to inform decisions and strategic investments to best support students.

Several features of the State Report Card include TCAP results and participation rates, designation flags to indicate Best for All Districts, Reward, Priority, ATSI, & CSI schools, districts and schools participating in strategic initiatives, and more.

“ We know that when children have families who are engaged in their education, they are more likely to be successful...

- DR. JON RYSEWYK, Director of Schools, Knox County Schools



INVESTING IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Tennessee has made—and will continue to make—deep, strategic investments to provide the most-needed supports for our students. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, over \$4.5 billion in federal relief funding is already making a difference throughout Tennessee. In addition, Governor Lee’s \$1 billion investment for public education was passed in historic legislation after significant community feedback. Investing in student achievement remains a top priority and is reflective of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do the life-changing work that will set all students on a path to success.

“ Investing in public education excellence builds thriving communities, a prosperous economy and a successful workforce.

- **WILLIAM LAMBERTH**
House Majority Leader

“ With Tennessean's commitment to becoming one of the strongest states in the nation for education, it is timely for us to examine this ambitious and worthwhile goal to invest in our students and our state. **The state needs a funding strategy reflective of the needs of all our students, educators and communities.**

- **DR. CATHY BECK**
*Director of Schools
Cheatham County Schools*

“ The timing is right in Tennessee to take a comprehensive look at the way we fund K-12 education. A funding formula that better supports the diverse needs of individual students could have an important impact in accelerating academic outcomes.

- **TERESA SLOYAN**
President, Hyde Family Foundation

\$4.5B+
**FEDERAL RELIEF
FUNDING**

DUE TO COVID-19
PANDEMIC

\$1B
**HISTORIC
INVESTMENT**

FOR PUBLIC
EDUCATION

Federal Relief Funding

In response to the global COVID-19 health pandemic, the U.S. Congress passed landmark legislation to provide a historic influx of federal funding to states. Between four major sources of federal relief and stimulus funding including ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief), Tennessee will benefit from almost \$4.2 billion for K-12 education to be spent between spring 2020 and fall 2024. Specifically, Tennessee received over \$150 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF), including PPE, over \$45 million in competitive federal grants for literacy, CTE, and mental health resources, over \$126 million in GEER (Governor’s discretionary relief funding), over \$385 million in ESSER (SEA discretionary relief funding), and over \$3.58 billion passed directly to school districts.

Tennessee’s American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) state plan laid out the state’s spending

strategy for its portion of federal relief funding, including grant opportunities and resources to support districts, schools, teachers, students and families aligned to the Best for All strategic plan.

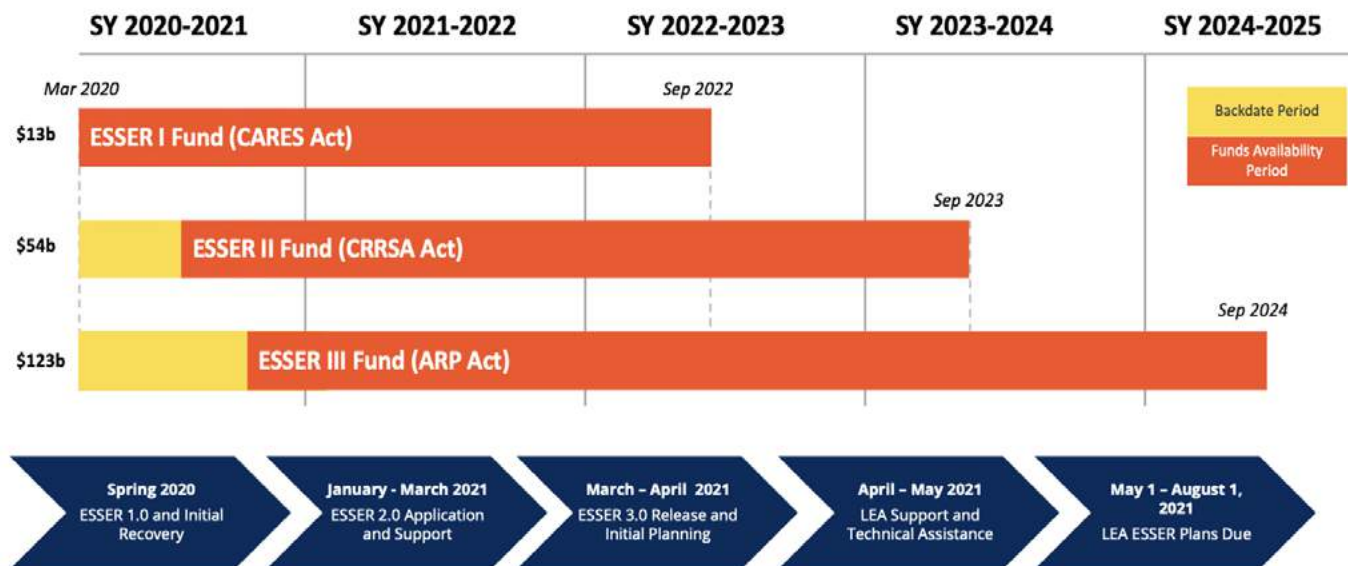
To receive ESSER funding, states received allocations based on their share of Title I funding, with 90% of funds allocated to school districts based on each districts’ Title I share and 10% is reserved for state level activities. Districts were required to submit their spending plans as allowable under federal guidance to the department, which are also aligned to the state’s overall federal relief spending strategy.

ESSER 3.0 funds specifically emphasized learning loss, in-person learning, school facility improvements, and the federal government required 20% of the districts’ ESSER 3.0 allocation to be spent to address learning loss.

To complete their required plans, districts focused on understanding and forecasting student needs over the next three years, designing a multi-year recovery plan to maximize one-time funds, implementing components with a strong focus on a few large initiatives and a clear process for data collection, and monitoring, evaluating and adjusting plans based on results of data collection and feedback from students and staff.

“
It is critical that we use these funds strategically. Used wisely, these funds will become educational assets to not only put our students back on track but propel them all educationally.

- JON LUNDBERG
Senate Education Chairman



Best for All Districts

In February 2022, the department announced 67 districts were receiving statewide recognition as Best for All Districts for significantly investing federal COVID-19 stimulus funding strategically to drive student achievement and improving academic outcomes. Best for All Districts are receiving financial, operational, celebratory, and resource benefits in appreciation for their planned investments to spend their share of the \$3.58 billion in federal COVID-19 relief and stimulus funding directly on services, resources and supports that will help students achieve academically. Governor Bill Lee announced a Day of Recognition in honor of Best for All Districts on Friday, February 11, 2022 in which the department held a statewide celebration via livestream. Dozens of Best for All districts were also highlighted on the AcceleratingTN 2022 Summer Bus Tour displaying their most innovative projects, targeted interventions, and improving literacy during summer programming.



67

DISTRICTS
RECEIVED STATEWIDE
RECOGNITION



TISA

Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement

In the fall of 2021, Governor Bill Lee and Commissioner Penny Schwinn invited *Tennesseans to participate in the full review of the state's public education funding formula and explore possibilities for a more student-centered approach.* The Tennessee Department of Education and the General Assembly convened 18 funding subcommittees and organized a legislative steering committee.

Tennesseans were given over 1,000 opportunities to engage, including 16 public town halls and local match conversations across the state. Public engagement focused on a student investment strategy that *prioritizes students over systems, empowers parents to engage in their child's education, incentivizes student outcomes, ensures all students- regardless of location or learning needs- are served at a high-level, reflects Tennesseans' values, and creates flexible funding that prepares students for postsecondary success.*

In January 2022, Governor Lee and Commissioner Schwinn released a draft framework for the new student-based K-12 funding formula.



All Tennesseans were encouraged to submit public comment to be considered by subcommittees.

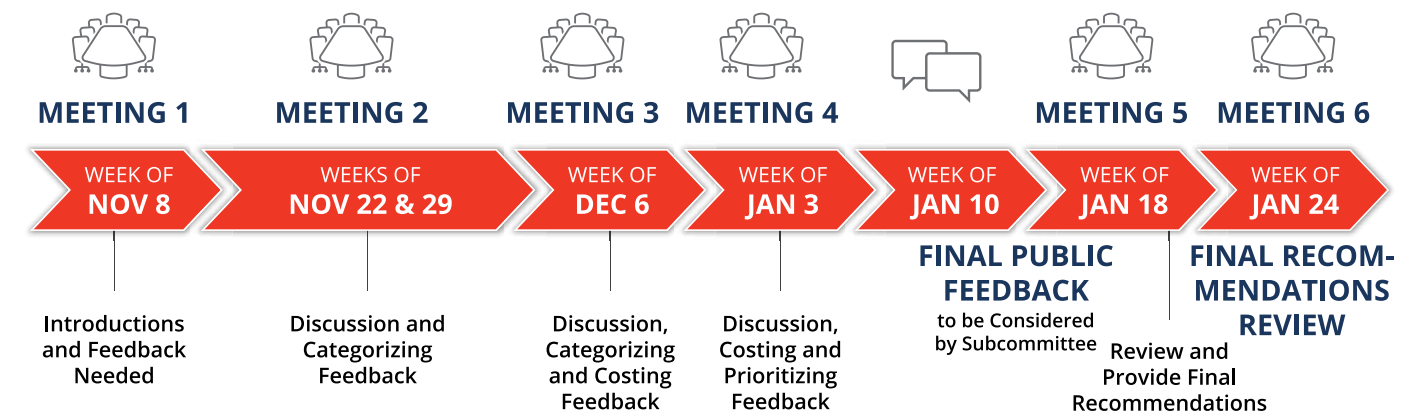
Over 1,300 public comments were submitted, which are available to [view here](#).

“Change is hard... Even positive change is hard, but this is transformational and it's time to transform education in TN.

- BO WATSON
Senate Finance Chairman

“We think [the formula] incorporates a lot of the things that we were looking for in terms of weights and an ambitious base. We think it is an important step in the right direction.

- GINI PUPO-WALKER
District 8 Representative, Metro Nashville School Board
Director, Education Trust in Tennessee



Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act

On Thursday, February 24th, Governor Bill Lee and Commissioner Penny Schwinn released the details of the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act, which transitions Tennessee’s K-12 public schools to a student-based funding approach. The TISA Act was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly on April 28, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Bill Lee on May 2, 2022. Through the passage of the TISA Act, Tennessee’s K-12 public schools will now transition to a student-based funding approach and invest an estimated \$9 billion in education funding for the state, including state and local funds, which includes an additional recurring state investment of \$1 billion starting in the 2023-24 school year.

To implement the new funding formula, the TISA Act requires rulemaking in certain areas to further flesh out the law, define terms, and establish processes and procedures for funding disbursements.

On July 28th, the department hosted a public rulemaking hearing to accept verbal comment on the proposed rules for the TISA Act. The public comment period for the proposed TISA rules ended on August 2nd, and the state board gave a unanimous positive recommendation on August 11th of the rules. The permanent rule will be sent to the Attorney General’s office for approval, be published with the Secretary of State for 90 days and go before the Joint Government Operations Committee for the Tennessee House and Senate.



“The process has been an outstanding example of how the General Assembly, the Department and the State Board have come together acting on extensive input from the residents of Tennessee to provide our districts with a funding process that will ensure the needs of individual students are addressed.

- **BOB EBY**
Vice Chair
State Board of Education

“We need a bold approach for the future, and we can't pay for that approach with an outdated funding system that prioritizes where a child lives over who a child aspires to be. So we applaud Governor Lee, Commissioner Schwinn, and our legislative leaders for their leadership at this critical time to explore ways to adjust and modernize school funding for the future and to help quickly close the learning gaps that too many of our students now face.

- **VICTOR EVANS**
Executive Director
TennesseeCAN



TISA Professional Development

With the TISA Act being implemented beginning in the 2023-24 school year, the department will offer several professional development opportunities for both district and department staff to assist in a smooth transition to the funding formula.



TISA Guide

The department is creating a TISA Guide to ensure proper reporting of district data. Under the TISA Act, districts will be required to submit data on a regular and ongoing basis as described in the TISA guide. The TISA guide shall be updated annually to ensure LEAs have an updated data submission calendar.



Brief Recap

In Governor Lee’s first term, the Tennessee Department of Education has strengthened and expanded several initiatives and programs to accelerate academic achievement and learning and provide the best for ALL students.

Through our focus on improving early literacy and high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring, the Reading 360 and TN ALL Corps initiatives are ensuring our students are equipped with resources to read on grade level and receive additional support if they have areas to improve in academically. Additionally, students across the state have access to multiple postsecondary pathways and opportunities through the Innovative School Models initiative to ensure each student can succeed and earn a living wage or pursue a degree or credential upon

high school graduation. Further, through our Grow Your Own initiative, Tennessee pioneered a new way to develop teacher pipelines and became the first state to establish a registered apprenticeship program for teaching, approved by the U.S. Department of Labor. Supporting this historic work and development, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act, transforming the way we fund public education in the state for the first time in over 30 years.

With the creation and expansion of these fundamental initiatives and programs comes action from the public, including parents and families, community partners, elected officials, and education stakeholders.



Accelerating

Student Academic Achievement and Providing the **Best for ALL** Students Throughout Tennessee



Looking Ahead

Over the next two years, the department will shift into continuing or beginning implementation of several of these strategic initiatives outlined in the **Best for All Strategic plan: Reading 360, TN ALL Corps, Innovative School Models, Grow Your Own, and the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement.**

The department is focused on transparency and providing on-demand access to actionable data and resources for Tennessee students, families, and stakeholders to continue partnering in this essential work. We are committed to engaging with parents and

families by providing access to data from these initiatives to drive positive outcomes and data-driven decisions at each level of our state’s K-12 public education system. **Tennessee will continue accelerating positive learning outcomes and providing access to the best resources, instruction, and supports for all students and educators.**

As we embark on this next chapter of implementation, Tennessee K-12 public education will ensure **each student has a place and is provided with every opportunity to succeed today and tomorrow.**



Andrew Johnson Tower, 9th floor
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243

tn.gov/education

#TNBestforAll

We will set all students on a path to success.

 @TennesseeEducation

 @TNedu

 @tndeptofedu

Permission is granted to use and copy these materials for non-commercial educational purposes with attribution credit to the "Tennessee Department of Education". If you wish to use these materials for reasons other than non-commercial educational purposes, please contact Joanna Collins (Joanna.Collins@tn.gov).