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March 20, 2012

Dear Fellow Tennesseans,

In 2011, Tennessee proved that it could rise to the challenge of education reform. Over the last three years, our state has made a series of policy changes to ensure that more of our students graduate from high school with the skills they need to be successful in life. After attracting millions of dollars in federal and philanthropic funds to support innovative K-12 education reforms and passing the most significant education legislation since 1992, educators have begun taking the steps to implement these policies in the classroom. Now, we must ensure these policy changes have positive impacts for our students.

Since the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) was founded, we have been committed not only to advocating for reforms that will lay the foundation to dramatically improve our schools but also to ensuring reforms are implemented with fidelity. In 2009, SCORE issued its *Roadmap to Success* report which outlined a plan to ensure that every student in Tennessee graduates high school prepared for college and career. Since then, the majority of those policy recommendations, including aligning our standards with college readiness standards and designing a new teacher and principal evaluation system that is based on multiple measures, including student achievement, have been adopted. But we are just at the beginning of this important work. In order for the early signs of success to be sustained and accelerated, it is crucial that we remain committed to achieving our state's education reform goals. We must not lose a sense of urgency to improve.

Our actions over the next few years will have significant implications in the lives of the next generation of Tennesseans. We hope that you read through this annual update and are both inspired by the tremendous progress that has been made, and motivated to continue in this important work. As the link between producing an educated workforce and creating jobs remains of critical importance, it is imperative that we focus on the important work of implementation — of turning policy successes into real student achievement gains. Our state and our children depend on it.

With warmest regards,

*Rick Fries*



**March 20, 2012**

**Dear Friends,**

Last August, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan traveled to Tennessee and challenged our schools to become the fastest-improving in the nation. The Secretary's comments reflected the fact that Tennessee's actions to establish itself as a leader in education reform have put the state in a unique position to start realizing significant gains in student achievement. As we move into the first year of wide scale implementation of our policy commitments, it is crucial that we reflect on how we arrived at this point to ensure that we better prepare our students for the challenges of college and the workforce.

This *State of Education in Tennessee* report that follows will provide you with an overview of the work that was done in Tennessee over the last year, update you on Tennessee's progress in meeting its First to the Top goals, feature the work of schools and districts that are making significant improvements in the lives of our students, provide extensive state and district data, and highlight SCORE's priorities for Tennessee in 2012. Although we have made significant strides in changing policy conditions, our work over the next few years in ensuring that those policies are being effectively implemented and that districts and schools have the supports they need to make our policy goals a reality is critical.

As you will see, SCORE's priorities for 2012 highlight the actions that we believe must be taken to ensure that the state can build upon its early gains in student achievement and become the fastest improving state in the country. All of us — educators, parents, students, policy experts, and state and local officials — continue to have an important role to play in implementing reforms. SCORE will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure we stay on a pathway to success.

Very sincerely,

*Quia Woodson*





# METROPOLITAN

## Executive Summary

While progress continues to be made, there is much work left to be done to prepare Tennessee's students for college and the workforce.

## When **SCORE** released its *State of Education in Tennessee* report in March 2011, Tennessee had passed a series of policy changes that transformed the state into a national leader for education reform.

Building on these early policy successes, 2011 ushered in the beginning of the tough and challenging work of implementation — of turning policy changes into tangible student achievement gains. While progress continues to be made, there is much work left to be done to prepare Tennessee's students for college and the workforce.

The need for maintaining the momentum for education reform continues to be driven by both an economic imperative as well as recent scores on a range of student assessments. Recent data show that, within seven years of graduation, Tennesseans who complete a credential beyond a high school diploma earn, on average, \$10,000 more per year than those who do not. Currently, only 31 percent of adults in Tennessee have an associate's degree or higher. And while students in grades three through eight showed improvements on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) in 2011, only 15 percent of students in the state are college-ready across all four ACT benchmarks (English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science).

These statistics served as a continued impetus for Tennessee's policymaking efforts in 2011. Education reform formed the core of Governor Bill Haslam's first legislative package and dominated the attention of the first session of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly. Both tenure reform and charter school expansion, priorities for the Governor, became law. In addition, the Achievement School District, the body tasked with turning around the state's lowest-performing schools, was given authority to authorize charter schools that are within the District's jurisdiction. The General Assembly sought a number of other education policy changes, many of which became law, including replacing Tennessee's collective bargaining process with a system of collaborative conferencing, and expanding online education.

2011 also marked the beginning of much of the implementation of Tennessee's First to the Top reform plan, and a significant part of this work focused on the state's new teacher evaluation system. The Teacher

Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC), created through the 2010 First to the Top Act, submitted a full evaluation plan, including four observation models, to the State Board of Education in April 2011. The system was implemented statewide in the Fall of 2011. To aid in the implementation of the system and to gather feedback on potential improvements from educators and other stakeholders, SCORE began a statewide listening and feedback process on the evaluation in early 2012, with a report on the feedback process due by June 1.

Other major implementation efforts in 2011 focused on school turnaround. In Fall 2011, the Achievement School District began co-managing five schools in Tennessee and assisting with operations in eight others. In addition, the ASD began authorizing new charter schools to open in 2012. Charter school expansion increased in the state as well, bringing the total number of charter schools operating in the 2011–12 school year to 40.

Additionally, Tennessee's educators began implementing the Common Core State Standards in grades K–2 in the Fall of 2011 after a series of summer trainings.

To more accurately identify schools that need additional support, Tennessee announced its intent to seek a waiver from certain provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law in late Summer of 2011. The formal waiver request, submitted in November, sought to replace NCLB with an accountability framework that is aligned with the state's First to the Top plan. In February 2012, the U.S. Department of Education granted the request. Tennessee will replace the Adequate Yearly Progress measurement with a goal of raising overall achievement 3 to 5 percent every year, while creating three new categories for schools based on their performance (Reward schools, Focus schools, and Priority schools).

Finally, significant implementation work took place in regional and local school district settings. The Greeneville, TN-based Niswonger Foundation continued to implement the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium (NETCO). The Memphis City Schools' Teacher Effectiveness Initiative began the third year of its four-pronged plan to improve student achievement by identifying, supporting, and developing effective teaching. And a number of school districts in Tennessee moved forward with alternative salary

schedules for educators, rewarding teachers and principals for their ability to increase student achievement levels.

In order to implement reforms effectively and ensure that they are having positive impacts on students, there are crucial areas that Tennessee must focus on as it moves into 2012. We have outlined four priorities for the coming year to ensure our state is the fastest improving in the nation with regard to public education. Tennessee has made progress, particularly on the policy front, but these priorities outline the substantial work that must be done before our state sees significant gains in student achievement.

First, **sustained policy leadership** will continue to be critical, as the implementation of Tennessee's ambitious reform efforts could lead to discomfort as new approaches replace old standards. In particular, the state will need to exhibit continued commitment to implementation of educator evaluations and high academic standards. SCORE encourages policymakers to maintain their commitment to First to the Top, recognizing challenges will inevitably arise as the state transforms its public education system into the fastest improving in the nation.

Secondly, **robust professional learning for educators** that addresses areas of greatest need identified by performance evaluations is necessary to support great teaching. Research shows that great teaching is the number one school-based factor in improving student achievement, and robust professional learning is critical in helping educators improve their instruction. Significant work remains to prepare teachers for the new Common Core State Standards, particularly as the state integrates these standards into the curriculum and adopts computer-based assessments. Professional learning should be ongoing, content-specific, job-embedded, and collaborative.

Third, an intentional focus on **strengthening teacher preparation programs** will ensure new candidates for licensure are prepared to be effective educators once they enter the classroom. This will mean a continued improvement of the Teacher Preparation Report Card. In addition to enhancing accountability, preparation programs must ensure that their curricula are aligned with the state's new policies and standards, including the new teacher evaluation system, Common Core standards, and

the use of data as an important instructional tool. This will also mean a partnership between the Department of Education and higher education institutions to ensure that the use of data is consistent with state needs.

Finally, **expanding and strengthening the principal and administrator pipeline** must be a priority in the year ahead. Effective models for expanding the principal pipeline can be readily found in Tennessee, but more must be done to scale up these successful models. District partnerships with colleges and universities, as well as non-profits and businesses, provide opportunities for building leadership pipelines that can be leveraged to broaden the pool of candidates to lead schools throughout Tennessee. In particular, small and rural districts should consider creating a principal pipeline through consortia models in collaboration with institutions of higher education, as these systems often lack the personnel or capacity to build effective pipelines of their own. This consortia model could be supported by the Tennessee Department of Education or philanthropic and non-profit partnerships.

## SCORE'S 2012 PRIORITIES

- Sustained Policy Leadership
- Robust Professional Learning for Educators
- Strengthening Teacher Preparation Programs
- Expanding and Strengthening the Principal Pipeline

We believe these four priorities will further our goal of preparing every Tennessee student for college and the workforce. By maintaining our commitment to implementing an ambitious reform agenda and promoting stronger, better prepared and supported educators and school leaders, Tennessee can continue to lead the nation as a state committed to a better future for its students and graduates.





## **SECTION 1:** Year-in-Review

Building on early policy successes, 2011 ushered in the beginning of the tough and challenging work of implementation — of turning policy changes into tangible student achievement gains.

2011 Year-in-Review Timeline

- January**  
Inauguration of Governor Bill Haslam
- February**  
Governor Haslam announces two key education initiatives for the year: teacher tenure reform and charter school expansion
- March — April**  
General Assembly passes tenure reform; Governor Haslam signs into law, effective July 1, 2011. Governor Haslam appoints Kevin Huffman to lead the Tennessee Department of Education
- May**  
TDOE Commissioner Kevin Huffman appoints Chris Barbic superintendent of the Achievement School District. The Department begins trainings on implementation of Common Core Standards. The Department also begins training evaluators for the new teacher evaluation system
- June**  
Governor Haslam signs charter reform law in Memphis
- July**  
TDOE releases TCAP scores indicating improvements over 2009–10 in all tested subject areas and grade levels
- August**  
New teacher evaluations are implemented statewide. Common Core implementation begins in grades K–2. ASD begins co-managing its first cohort of schools. Contract finalized to develop the Early Warning Data System
- September**  
President Obama announces NCLB waiver process. First annual SCORE Prize winners announced
- November**  
Tennessee submits NCLB waiver application
- December**  
Governor Haslam requests that SCORE collect feedback on evaluation system and issue report by June 2012

“This work is tough. It is challenging. Nothing is easy about it. There’s a reason why these gaps haven’t closed. There’s a reason why education has been so slow to improve. But I am very hopeful that Tennessee could possibly become the fastest-improving state in the country. If Tennessee can do that, the implications not just for the children here but for the nation are profound.”<sup>1</sup>

While 2009 and 2010 were marked by significant policy changes that made Tennessee a leader in the education reform movement, **2011 ushered in the beginning of the tough and challenging work of implementation.**

Over the last year, statewide implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems began, teachers in grades K–2 began teaching Common Core standards, the Achievement School District began co-managing its first cohort of schools, and two STEM schools were opened in Nashville and Knoxville. From the state department to local districts and schools, educators began rising to the state’s new standards and turning the state’s policy goals into a reality in classrooms.

As a result, Tennessee’s students have posted strong learning gains, performing better in all subject areas and grade levels than they did last year, even as they were learning under more difficult academic standards. Statewide, student math scores increased by 7 percentage points and reading scores increased by 3.7 percentage points.<sup>2</sup> In many districts, the gains were even higher, with double digit growth in certain grades and subjects.

While Tennessee has shown early signs of success in preparing students for the rigors of postsecondary education and the workforce, these incremental improvements, while significant, will not be enough to ensure that the state remains globally competitive and economically vibrant. Data from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) released in 2011 indicated that although there was no statistical change in the state’s fourth and eighth grade reading and math scores from 2009, other states made improvements during this period that pushed Tennessee further down in the rankings.<sup>3</sup> And while students in grades three through eight showed improvements on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), only 15 percent of students are “college-ready” across all four ACT college benchmarks (English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science).<sup>4</sup>

Using the initial Roadmap to Success report that SCORE issued in October 2009 and the state’s First to the Top priorities as a guide, the report that follows analyzes

both the important progress that occurred in 2011 and points the way forward for sustained action and lasting change in 2012.

The need for maintaining the momentum for education reform continues to be driven by economic and workforce needs. Recent data show that, within seven years of graduation, Tennesseans who complete a credential beyond a high school diploma earn, on average, \$10,000 more per year than those who do not. Currently, only 31 percent of adults in Tennessee have an associate’s degree or higher.<sup>5</sup> For rural communities, the connection between a quality education and a strong, sustainable economy is even more pronounced. Unemployment rates in rural communities continue to outpace state and national rates, and to get the jobs of the future, even in fields like manufacturing and agriculture, which have not traditionally required postsecondary education, businesses are requiring that their workers obtain higher levels of education than ever before. For many Tennesseans, the most significant topic in 2011 continued to be the difficult and challenging economic environment.<sup>6</sup>

In the increasingly global economy, businesses are no longer just looking across borders for an educated and prepared workforce, but across oceans as well. According to a recent study conducted by researchers at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, Tennessee’s students’ performance in math puts them at a disadvantage when compared to most states in the U.S. and many countries around the world.<sup>7</sup>

In the face of these challenges that reaffirm the critical importance of maintaining the momentum for education reform in the Volunteer State, state leaders issued a renewed challenge in 2011 to be the fastest improving state in the nation. Policymakers responded to this challenge by making a number of substantial changes in education policy to build on the policy successes of 2010.

Education reform formed the core of Governor Bill Haslam’s first legislative package and dominated the attention of the first session of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly. In February 2011, Haslam announced the two key pieces of education legislation he sought: teacher tenure reform and charter school expansion. The Governor’s tenure proposal directly

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan — August 10, 2011



# PROMISING PRACTICES

## Fairview Elementary / More than a wall

Two years ago, it was a wall. Now it's a student progress monitoring center, showing teachers and staff the proficiency levels of every student in the building at a glance.

The “assessment wall” at Fairview Elementary in Heiskell, TN is a large, visually impressive display of a teaching culture driven by data and innovation. It includes moveable, brightly colored cards for every child, providing a real-time proficiency snapshot in reading, math, and writing. The assessment wall is updated at least every few days by all staff members, not just teachers, using data from classroom observations, anecdotal records, and benchmark tests. The wall also includes feedback from all staff members outside of the classroom. School staff says the constant access to proficiency data has had a transformative effect on the way they work with students.

***“If you’re not looking at what children have done — what they’ve done today and what your expectations are for tomorrow — these children have no chance,” said Fairview teacher Theresa Barrington.***

In addition to helping teachers make changes in their classrooms, the wall also fuels a comprehensive early intervention program referring students to the school’s Response to Intervention (RTI) team of teachers, specialists, and administrators who work together to determine appropriate responses to student needs. And every day, a school-wide 30-minute intervention period provides all students an opportunity for one-on-one enrichment from faculty and staff throughout the building. The school librarian, for example, leads two 30-minute daily intervention groups focused on reading, with no more than four students in each group. A music teacher with free time during her planning period provides a 30-minute reading and writing intervention period for a handful of fifth-graders. When students no longer require interventions for particular skills, group members and subject focuses are changed.

This involvement of related arts instructors with core subject instruction is part of Fairview’s culture of staff collaboration. All faculty and staff members are integrally involved in student instruction at every level, providing feedback on student needs and staying abreast of daily progress. Principal Karen Cupples said the school’s focus on data and school-wide communication has enhanced the staff’s ability to work as a team. A few years ago, Cupples saw more divisions — between upper and lower grades, between core and related arts instructors, between faculty and administration. The clear and consistent use of data provides goals that are easily defined and tracked. Staff members contributing to every level of the student experience can see how their efforts contribute to an individual student’s success.

***“I think the atmosphere is better because we’re all on the same team,” Cupples said. “Everyone is involved. We are all of equal importance. It is not just one person in a classroom.”***

The Fairview team includes parents as well. Parents are part of the intervention process, welcomed as volunteers by classroom teachers. One program provides parents with training in reading and writing strategies, offering opportunities to observe school lessons taught by a reading interventionist. In addition, upper-grade parents receive regular tips on good writing skills to model for children, and all parents are invited to Friday morning assemblies throughout the school year honoring student accomplishments.

Missie Wiggins, president of the school’s PTO, said communication makes all the difference at Fairview.

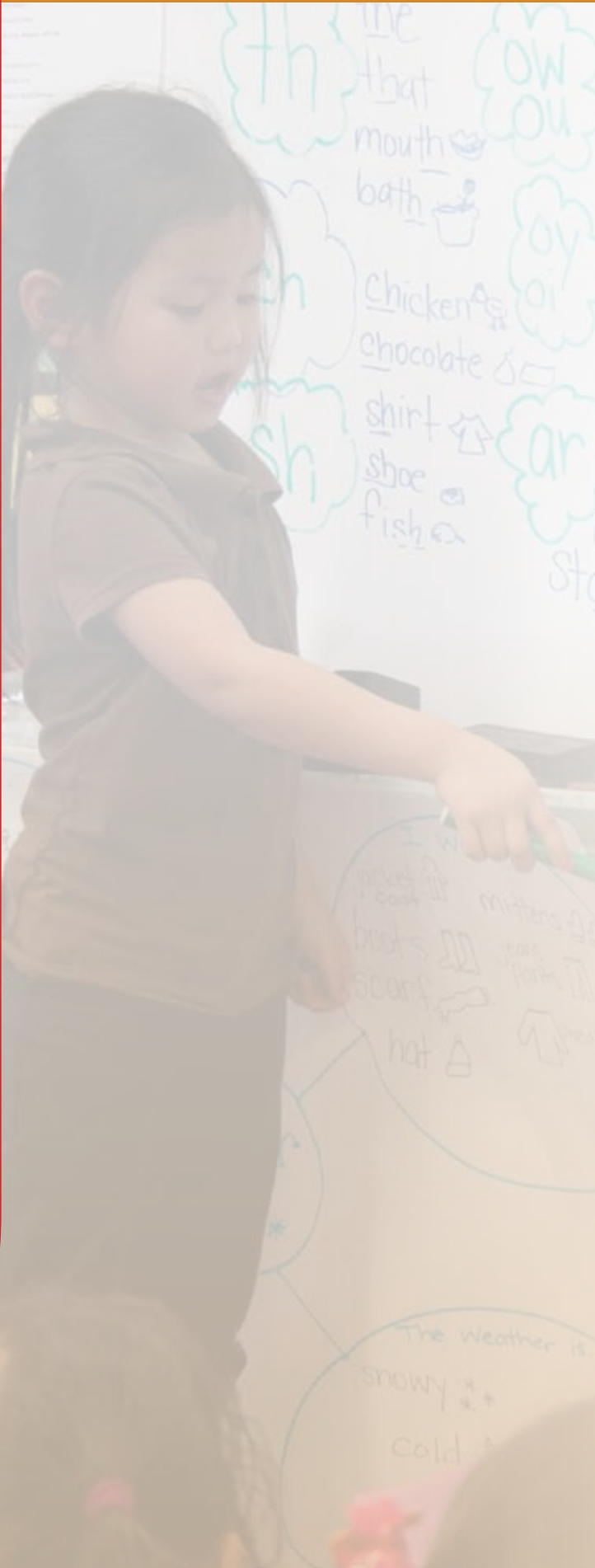
***“It’s my child’s education. It’s not just the teachers,” Wiggins said. “You don’t just send [the kids to school] and expect the teachers to do everything.”***

With TVAAS scores showing that Fairview students’ math scores are improving 14 times faster than the state average, it’s clear that these efforts are fueling incredible academic gains.

**At Fairview, walls aren’t just walls. They’re opportunities.**

**Fairview Elementary, part of Anderson County Schools, is the 2011 SCORE Prize winner in the elementary category.**

## SECTION 1: Year-in-Review



ted tenure decisions to the state’s new teacher evaluation system, a recommendation made by SCORE in the 2009 Roadmap to Success report.

Previously, tenure decisions were not necessarily tied to an educator’s effectiveness in the classroom and were largely based on years of service. After three years of teaching, nearly all educators received tenure protection for the remainder of their careers. In addition, tenure protection ensured that teachers could only be removed from the classroom by being “dismissed for cause,” an often lengthy and expensive process.

The Governor’s proposed bill, SB 1528 / HB 2012, sought to make tenure a more meaningful decision by rewarding effective teachers with tenure protection while allowing for the removal of tenure if an educator was ineffective in the classroom. Additionally, the bill would allow for an additional two years in which school systems could evaluate teachers and provide them with professional development before making decisions about tenure.

### The major components of the bill included:

- An extension of the probationary period before granting tenure from three to five years
- A change in tenure eligibility requirements that requires teachers to be in the top two (out of five) effectiveness categories on the evaluation system for two consecutive years
- For educators who received tenure after the new law was enacted, a return to probationary status (and the loss of tenure) if an educator is in the bottom two effectiveness categories for two consecutive years

The tenure legislation moved quickly through the legislature. In March, both the State House and State Senate passed the bill, and Governor Haslam signed the legislation into law in mid-April. At the bill signing, the Governor said that “three years was too short a time to grant something that’s such a great privilege like tenure. I think the bar had been set too low in terms of having objective criteria, in terms of how we decide who got tenure.”<sup>8</sup> The law went into effect on July 1, 2011.

Governor Haslam set high-quality charter school expansion as his second major legislative priority in education. According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Tennessee has experienced the fastest

growing student population attending charter schools with a 38 percent increase over the 2009–2010 school year.<sup>9</sup> To encourage the continued increase in the number of students with the ability to attend a charter school, the Governor sought to lift restrictions on both the number of charter schools that could operate in Tennessee as well as on the kinds of students that could attend charter schools (See the chart on p. 20).

In June 2011, Governor Haslam signed SB 1523 / HB 1989 during a ceremony at Freedom Preparatory Academy in Memphis. The legislation passed the previous month with a bipartisan majority in the General Assembly. The bill removed the cap on the number of charter schools that could open in the state. It also enables any student that lives in a district with a charter school to enroll; however, it allows charter schools to give preference to students who are zoned to a failing school, have failed to test proficient on the TCAP, or who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

A third piece of the legislation gave the state’s Achievement School District — the body tasked with turning around the state’s lowest performing schools — the ability to authorize charter schools that are within the District’s jurisdiction. For the first time, this legislation created an alternate authorizer for new charter schools in the state. Previously, only a local school district had the authority to authorize charters. In a varied approach, the Achievement School District is working to ensure that the state is attractive to excellent school operators from around the country by creating an environment for school operators to thrive. Additionally, the ASD will authorize and hold accountable charter schools and program partners while building the Achievement Schools, a network of model schools.

In addition to the Governor’s legislative priorities, the General Assembly sought a number of other education policy changes, many of which became law. The Professional Educators Collaborative Conferencing Act repealed Tennessee’s traditional collective bargaining process that required collective bargaining between teachers and school boards if a majority of teachers voted for such negotiations.<sup>10</sup> Bargaining was replaced with a system of collaborative conferencing, in which school boards and teachers will “confer, consult, discuss and exchange information, opinions and proposals on matters relating to terms and

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Higher Academic Standards:  
The Common Core State Standards

What are the Common Core State Standards?

Common Core State Standards are a set of standards that were developed by state leaders to ensure that every student graduates high school prepared for college or the workforce, regardless of the state in which they live. The standards are designed to set clear expectations of what students should know in each grade and subject. They reflect rigorous learning benchmarks when compared to countries whose students currently outperform American students on international assessments. States voluntarily choose whether to adopt the standards. To date, 46 states, including the District of Columbia, have adopted Common Core standards. The initiative is led by the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve.

Why did Tennessee adopt Common Core?

Tennessee is committed to ensuring that high school students graduate prepared for college and career. Currently, only 15 percent of Tennessee students are college-ready.<sup>1</sup> The state took an initial step to raise standards by adopting the Tennessee Diploma Project standards in 2009 to meet this challenge. By joining nearly every other state to develop and implement Common Core standards, Tennessee is now taking a further step to enhance the quality of instruction and learning for its students. By adopting Common Core, teachers in Tennessee will be able to better learn from and collaborate with teachers in other states, since all teachers will follow a common set of standards.

How will Common Core affect teaching in Tennessee?

Common Core standards will represent a significant shift in instructional practice for educators across the state. Although there is some alignment between Tennessee's standards and the Common Core, the Common Core requires a deeper engagement with a smaller number of standards than the state currently requires. Specifically, students will be required to master more critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Recognizing the new depth to which Common Core subject areas must be taught, teachers and school and district leaders will need to receive comprehensive training on implementation of the standards to develop a deep understanding of what they require. The table below compares a subset of the Tennessee Diploma Project (TDP) and Common Core standards in fourth grade math.

Grade 4 Math Standards

| Tennessee Diploma Project  | Common Core   |
|--|---|
| Add and subtract fractions with like and unlike denominators and simplify the answer               | Compare two fractions with different numerators and different denominators                        |
| Given a set of data or a graph, describe the distribution of the data using median, range, or mode | Make a line plot to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit                     |
| Solve problems using whole number division with one or two digit divisors                          | Find whole-number quotients and remainders with up to four-digit dividends and one-digit divisors |

<sup>1</sup> ACT. (2011). 2011 ACT National and State Scores. Retrieved from: <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2011/states.html>.

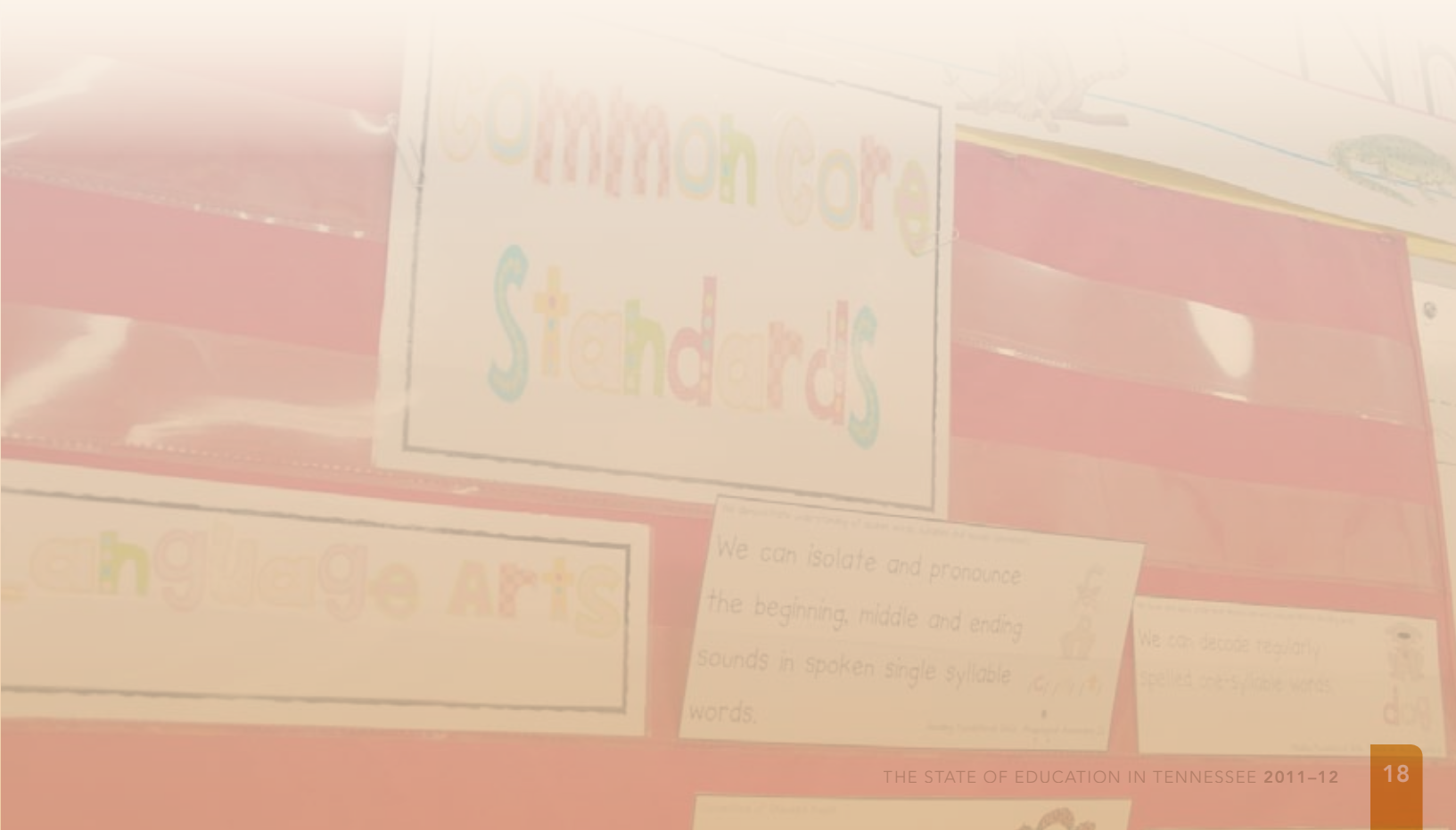
The transition to Common Core will also include the adoption of new assessments that will test what students have learned under the new standards. These assessments will replace the current TCAP tests. These assessments will be administered online and include both an end-of-year final exam and periodic assessments throughout the school year that will allow teachers to monitor their students' progress and adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Tennessee is working with a number of other states in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium to design these new assessments.

What is the timeline for implementing Common Core?

Common Core standards will be phased into English/language arts and math across all grade levels in the coming academic years, with full implementation scheduled for 2013–14. These standards will require new approaches to teaching, and students should expect enhanced rigor in their courses.



More information on Common Core implementation can be found in the *First to the Top Progress Update* later in this report.





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conditions of professional service.”<sup>11</sup> The bill limited the items that can be considered in conferencing, shielding items such as differentiated pay, teacher evaluations, and personnel decisions, among other items.

Following the bill’s passage, the Tennessee Department of Education, along with the Tennessee School Boards Association and the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents provided school districts with guidance on navigating the new collaborative conferencing system.

The final major piece of education legislation was the Tennessee Virtual Public Schools Act. The legislation expanded online education in the state, allowing students from across the state to take all of their courses online through virtual schools established by local districts. While a number of school districts in Tennessee had established online coursework to supplement the traditional curriculum, this legislation allows for full virtual education and mandated that state education dollars follow students to these virtual schools.

**In 2011, work also began to translate policy change in the state capitol to meaningful change in schools and districts across Tennessee to support and improve student learning.** Many of the most critical parts of Tennessee’s First to the Top plan began to be implemented, particularly the state’s new evaluation system for educators which is more closely aligned with student achievement.

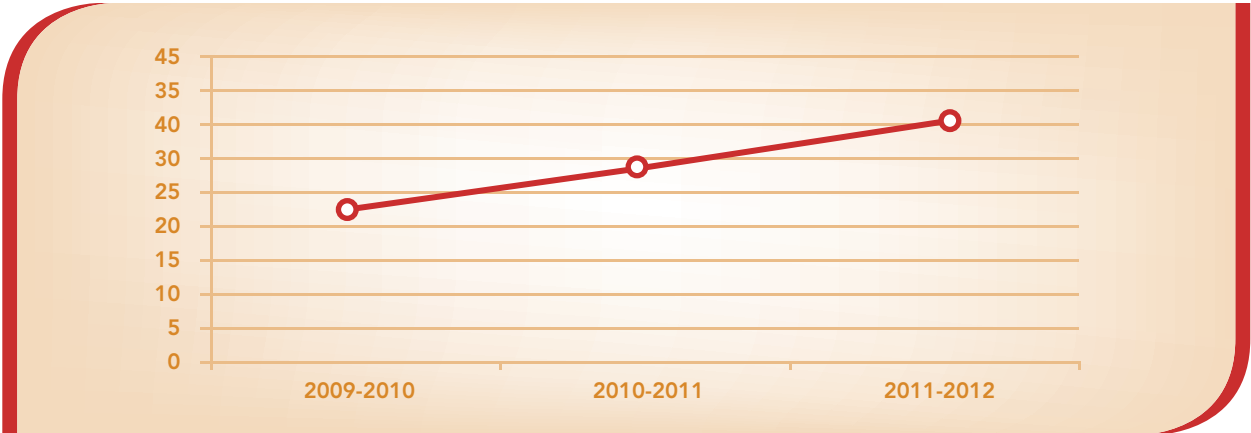
Throughout 2010 and 2011, the Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC), a 15-member body that included educators, administrators, and other education stakeholders, worked to develop and recommend guidelines and criteria for the new evaluation system that would be based 50 percent on student achievement data, including 35 percent on value-added data for teachers for whom they are available. The other 50 percent of the evaluation would be based on classroom observation. The creation of the system followed a recommendation made by SCORE in 2009 that Tennessee “develop and implement a new teacher evaluation system based on multiple measures including student achievement gains.”

While the TEAC worked through the details of the evaluation system, a number of evaluation systems were being piloted in the state during the 2010–11 school year. Hamilton County Schools piloted Project COACH, an observation protocol that requires school administrators to conduct six to 10 observations per teacher per school year and provide verbal and written feedback within a three-day period. Similarly, Memphis City Schools continued the work of its Teacher Effectiveness Initiative (TEI), a seven year transformational project funded in part with a \$90M grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The district’s priority for the school year focused on developing the Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM), the keystone element to better understand best practices in evaluating teacher effectiveness. In addition to these two models, 21 districts piloted the Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER) model that is based on a modified set of Charlotte Danielson’s rubrics and has a focus on teacher professional learning. Meanwhile, the state piloted an observation rubric based on the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model, which Knox County Schools began using in a subset of its schools in 2006.

The TEAC made initial recommendations on the evaluation system in September 2010, and submitted the full evaluation plan to the State Board of Education in April 2011. Subsequently, the Department of Education received plans for three alternative observation models, which were submitted to the State Board for

| Models                              | Number of Teachers | Percentage of Teachers |                               |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| TEAM                                | 52,989             | 81.7%                  |                               |
| Project Coach                       | 2,925              | 5%                     | Total alternative models: 18% |
| Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) | 7,329              | 11%                    |                               |
| TIGER                               | 1,606              | 2.4%                   |                               |
|                                     | 64,849             |                        |                               |

Charter Schools in Tennessee (2009–2011)



Students Served by Tennessee Charter Schools (2009–2011)



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

approval. Four models ultimately gained approval, including recommendations for measuring the value-added portion of the evaluation for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. Of the four models, the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM), is the model being used for the majority of the state’s teachers.

Throughout the Summer of 2011, educators and administrators across the state were trained on the new evaluation systems. The system, including the four approved observation models, was implemented statewide in Fall of 2011. In December, to aid in the implementation of the evaluation system, Governor Haslam asked SCORE to conduct an independent

process to gather feedback on the evaluation from educators and community members to inform potential improvements. In the first half of 2012, SCORE will solicit feedback through a statewide listening tour on the challenges and concerns, as well as the best practices around implementing the system. SCORE will report back to the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education by June on its findings.

**Other major implementation efforts in 2011 focused on the Common Core State Standards, which the State Board of Education adopted in July 2010.** The Common Core is a set of standards developed by state leaders from across the country to ensure that every student graduates from high school prepared

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for college or the workforce, regardless of the state in which they live. During Summer 2011, the Department held two series of trainings: one for K–2 educators who began implementing the standards in Fall 2011 and an awareness training for other educators who will implement the standards in later years.

Additionally, Tennessee began its work to turn around the state’s lowest performing schools. In May 2011, Tennessee Education Commissioner Kevin Huffman appointed charter school network founder Chris Barbic to lead the Achievement School District. In Fall 2011, the ASD began co-managing five schools in Tennessee and assisting with operations in eight others. In addition, because of the state’s charter school legislation mentioned earlier, the ASD began authorizing new charter schools to open in 2012. The ASD will open the Achievement Schools in the 2012–2013 school year, the team’s own brand of charter schools that they will run. *(For more information on educator evaluations, implementation of the Common Core standards, and school turnaround, see the First to the Top progress update later in this report).*

To more accurately identify schools that need additional support, Tennessee announced its intent to seek a waiver from certain provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law in late Summer of 2011. In 2010–11, only 51 percent of Tennessee schools were in “Good Standing” under the Adequate Yearly Progress measure, the accountability system established by NCLB.

Many education leaders in Tennessee and across the country felt that the federal accountability system was not an accurate or fair measure of the performance of Tennessee’s schools, in part because Tennessee had dramatically raised academic standards through the Tennessee Diploma Project in 2009, an action which initially lowered the average test scores of Tennessee’s students.

In September 2011, President Barack Obama announced a formal waiver process for states to seek regulatory relief from NCLB. Under the waiver plan, states would be freed from some parts of the law in order to pursue their own plans for school improvement and accountability, if they meet certain requirements of the U.S. Department of Education. These requirements included raising student-achievement standards to reflect what’s needed to go on to college or a career, holding schools accountable for student gains, and improving teacher effectiveness.<sup>12</sup>

On November 15, Tennessee submitted a waiver request to the Department of Education to replace many of the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind law with an accountability framework that is aligned with the state’s First to the Top plan. Tennessee’s request was granted in February 2012. The state will replace the Adequate Yearly Progress measurement with a goal of raising overall achievement 3 to 5 percent every year, while cutting the achievement gap for minority and low-income students in half over the next eight years.

Tennessee Schools in “Good Standing” Under NCLB

Out of more than 1,700 schools



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

PROMISING PRACTICES

Mt. Juliet High / Beyond the classroom:  
Collaborative instruction elevates Mt. Juliet curriculum

Illustrating the fine points of a cow eyeball isn’t part of the syllabus in most high school art classes. But Mt. Juliet High School offers more than a typical curriculum.

At MJHS, a uniquely collaborative instructional culture helps students make connections between arts and sciences, classrooms and careers. The staff works creatively together to support higher expectations and advance common goals.

The eyeball illustration project, for example, began when a group of Mt. Juliet teachers brainstormed skills that students will need in future jobs — in this case, high level teamwork.

Fine arts teacher Derek Elwell followed up on this idea with biology instructor Cher Carlisle to devise a lesson plan that incorporated medical illustration in the two classes. When it was time for dissections to take place, the students from the two classes were placed in teams, and they were all graded, in part, on their ability to work together.

*“There’s a real collegial air here,” Elwell said. “You’re given the latitude to go outside your department and your discipline.”*

These partnerships extend beyond arts and sciences. English and world history are taught together in a World Studies class. Authentic frescos are crafted in history classrooms. The science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) initiative has involved auto mechanics, biology, chemistry, and health science to help students make connections between their classes and these areas. If the staff is working toward specific ACT achievement test objectives, students can expect to field practice questions in every class, from physical education to drama. In fact, physical education instructors conduct a daily writing assessment program, which school officials say have contributed to their growth in this area.

This teaching culture is nurtured very deliberately by school administrators. Common planning periods are built into the daily schedule to facilitate team teaching. School-wide benchmarks are honed in a monthly process bringing together every teacher in the building. A Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure facilitates cross-curricular focus groups, as well as subject area-specific planning to analyze benchmarks and discuss students’ strengths and weaknesses on state standards.

All of this adds up to an environment in which much is expected of students and teachers alike. The foundation of the team’s success, according to Principal Mel Brown, is a carefully hired staff of individuals ready to be part of a dynamic school.

*“As principal, I do have high expectations of everyone in the building, including myself” Brown said. “If it is determined that someone cannot be a team player or is not willing to be coached and encouraged to do better than their best, I try not to hire them.”*

The holistic approach is paying off. Mt. Juliet students exceeded state averages in composite ACT scores, and TVAAS performance exceeded expectations in all five End-of-Course exams. The school is proactive and aggressive in interventions when students veer off track from graduation requirements. A new Academic Referral System is in the works, in which teachers are asked to intervene every time a student receives a zero or submits sub-par work.

When MJHS senior Mikka Maderal talks about her school, she doesn’t mention PLCs or composite ACT scores. She talks about choir practice. Maderal said she appreciates that her choir teacher “constantly” tells students about how anatomy produces music. Exact language is used at practice — students are told to lift their sternums, for example, to produce the best sound. The interdisciplinary structure of choir and other classes helps Maderal think beyond classroom walls.

*“We’ll talk about math in choir. We actually talked about anatomy in history and language arts,” said Maderal, who plans to study physical therapy at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in the fall. “They teach you things that you’re supposed to learn, and then they teach you more things that you can use in real life.”*

With a teaching force modeling the kind of high-level teamwork students will one day use professionally, a relevant, “real life” education is exactly what MJHS offers.

Mt. Juliet High School, part of Wilson County Schools, is the 2011 SCORE Prize winner in the high school category.



## SECTION 1: Year-in-Review

### The request also created three new categories for schools which will receive differentiated support and rewards:

- Reward schools — the 10 percent of schools throughout the state with the highest achievement or overall growth
- Focus schools — the 10 percent of Tennessee's schools with the largest achievement gaps
- Priority schools — the bottom 5 percent of the state's schools in terms of academic performance.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the implementation work that was done on a statewide level, local school districts in Tennessee were busy with significant implementation work as well.

The Greeneville, TN-based Niswonger Foundation continued to implement the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium (NETCO) initiative funded in large part by a federal Investing in Innovation (i3) grant, with supporting funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, JP Morgan Foundation, and Rural School and Community Trust. NETCO includes 29 high schools from 15 school districts and seven partner institutions of higher education. The Consortium's primary goal is to promote a college-going culture among Northeast Tennessee high school graduates who are equipped with the skills to succeed at college-level work. They aim to do this by supporting a network of college and career counselors who visit participating schools weekly and by expanding access to rigorous coursework through the use of dual enrollment, distance and online learning, and professional development for Advanced Placement teachers.

In 2011, the Niswonger Foundation provided AP training to 40 teachers and made progress in opening opportunities for students in the region to enroll in college-level AP and dual-enrollment courses. The initiative has also expanded opportunities to take upper-level foreign language courses. An independent evaluation of the program provides ongoing feedback to Consortium staff to target resources where they are most needed to achieve project goals.

In West Tennessee, Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools began reconfiguration to a 23-member unified countywide school board that will govern both Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools until the systems merge in August 2013. In addition, a separate 21-member transition planning commission, comprised of both city and county representatives and created by action of the General Assembly to establish a plan for consolidation, was formed to manage the transition process during this time. While these

external circumstances initially seemed to put Memphis City Schools' ambitious Teacher Effectiveness Initiative plan (TEI) at risk, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as well as the local philanthropic community, reiterated their commitment to the district and the future consolidated system. Josh Edelman with the Gates Foundation said that Gates was "committed to the consolidation" and "excited about seeing it go forward" because it would allow the foundation to "serve more kids over time."<sup>14</sup>

In 2011, the Memphis City Schools' Teacher Effectiveness Initiative began the third year of its four-pronged plan to make teachers more effective and more accountable. The introduction and implementation of the new Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM), one of Tennessee's four teacher evaluation models, began immediately upon approval from the State Board of Education. As of January 2012, Memphis City Schools reported that 15,000 observations had been completed. "This process is neither quick nor easy," said Tequilla Banks, head of Teacher Talent and Effectiveness for Memphis City Schools. "Getting classroom observations right is tough work but a critical component."<sup>15</sup>

#### Part of the work of implementing the TEM included:

- training and certifying 630 school and district-based observers
- providing monthly "norming" training for all observers to ensure inter-rater reliability
- educating all 7,000 teachers on the new system and observation rubric
- developing new rubrics tailored for teachers in specialty areas such as guidance counselors and special education teachers.

Memphis City Schools also made significant progress in recruiting high quality teachers through its partnership with the Memphis-based TNTP (formerly The New Teacher Project) office, known as STARS. The STARS office worked closely with MCS departments to streamline the staffing and recruiting timelines, fill 100 percent of the vacancies by August 1, and place 190 candidates from Teach For America, Memphis Teaching Fellows, and the Memphis Teacher Residency in schools throughout the city. In addition, Memphis City Schools, along with the local philanthropic community, enhanced its efforts to recognize and reward top-performing teachers through the "I Teach. I Am." public advocacy campaign, a Teacher Tenure Celebration, and a district-wide end of year celebration for teachers. These efforts were designed to elevate the teaching profession in the context of increased

## PROMISING PRACTICES

### Maryville City Schools / Schools and community are intertwined in Maryville

Maryville Mayor Tom Taylor called it a "wake-up call."

More than 20 years ago, when Japanese manufacturer DENSO established a major presence in East Tennessee, city officials reveled in the economic development achievement. The city's school system had played a role in DENSO's decision. But it was a big surprise to learn that Maryville City Schools — long a well-deserved point of pride for Maryville citizens — weren't deemed sufficient for incoming DENSO employees who planned to return with their children to Japan one day.

*"The first thing that happens is the Japanese executives are saying they're going to do supplemental stuff so that their kids don't fall too far behind," Taylor said. "It was a wake-up call for Maryville."*

Whether it was this wake-up call or Maryville's long history of supporting public education, the city has a uniquely global outlook on academic expectations. This outlook translates into a commitment to constant school improvement that defines the city and its schools.

*"From our community to the classroom, high expectations permeate everything we do," MCS Director of Schools Stephanie Thompson said. "The discipline and hard work that goes hand-in-hand with high expectations starts at home, in the boardroom, at city hall, on the playing field, on stage, and from kindergarten to graduation."*

The district's first goal in its strategic plan is to "prepare all students for success in an ever-changing world." Maryville accomplishes this by providing students with a rigorous curriculum that often demands more of its students than state requirements. The district measures its progress against state and national benchmarks and makes revisions to its academic strategies by tracking their students' success long after they have graduated from high school.

Because of the district's high expectations, the seven schools comprising MCS have produced outstanding student achievements. The district's three-year ACT average is 23.8, considerably higher than Tennessee's statewide average of 19.5. While students exhibit high achievement, they are also constantly improving. The entire district has a 3-year TVAAS standard t-statistic of 14.32 on math, which means their students are improving 14 times faster than the state average.

Thompson said community and parent support are critical to the system's success. Thompson said they keep all stakeholders — including taxpayers, business leaders, elected officials, and families — engaged by clearly communicating the district's goals and strategies. The district conducts a quarterly series of parent and stakeholder surveys to gauge satisfaction and measure community involvement. A Director's Education Roundtable regularly brings together 20 diverse citizens to provide Thompson with valuable input on timely topics.

The school system also has the support of local government, Taylor said. MCS receives significant financial support from the city, and the Maryville City Council works closely with the school board — so there's no "bickering" between different entities, Taylor said.

In Maryville, it's widely understood that high-quality schools are critical to the community's economic development, said Bill Eanes, director of economic and workforce development for the Blount County Chamber of Commerce.

*"[We] understand that a quality school system leads to a quality workforce, which leads to quality jobs," Eanes said. "We hang our hats on the fact that we have an excellent school system."*

**Maryville City Schools is the 2011 SCORE Prize winner for school districts.**



# SECTION 1: Year-in-Review

accountability in order to attract and retain top talent. MCS also hopes to begin development of another signature component of the TEI plan this year — design and launch of a modern compensation structure to further its efforts at attracting and retaining top talent.

Finally, a number of school districts in Tennessee moved forward with alternative salary schedules for educators that will reward teachers and principals for their ability to increase student achievement levels. In January 2011, the Tennessee Department of Education awarded Innovation Acceleration Fund grants to four school systems to assist them in designing and implementing alternative salary schedules. These grants were supplied by First to the Top funds.<sup>16</sup> This grant followed the awarding of the U.S. Department of Education’s Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant awarded to Tennessee in 2010. Work on alternative salary structures follows a 2009 recommendation made by SCORE to fund differentiated pay plans and to connect the new teacher evaluation system to compensation decisions.

In total, more than 100 schools in 14 districts across the state began implementing some form of strategic compensation for educators in the 2011–12 school year, supported by federal, state, and local funding. Putnam County Schools, for example, began implementation of P.A.S.S. (Putnam’s Alternative Salary Schedule), which offers bonus pay to educators for targeted professional development, higher education content courses and degrees, and mentor and master teacher roles. Base pay acceleration is determined by teacher evaluation scores. Teachers hired prior to June 30, 2011 may “opt-in” to P.A.S.S. or stay on the current step and level pay system that provides salary increases aligned with the number of years served and advanced degrees obtained. All teachers hired after July 1, 2011 are automatically included in the new alternative pay schedule. In the first year of implementation, more than 50 percent of educators in Putnam County decided to “opt-in” to the P.A.S.S. system.<sup>17</sup>

Education reform in 2011 included both major policy changes and the beginning of the difficult work of implementation at the state and local level. The second part of this report provides a deeper look at the challenges and gaps the state faces in successfully implementing these reforms effectively in 2012.

# PROMISING PRACTICES

## Power Center Academy / Teacher support is critical at PCA

Power Center Academy gives new meaning to the phrase “teacher support.”

At the beginning of each school day, students and staff at PCA, a charter school in Memphis, recite the phrase “This is our house — the Power House.” While this saying highlights the ownership and accountability that each person takes for academic outcomes, it also emphasizes the collaborative nature that enables students to be successful.

*“[Students] know that they are going to be pushed to their highest potential when it comes to academics,” second-year teacher Cullen Johnson said. “They know that if they are struggling in class, there is going to be a teacher or someone else reaching out to them to make sure that they are understanding.”*

PCA sets high expectations for its students. Every week, the school sets a benchmark of 80 percent proficiency on standards-based Tennessee State Performance Indicator (SPI) assessments. While teachers are expected to help students meet these benchmarks, they are not expected to do it without the support of the administration. Administrators, experienced educators with years of classroom experience, visit classrooms every day to take note of things that are working well and things that could be improved upon. Formal annual evaluations are conducted for every instructor — something that the school required before Tennessee began requiring it of all schools in the state. According to Johnson, all of this adds up to an atmosphere of perpetual feedback and support.

*“[School leaders] care not only about their kids, but about their teachers, and that’s evident in their interactions,” said Johnson, who teaches eighth grade science. “They know what works with middle-schoolers and what doesn’t. They’re giving instructional strategies. They’re following up. The relationship that they create makes you feel comfortable sharing.”*

The majority of the school’s teachers are new to the profession. Many teachers are placed through programs such as Teach For America or the Memphis Teacher Residency. Thus, a robust approach to supporting teachers, particularly new ones, is critical at PCA.

Last year, for example, a first-year social studies teacher struggled to manage her classroom. First-year teaching learning curves aren’t unusual. School responses, however, can vary widely. In this case, Power Center school leaders began a series of targeted classroom observations and even recorded videos of instruction, giving the teacher an opportunity for play-by-play analysis with experienced educators.

The problem turned out to be distinct and fixable. The issue identified was poor use of transition times, which created brief but periodic windows of opportunity for mischief. The teacher took her winter holiday to digest the information and plan accordingly.

Results were dramatic. In addition to a classroom in control, the strategic changes resulted in a spike in weekly student assessment scores. It’s the sort of success that Yetta Lewis, Chief Academic Officer and founding principal of PCA, considers essential.

*“I was so honored that she was willing to say, ‘I’m going to open my classroom up to administrators, and I’m going to use my winter break to make a plan,’” Lewis said. “There’s just so much great potential. The talent that’s in the building, the desire to do what’s right, is so incredible. We just have to figure out how to harness it.”*

The hard work is generating immense gains for students, 90 percent of whom were eligible for free and reduced lunch during the 2010–11 school year. The school has a three year TVAAS standard t-statistic of 9.72 in math, which means their students are improving more than nine times faster than the state average. At the same time, PCA narrowed its achievement gap between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students by 18.66 points on the math TCAP between 2010 and 2011.

With the entire state of Tennessee launching one of the nation’s most rigorous teacher evaluation systems, the success at Power Center deserves attention. Teacher evaluations have been frequent and in-depth there for years, and instructor support is provided to match.

*“We feel really good about...the investment that we’ve made in having a collaborative culture,” Lewis said. “The ability to provide immediate feedback has really shaped what happens in the classroom.”*

Power Center Academy, part of Memphis City Schools, is the 2011 SCORE Prize winner in the middle school category.



Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2001). Tennessee Releases 2010–2011 TCAP Results [Press Release]. Retrieved from: <http://news.tn.gov/node/7451>.

<sup>3</sup> Tennessee dropped from 45 to 46 in the nation in fourth grade math; 39 to 41 in fourth grade reading; 43 to 45 in eighth grade math; and 34 to 41 in eighth grade reading.

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<sup>5</sup> Murray, M. (2012). An Economic Report to the Governor of the State of Tennessee. University of Tennessee, Center for Business and Economic Research: Knoxville. Retrieved March 7, 2012 from <http://cber.bus.utk.edu/erg/erg12ch4.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> A poll conducted by Vanderbilt University and the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions and released in November 2011 showed that 59 percent of Tennesseans view the economy, including jobs, as the top priority of the Tennessee state government.

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<sup>10</sup> Sher, A. Teacher union bargaining replaced by ‘conferencing’. Chattanooga Times Free Press. 21 May 2011. Retrieved from: <http://timesfreepress.com/news/2011/may/21/teacher-union-bargaining-replaced-conferencing/>

<sup>11</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2011). Professional Educators Collaborative Conferencing Act of 2011 [FAQ]. Retrieved from: [http://www.tn.gov/education/doc/PECCAFAQ\\_June17.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/education/doc/PECCAFAQ_June17.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Khadaroo, S.T. No Child Left Behind: With Waivers, Obama Offers States Flexibility. The Christian Science Monitor. 23 September 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2011/0923/No-Child-Left-Behind-with-waivers-Obama-offers-states-flexibility>.

<sup>13</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2011). Tennessee Submits ESEA Flexibility Application [Press Release]. Retrieved from: <http://news.tn.gov/node/8067>.

<sup>14</sup> Roberts, J. Gates Funding Key for Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ future. The Commercial Appeal. 4 November 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2011/nov/04/gates-funding-key-in-merger/?print=1>

<sup>15</sup> Blume, H. Updated Teacher Observations Key to Improvement. Los Angeles Times. 7 January 2012. Retrieved from: <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jan/07/local/la-me-teaching-20120107>

<sup>16</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2011). Innovation Acceleration Fund to Reward Top Educators [Press Release]. Retrieved from: <http://news.tn.gov/node/6586>.

<sup>17</sup> Airhart, K. Project P.A.S.S. — Putnam’s Alternative Salary Schedule. The SCORE Sheet. 6 September 2011. Retrieved from: <http://thescoresheet.org/2011/09/06/project-p-a-s-s-%E2%80%93-putnam%E2%80%99s-alternative-salary-schedule/>.

Education reform in 2011 included both **major policy changes and the beginning of the difficult work of implementation** at the state and local level.





## SECTION 2: SCORE Card

Tennessee has made progress, but there is substantial work that must be done before our state sees significant gains in student achievement.



First to the Top Progress Update

In March 2010, the U.S. Department of Education selected Tennessee as one of two states awarded a first round Race to the Top grant. The award, which will bring more than \$500 million to Tennessee over a period of four years, rewards states that have committed to ambitious plans for comprehensive education reform. Tennessee’s ambitious plan for education reform is embodied in First to the Top, a body of reforms that the state has committed to that will dramatically alter the way education is delivered in order to prepare students for a globally competitive world. The Race to the Top grant is being used to support these activities.

As mentioned earlier in this report, 2011 marked the first year of statewide implementation of much of Tennessee’s First to the Top reform agenda. In 2010, Tennessee’s work focused on passing legislation—most notably the First to the Top Act—engaging in strategic planning, and conducting stakeholder outreach. Now, one and a half years into the grant period, this work has begun to impact instructional practice in the classroom. While the majority of Tennessee’s work is on track, a few key pieces of the work have been delayed or postponed. SCORE is committed to tracking the state’s progress in order to identify areas of progress and those

areas in which key challenges may make achieving our student achievement goals more difficult. This update provides an overview of the plan the state is committed to and focuses on key areas of progress and challenge in implementation efforts to date.

Tennessee’s reform goals revolve around four core areas:

- Adopting higher standards
- Using student data to improve instruction
- Focusing on effective teachers and principals
- Turning around the lowest-achieving schools

The state’s plan is also infused with a focus on developing strategies to promote teaching and learning in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Half of Tennessee’s funding will be distributed to local districts to support their scopes of work. The other half, which this update focuses on, will be distributed to support statewide reform activities.

Tennessee’s statewide Race to the Top scope of work is divided into 23 discrete projects that fall within the state’s four priority areas.

| Priority Area                       | Projects  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Oversight                           | First to the Top Oversight Team; Education Delivery Unit  |
| Standards and Assessments           | Common Core Standards <sup>1</sup> ; Integrating TVAAS Into Pre-Service   |
| Data Systems to Improve Instruction | State Longitudinal Data System; Electronic Learning Center; TN CRED   |
| Great Teachers and Leaders          | Teacher and Principal Evaluation Development; School Leader Study; Teacher and Leader Residency Programs; UTeach; Strategic Compensation Packages; TELL Survey; Data Dashboard/Integrating Data to Improve Instruction (TVAAS) <sup>2</sup> ; Distinguished Professionals; Teach Tennessee; Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Report Card; Leadership Action Tank |
| School Turnaround                   | Rural Literacy Programs; Achievement School District; Focus Schools; Renewal Schools; Tennessee College Access and Success Network  |

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Tennessee Scope of Work.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to adopting the standards and providing professional development to educators, this body of work also includes aligning new, computer-based assessments with the Common Core standards.  
<sup>2</sup>The Data Dashboard work was originally included in both “Data Systems to Improve Instruction” and “Great Teachers and Leaders.” In September 2011, these projects were merged.

Tennessee established goals for each of these reform areas against which its implementation progress is measured. To provide oversight and guidance to this work, the state created the First to the Top Oversight Team and the Education Delivery Unit. Representatives from the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), the Governor’s Office of State Policy and Planning, the Tennessee Consortium on Research, Evaluation, and Development (TN CRED), and the STEM Innovation Network work together to provide feedback to the First to the Top Oversight Team, which is located in the Department. The Department and THEC manage all of the state’s projects in collaboration with the State Board of Education, local districts, and vendors. TN CRED is engaged in long-term evaluation of different components of the state’s work. Although the Education Delivery Unit was originally designed to provide ongoing pressure and support for Department personnel to meet statewide performance goals, the group has been moved to support districts in meeting local performance goals. As the Department moves forward, a challenge will be ensuring that there is appropriate analysis and management of implementation efforts at the state level on a frequent basis.

student achievement and student growth and frequent observations designed to support instruction in the classroom and school leadership. Both of these systems were rolled out statewide in Fall 2011. Like the teacher evaluation system, principal evaluations are based 50 percent on quantitative data and 50 percent on qualitative data. Principals and assistant principals will each receive two observations per year that are aligned with the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards. Part of their qualitative evaluations will be based on the quality of the teacher evaluations they conduct. Beginning in 2012–13, the state will require a formal mentoring/coaching process that is focused on goal-setting. The state is collecting feedback on the principal evaluation mechanisms and processes in order to make adjustments as needed.

Tennessee has begun the process of assessing the implementation of the evaluation systems and responding to concerns from the field. In November 2011, the State Board of Education revised its policy to give districts the option of combining two observations into one classroom visit to alleviate capacity concerns. The Department has also been working with districts and the SAS Institute to develop and pilot appropriate growth measures for teachers in untested grades and subjects. Additionally, Governor Haslam called for an internal and external review of the models to provide policymakers with additional information to inform any future policy adjustments that might be made to the system.

In addition to designing and implementing new educator evaluation systems, the state has also engaged in work to ensure its teacher preparation programs have the support they need to produce graduates that have positive impacts on student achievement from the first day they enter classrooms. To support this work, THEC has revised its Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs to make it more understandable for the public and more actionable for teacher preparation programs. These changes include creating individual program reports that incorporate demographic and academic information about completers, maps indicating where program graduates go on to teach, and a state profile that includes program comparison information. Moving into this year, THEC has begun to devise ways to

Teachers and Leaders

**Tennessee has an ambitious reform agenda to ensure the state has effective teachers and school and district leaders.** The state’s goals include implementing new principal and teacher evaluation systems that affect all human capital decisions, improving teacher and principal effectiveness across all schools, enhancing the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs, and providing data-driven professional development that is linked to student growth.

Out of this body of work, Tennessee highlights the new teacher and principal evaluation systems as the “essential underpinning of the First to the Top Great Teachers and Leaders work.” As mentioned earlier in this report, in 2010 and 2011, the state took the necessary steps to revamp educator evaluations so they are based on multiple measures, including

work with programs to improve, including creating opportunities for representatives from less effective programs to interact with representatives from highly effective programs, creating feedback reports to help identify strengths and weaknesses of programs, and, by the end of 2012, including teacher effect data for all teachers based on new growth measures that are being developed for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. THEC is currently preparing a similar report card for school leader preparation programs that will be released in Fall 2012.

Although the state made great strides over the last year and a half, Tennessee's work in professional development and providing continual support to impact instructional practice and school leadership has been delayed or postponed. Aside from trainings on formative instructional practice and value-added analysis that have been conducted by Battelle for Kids on a continual basis since Fall 2010, major components of the state's professional development work missed implementation goals this year, including work with the Leadership Action Tank, a principal effectiveness laboratory designed to capture and share best practices from high-poverty, high-performing schools. The state also delayed work on the Electronic Learning Center, which the state ultimately hopes to use as a platform to provide support to districts on a variety of Race to the Top initiatives, including implementing Common Core standards. **To ensure that Tennessee's teachers and principals are continually improving their practice, the state must remain committed to effectively implementing these key reforms.**

Standards and Assessments

Tennessee's primary goal with regard to standards and assessments is ensuring that the state adopts and transitions to internationally benchmarked K – 12 standards that build toward college and career readiness and high-quality assessments tied to these standards.

In July 2010, the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards, a set of internationally

benchmarked standards developed by a consortium of states. The Department partnered with Achieve to engage in a Crosswalk Study to determine the alignment between Tennessee's standards and the Common Core. Although the Crosswalk Study found that there was significant alignment between the two sets of standards, the Common Core requires a deeper engagement with a smaller number of standards than Tennessee currently requires. The state is engaged in a multi-year, multi-stage professional development plan to help educators teach the new standards with fidelity before the arrival of new, computer-based assessments.

THEC began work to integrate Common Core standards into teacher preparation programs, including developing new curriculum. As Tennessee continues to train educators in how to teach the new standards, it will be important to provide training that helps them understand the different pedagogical approaches required to teach students the Common Core, which includes rigorous content and demands more higher-order skills from students than current standards.

As a governing state in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium, Tennessee has played a crucial role in the development of computer-based assessments aligned with the Common Core. THEC has already been engaged with educating higher education faculty on the new standards. THEC has also gathered feedback from faculty members to ensure that the assessments for Algebra II and English III are aligned with college readiness standards. These assessments will replace entrance exams and be used to determine whether first year students are eligible to take credit-bearing courses. Tennessee will begin adjusting TCAP assessments toward a more Common Core-aligned model in Spring 2012 to ensure that districts are prepared for the full transition to PARCC assessments in the 2014–15 school year. As the state moves toward 2014–15, a challenge will be ensuring that districts and schools have the technological capacity and training to implement the new, computer-based assessments and that teachers know how to integrate technology into their instructional practice.

Data

**The state is working with the University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research to create a P-20 state longitudinal data system that will combine information from a variety of agencies, from higher education to health and human services.** The system will be used to provide the state with a comprehensive look at its students and enable leaders to see where students struggle on their pathway to postsecondary education and training. In addition to regular TVAAS trainings that are being provided by Battelle for Kids and supported by regional value-added specialists, the state's main data platform for educators is the Early Warning Data System, which will enable educators to see real-time indicators for at-risk students so they can craft effective academic interventions to keep more students on track to high school graduation and postsecondary readiness.

In March 2011, the Department hosted an educator focus group to gather feedback on what data elements the Department should include in the system now and in the future when additional measures become available. Construction of the system began in August

2011. According to the Department, the system will be piloted in Spring 2012 with an anticipated statewide rollout of July 2012. Since the state originally anticipated a Fall 2011 launch of the system, they have issued some data reports, including a ninth grade report to all high schools, to provide educators with data on many of the indicators that will be provided through the system.

Although the Department has proactively taken steps to provide districts with access to information in advance of the system coming online, turnover at the Department and a lengthy contracting process has delayed this important project. Given the importance of this project to much of the state's work in improving the effectiveness of teachers, it is crucial that the state take steps to make up for lost time. TDOE, aided by its Field Service Centers, should ensure that the Department has built in capacity to aid districts in using this system to drive academic interventions at the classroom, school, and district levels. Additionally, the state should supplement the information the system provides by using information at the state level to support districts when it identifies consistent, systemic issues affecting student achievement. An example issue could include a district lacking the teaching staff to teach the advanced math and science courses required of all students entering high school in the Fall of 2009.

School Turnaround

**Tennessee's school turnaround strategies focus on identifying and establishing an effective support model for the state's underperforming schools and establishing an effective Achievement School District that will turn around the state's persistently lowest performing schools. In the last year, the state has given significant financial awards to schools undergoing turnaround, placed effective, long-time educators in these schools, and hired vendors to engage in whole school reforms.**

As part of the First to the Top legislation, the General Assembly provided the Commissioner of Education with the authority to take over persistently failing schools and create a new state-run Achievement School District (ASD). After Governor Haslam's inauguration, he appointed Kevin Huffman to lead the Department as Commissioner of Education in April 2011. Huffman then appointed Chris Barbic in May 2011 to lead the ASD. Barbic officially began work in August 2011. Given the timing associated with these transitions, the role of the ASD was altered for its first year. Instead of directly managing all 13 ASD-eligible schools in 2011–12, the ASD is co-managing the five lowest performing schools with their home districts. The ASD held community forums with all five schools and their districts in the Summer and Fall 2011 to inform partnerships moving forward. Co-managing for the ASD has included working with human capital partners, including Teach For America and TNTP (formerly The New Teacher Project),



## SECTION 2: SCORE Card

to ensure fully staffed schools by the beginning of the 2011–12 school year. The ASD also began working with the other eight ASD-eligible schools this year to develop interventions even though they are not technically being co-managed. Field staff has been assigned to all 13 schools. In early 2012, the ASD began finalizing and releasing the list of schools it will be directly managing during the 2012–13 school year. In the Fall of 2011, the ASD authorized three organizations — Gestalt Community Schools, Cornerstone Prep, and LEAD Public Schools — to open charters in Memphis and Nashville.

In November 2011, Tennessee submitted a proposal seeking a waiver from some provisions of the No Child Left Behind law. The proposal has significant implications for the way the state identifies and supports schools with different needs, including rewarding schools that have demonstrated significant progress with student achievement and/or growth. The state also proposed establishing district innovation zones, a service-oriented model of support with state oversight that provides flexibility for making financial, programmatic, staffing, and time allocation decisions.

|                      | 2012-2013  | Change | 2013-2014  | Change | 2013-2014  |
|----------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| ASD                  | 6 schools  | + 12   | 18 schools | +17    | 35 schools |
| LEA Innovation Zones | 9 schools  | +9     | 18 schools | +12    | 28 schools |
|                      |            |        |            | -2     |            |
| SIG turnarounds      | 35 schools |        | 35 schools | -13    | 22 schools |
| LEA-led turnaround   | 35 schools | -21    | 14 schools | -14    | 0 schools  |

Source: Tennessee’s ESEA Waiver Request, November 2011.

### STEM

Although the state has not issued specific STEM goals, **a STEM focus is integrated throughout the other priorities of the state’s plan and will drive much of the work with regard to preparing students to compete in the global marketplace.** Over the last year, Tennessee established the STEM Innovation Network to share best practices, support innovative start-up efforts, and boost student achievement in STEM fields. STEM schools have been opened in Nashville and Knoxville, and both cities received grants to establish innovation hubs.

Additional proposals are being vetted to open new hubs in East or West Tennessee. Additionally, THEC funded 10 higher education proposals that will provide 18-month professional development programs aimed at improving content and pedagogy for K–12 STEM teachers. The programs began in August 2011. As the state continues its STEM work, it should ensure this work has far reaching effects beyond just the schools directly impacted by STEM initiatives.

# 2012 Priorities

In 2011, Tennessee began the hard work of implementing education reforms in classrooms throughout the state.

After passing the most significant piece of education legislation since 1992 and capturing a Race to the Top grant, some of the state’s most ambitious policy priorities, including implementing new teacher and principal evaluation systems, implementing Common Core standards in grades K–2, and co-managing the schools in the Achievement School District, are affecting educators and students statewide. In *The State of Education in Tennessee — 2010* report, SCORE established four priorities that would enable Tennessee to make significant progress in effectively implementing these and other policy priorities the state had committed to.

These priorities included:

- Sustained Policy Leadership
- A Comprehensive Strategy for Improving the Pipeline of District and School Leaders
- A Relentless Focus on Instructional Quality
- Increasing the Capacity of the Tennessee Department of Education

In three of these areas — sustained policy leadership, a focus on instructional quality, and increased capacity at the Tennessee Department of Education — the state made substantial progress in 2011. The state’s progress in these areas allowed Tennessee to meet many of its implementation goals and start to see improvements in student achievement. Unfortunately, little progress was made in advancing a comprehensive strategy for enhancing district and school leadership pipelines. As schools seek to improve the quality of education for students statewide, this area will remain of critical importance

In order to implement reforms effectively and ensure that they are having positive impacts on students, there are a few crucial areas that Tennessee needs to focus on as it moves into 2012.

This section of the report provides an update on the state’s progress on SCORE’s 2010–11 priorities and then presents **four priorities for the state in 2012:**

- Sustained Policy Leadership
- Robust Professional Learning for Educators
- Strengthening Teacher Preparation Programs
- A Renewed Focus on Enhancing the Pipeline of School Principals

We believe these priorities will further our goal of preparing Tennessee’s students for college and the workforce. By maintaining our commitment to implementing an ambitious reform agenda and promoting stronger, better prepared and supported educators and school leaders, Tennessee can continue to lead the nation as a state committed to a better future for its students and graduates. Tennessee has made progress, particularly on the policy front, but these priorities outline the substantial work that must be done before our state sees significant gains in student achievement.

## Reviewing Progress on 2010–11 Priorities

### Sustained Policy Leadership

Education remained a high priority issue in 2011 for Governor Haslam and the Tennessee General Assembly. During the year, policymakers prioritized public education issues ranging from teacher tenure to public charter school reform. Equally important, the state maintained its commitment to implementing its First to the Top goals.

In addition to policymakers, business and community leaders maintained a strong commitment to supporting the state’s education reform efforts. For example, Volkswagen has invested more than \$5 million in educational institutions in the state as part of its Partners in Education initiative. In addition, the state engaged and received support from the Tennessee Business Roundtable, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Greater Memphis Chamber, and other business groups in developing its No Child Left Behind waiver application.

Although some civil rights organizations in other states have expressed concerns about state-level commitments to addressing achievement gaps for students from racial minority and lower-income backgrounds, the Tennessee chapter of the NAACP, Tennessee Urban League Affiliates, and Memphis Urban League also added their support to the state’s waiver application. Throughout the year, leaders from government, business, philanthropic, and civil rights communities demonstrated a strong commitment to pursuing improved educational conditions for all students in the state.

### Relentless Focus on Instructional Quality

Although making policy changes is an important first step to instituting education reform, ultimately, the greatest effects are realized when policies impact instruction in the classroom. Most of the work around instructional quality in 2011 focused on piloting and implementing new models for teacher evaluation in ways that connect evaluation to human capital decisions, including tenure and alternative compensation systems. Although these efforts have been essential in reforming teacher evaluation in Tennessee, much work remains to continue driving improvements in evaluations and in assessing successes and challenges. SCORE will contribute to this work in 2012 by gathering input on the new teacher evaluation system through a feedback process across the state.

The state’s adoption of Common Core State Standards makes a continued focus on improved instructional quality even more necessary. The standards will require depth of instruction that goes beyond the Tennessee Diploma Project, and represent a paradigm shift in the way we prepare students for college and careers. Rather than providing educators with one-time opportunities to learn what the standards are and what they require, teachers and school leaders also need ongoing, targeted professional learning opportunities to expand their knowledge and instructional skills to effectively implement Common Core.

As the state shifts its approach to evaluating teachers, more support is needed to provide them the information, training, and tools they need to succeed. These resources must come from pre-service training institutions and ongoing, content-specific, and job-embedded

professional learning. Although state agencies including the Department and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) are moving to provide increased opportunities for both current teachers and students in teacher training institutions, more work is needed to invest in and support teachers to continue developing their practice and improve instructional quality.

Other initiatives in 2011 included expansion of professional learning communities (PLCs) in some local districts and schools to support teachers through Race to the Top funds, and Common Core standards launched statewide in grades K–2. As Common Core standards are phased into the English/language arts and math curricula for all grades in the coming school years, leaders at the state and district level will continue to face the need to provide teachers the resources and training they need to be successful under this new model of instruction. PLCs present a promising approach to meeting this need.

### A Comprehensive Strategy for Improving Pipeline of District and School Leaders

Unfortunately, Tennessee made little progress toward achieving this goal. Models of success for building effective school and district leaders can be found at the Knoxville Leadership Academy and Hamilton County’s recently established Principal Leadership Academy, for example, but more work remains to ensure that there is a statewide pipeline of effective school and district leaders.

### Increasing the Capacity of the Tennessee Department of Education

In April 2011, Governor Haslam appointed Kevin Huffman as Commissioner of Education. Commissioner Huffman, previously vice president for public affairs at Teach For America, initiated a strategic review of the Department to ensure effective allocation of education resources. As a result of this review, a strategic plan for the Department orients much of its work around revamping the state’s nine Field Service Centers. In addition to providing support to schools and districts on state and federal programs as they have in the past, the Field Service Centers will also provide coordinated professional learning programs from the Department around training teachers in grades 3–8 for implementing Common Core standards in Summer 2012. The centers will also provide training and recertification



programs focusing on the state's evaluation system for teachers and administrators. Using the Field Service Centers to support individual districts in implementing reforms is important, and an emphasis must be placed on ensuring that the centers meaningfully execute this work.

As part of the Department's commitment to improving the state's lowest performing schools under its First to the Top plan, Commissioner Huffman appointed Houston charter school leader Chris Barbic as the first superintendent of the Achievement School District. Additional leadership appointments included Dr. Kathleen Airhart, former superintendent of Putnam County Schools, as Deputy Commissioner and Meghan Curran as Director of the Department's First to the Top office. *The strategic planning and appointment of high quality, highly qualified leaders within the Department reflect SCORE's recommendation to enhance capacity at the state level.*

Continued focus on the need for increased capacity at the district level is needed from the Department to ensure the effective implementation of statewide goals. As districts implement Common Core standards, the Department must work with districts to train and support leaders who are committed to enhanced rigor in classrooms and improved learning outcomes for Tennessee's students. These leaders will be positioned to communicate the expectations of Common Core and identify the areas in which educators need support to fulfill them. The Department is now better positioned to support districts as they build capacity to ensure sustained progress after the expiration of Race to the Top funds.

Priorities for 2012

Sustained Policy Leadership

In recent years, sustaining policy leadership meant making needed policy changes to improve public education. Following the recent adoption of so many policy changes, sustaining leadership in 2012 means focusing on the critical task of implementation — of turning policy into real student achievement gains. Policymakers now must “keep their eye on the ball” and

resist significant additional policy changes that do not further the state's reform goals. Placing the burdens of implementing too many additional policy changes on educators and schools could lead to reform fatigue and jeopardize success in meeting the state's goals.

Policymakers will likely face the challenge of maintaining commitment to Tennessee's ambitious reform efforts. Major reform efforts often lead to discomfort, as new approaches replace old standards. However, as reforms move into the implementation phase, SCORE encourages policymakers to maintain their commitment to First to the Top, recognizing challenges will inevitably arise as the state transforms its public education system into the fastest improving in the nation.

In particular, the state will need to exhibit continued commitment to implementation of educator evaluations and high academic standards. The state's new evaluation system seeks to use frequent classroom observations and feedback, student data, and professional learning to enhance the quality of instruction and student learning in Tennessee. As educators transition from prior models of evaluation into the new system, and as Common Core standards are implemented across all grades in the coming years, effective school and district leaders must connect their colleagues to the resources they need in order to provide the enhanced rigor students will need to be prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. Lastly, community, business, and philanthropic leaders should continue to support public education by working with schools and districts to ensure there are strong connections between the knowledge and skills students develop in school and the needs of Tennessee's economy.

Robust Professional Learning for Educators

Research shows that great teaching is the number one school-based factor in improving student achievement, and robust professional learning is critical in helping educators improve their instruction. Meaningful professional learning for educators that addresses areas of greatest need identified by performance evaluations is necessary for the successful implementation of Common Core State Standards. This professional learning must be informed by the new evaluation system and aligned with the new standards. It also must

be differentiated to help teachers improve based on the results of their individual evaluations. Although there are many ways to provide professional learning, research indicates the most effective approaches are ongoing, content-specific, job-embedded, and collaborative. Adopting the international set of professional learning standards is a needed initial step to provide the most effective professional learning for teachers and school leaders.

There is significant work to be done to ensure that educators receive the necessary support and professional learning around Common Core standards.

As Tennessee integrates the standards into curriculum and adopts computer-based assessments, professional learning opportunities should include:

- Districts following up on Summer 2011 training sessions with job-embedded time for teacher teams to collaborate by subject area and grade level on Common Core standards implementation
- Wider use of state-provided technical assistance consultants to districts on understanding and implementing Common Core standards
- Strategic planning among districts and between districts and the state Department of Education on Common Core standards implementation

The Department has announced three sets of dates to provide trainings on Common Core mathematics standards in grades 3-8 in Summer 2012. Training sessions will be hosted across the state by the nine Field Service centers and target school teams selected by districts. These sessions will focus on changes to further steps to align math instruction with Common Core standards.

As part of its Common Core implementation plan, the state will also facilitate online courses for grade 3-8 math teachers on the standards. In addition, Core coaches and PLCs will support implementation in the 2012-13 school year, along with optional Saturday follow up sessions and online modules for teachers.

Local communities must also consider how best to support educators through ongoing opportunities for professional learning oriented around Common Core.

The Department and the philanthropic sector should consider approaches to spur the creation of collaborative models for professional learning by establishing a grant program to match local funding that pools resources for job-embedded teacher training. Innovative partnerships between institutions of higher education, local school districts, and business and philanthropic leaders could propose models for professional learning that address the needs of their communities — especially in rural areas — in applying for matching funds from the state.

In addition to these potential approaches to professional learning, students in Tennessee would benefit from schools and districts that broaden their understanding of instructional leadership to include principals who model and develop effective instructional practices. *The best principals serve as both administrative and instructional leaders in their schools.*

In all of its planning for professional learning, the Department and other key partners must be mindful of the challenge in providing robust professional learning opportunities to educators in rural and remote areas of the state. Professional learning communities facilitated by video conferencing and other technology can bring together educators facing similar challenges to share best practices and develop improved instructional strategies. Later this year, the Niswonger Foundation will coordinate common professional learning time focused on Common Core standards for 1,700 teachers across 15 districts in rural Northeast Tennessee. Schools will host high school teachers from the region grouped by subject area. Follow up sessions are also under development, along with plans within districts to provide common planning time for subject area teachers in their middle and elementary schools. This collaboration shows what is possible when rural districts commit to sharing resources to focus on improved instruction for their students.

*Strengthening Teacher Preparation Programs*

As new standards are set for student learning in Tennessee, the state must partner with teacher training institutions to ensure new candidates for licensure are knowledgeable of the standards and equipped with the skills to meet them. The *Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs* highlights essential indicators of quality and areas in need of improvement for teacher training institutions in Tennessee.

**The Report Card could be improved, however, by incorporating additional resources and information, including:**

- Sharing best practices for highly effective programs, including alternative certification programs
- Providing more specific feedback to individual programs
- Exploring additional measures of success beyond test scores, potentially including other assessments of teacher effectiveness

As the state implements new policies and standards to improve teacher effectiveness, it should partner with training institutions to ensure their curricula for teachers-in-training align with these new expectations in order to prepare them for the professional standards they will encounter upon entering the classroom. THEC has begun this important work, as it partners with institutions of higher education to align curricula with Common Core standards. Common Core training sessions should also include teacher training personnel so they are able to appropriately align standards. These sessions should be supplemented with professional development for teacher training faculty.

In addition to enhancing accountability, teacher preparation programs must continue to build stronger relationships with local school districts for the preparation and on-going support of teachers. Community and philanthropic groups, along with the Department, can help facilitate these relationships and build support for their sustainability. These partnerships should focus on expanding awareness of and preparing

teachers for Common Core standards, as well as on ensuring curricula are matched to the needs of schools in surrounding communities.

To address the needs of rural communities, teacher training institutions, where they do not already, should incorporate opportunities for their students to gain experience in rural schools while pursuing licensure.

Just as classroom teachers receive professional learning on the effective use of technology in educational practice, students in teacher training programs should also be exposed to effective strategies regarding how to use technology in ways that advance student learning. Such approaches would enable new teachers to blend online and traditional instructional practices from the start of their service.

Lastly, teacher preparation programs must equip new teachers with an understanding of available education data and how to use data in ways that address the educational needs of students. Data use will only grow in importance as an instructional tool, especially as the state implements its Early Warning Data System of potential dropout indicators. The Department must partner with higher education institutions to ensure that the use of data as an instructional tool is consistent with state needs.

*Expanding and Strengthening the Principal and Administrator Pipeline*

The strategic plan developed by the Department focuses attention on the necessity of developing a wider pool of potential principals across the state. The Department's division of Teachers and Leaders will include an office of Recruitment, another office of Leader Licensure, Evaluation, Program Approval, and Professional Development (TASL), as well as a Principal Training Academy. By allocating specific resources to enhance the pool of potential principals and provide high quality professional learning opportunities to school leaders, the Department recognizes the essential role performed by principals in implementing reforms and ensuring educational quality for students throughout Tennessee.

The state should enhance accountability by implementing an appropriate process and timetable for site visits to principal training programs to ensure their quality and alignment with the needs and performance expectations of principals upon assuming a school leadership position. These visits would ensure programs are meeting requirements the State Board of Education established four years ago under the Learning Centered Leadership System. Evaluation teams are empowered to determine whether instructional leadership programs meet criteria of the Tennessee Standards for Instructional Leaders. These standards focus on core competencies for effective principals that include:

- Demonstrating comprehensive understanding of classroom practices that contribute to student achievement
- Developing a culture of high expectations
- Collaborating with teachers, parents, and other key stakeholders to create positive learning environments
- Making use of data to guide school, curriculum, and instructional practices

Effective models for expanding the principal pipeline can be readily found in Tennessee. The Knoxville Leadership Academy, recently established Principal Leadership Academy in Hamilton County, and a partnership between Kingsport and Greeneville City Schools and East Tennessee State University all present possible models for replication in other areas of the state. The Knox County model of courses team-taught by university faculty and current practitioners is particularly compelling for its pairing of educational theory and practical experience. This pairing of research- and practitioner-based perspectives is also modeled by the Principals' Leadership Academy of Nashville (PLAN) at Vanderbilt University. In addition, the Center for Urban School Leadership at the University of Memphis provides a year-long, intensive training program for rising school leaders in Memphis City Schools that partners with teachers, students, parents, and community leaders. District partnerships with colleges and universities, as well as non-profits and businesses, provide opportunities for building

leadership pipelines that can be leveraged to broaden the pool of candidates to lead schools throughout Tennessee.

Small and rural districts should also consider creating a principal pipeline through consortia models in collaboration with institutions of higher education, as these systems often lack the personnel or capacity to build effective pipelines of their own. This consortia model could be supported by the Department or philanthropic and non-profit partnerships.

The need for mentorship and leadership development for principals does not end upon receiving their school administrator certification. School leaders need ongoing, targeted professional learning, and the state should mirror its commitment to improved learning opportunities for its teachers by enhancing the quality of offerings for administrators. The state's evaluation system holds principals accountable for the performance and academic growth of students in their schools, and school leaders need ongoing support to understand expectations for student achievement and how best to employ their resources to pursue achievement goals. As discussed earlier in this report, the Leadership Action Tank, which focuses on identifying and sharing effective practices of school leaders in high-poverty, high-performing schools, is a potential avenue for this work.

In addition, the state's Field Service Centers should be used as hubs for professional learning for school leaders that is directly tied to areas of need identified by administrator evaluations. Although larger districts in the state often receive approval from the Department to host their own professional learning programs, many smaller and more rural districts lack the capacity to do so. Groups of smaller districts, however, should partner with Field Service Centers to develop ongoing professional learning programs that reflect the needs of their communities and school leaders. Districts and Field Service Centers can also leverage distance learning technology to facilitate common professional learning time across districts. School leaders could meet by video conference, hosted by the regional service center, to address areas for improvement and share practices that have demonstrated positive results.



## SECTION 2: SCORE Card

### Sustained Policy Leadership

- Focus on effective implementation
- Maintain commitment to educator evaluations and Common Core implementation

### Robust Professional Learning for Educators


- Better connect professional learning to new educator evaluations
- Prepare teachers and leaders for Common Core standards by providing ongoing, content-specific, and job-embedded learning
- Focus on challenges of providing meaningful professional learning in rural communities through collaboration and technology

### Strengthening Teacher Preparation Programs

- Continue enhancing the teacher preparation Report Card
- Ensure curricula are aligned with new standards and policies
- Train future teachers to use data to serve students

### Expanding and Strengthening the Principal Pipeline

- Build leadership pipelines through district partnerships with colleges, universities, non-profits, and businesses
- Provide more meaningful professional learning for school leaders
- Leverage technology to facilitate professional learning across rural districts



Tennessee has made progress, particularly on the policy front, but **these priorities outline the substantial work that must be done** before our state sees significant gains in student achievement.

State Data

As Tennessee implements education policy changes in classrooms statewide, student achievement data indicate students are beginning to rise to the challenge of the state’s new standards. **However, many indicators illustrate that we are just at the beginning of this important work to ensure all of Tennessee’s students graduate from high school prepared for college and career.**

After experiencing a steep decline in achievement levels last year after the state raised its standards, TCAP scores reflected promising student gains in 2011. Although 51 percent of students scored “proficient” or “advanced” on the TCAP reading exam in 2010, 54 percent did so in 2011. Similarly, only 34 percent of students scored proficient or advanced on the TCAP math exam, but 41 percent did in 2011. The faster rate of improvement in math scores is particularly encouraging. A closer look reveals that the biggest improvements occurred as students moved into middle school, narrowing the proficiency gap that occurs as students move into higher grade levels.

In addition, three-year composite TVAAS scores across all subject areas rose in 2011. Scores rose by the least amount in social studies, the only subject area for which score scales were not changed in 2010-11. The state’s value-added scores remained the same, however, in three subjects when compared to 2010. As in 2010, the state earned a “D” in science and a “C” in social studies. Although the state earned a “D” in reading — the same grade it received in 2010 — students showed gains in this area. Student gains in math also contributed to a grade of “B” in 2011, reflecting a substantial improvement over the “D” the state earned in 2010. As more rigorous curricula and assessments become the norm, SCORE anticipates continued gains on both student achievement and growth indicators.

Despite gains in some important areas, the state’s achievement gaps between minority students and their white peers persist. According to NAEP 2011 math results, average scores for black students fell 28 points below those of white students. Similarly, scores of Hispanic students trailed those of white

students by 15 points. In addition, students from low-income backgrounds scored an average of 25 points lower than their peers who were not eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, a discrepancy unchanged from 1996. Educational improvement must address these and other stark equity gaps in our system. The state has reflected a commitment to addressing achievement gaps by making them a focus of its No Child Left Behind wavier application.

After reaching an all-time high in 2010, the state’s high school graduation rate declined slightly from 86.1 percent to 85.5 percent. Although these results serve as a reminder of the need for constant attention focused on increasing graduation rates, this decline is likely attributable to a change in formula for calculating the statewide average. Under the previous formula, districts could count students with disabilities and limited English proficiency, as well as those enrolled in middle college programs, toward the graduation rate even though they took a fifth year to complete their diplomas. The formula instituted last year no longer allows this practice. Data from 2011 also reflect lower graduation rates in the largest urban districts, but rates in more than 100 districts exceeded the statewide average. In addition, high schools continued their progress in Memphis, the state’s largest system by enrollment, as the graduation rate there increased to 73 percent in 2011. The district posted a graduation rate of just 62 percent in 2009.

Since 2010, all Tennessee juniors have taken the ACT as a measure of college readiness. The statewide average score of 19.5 represented a slight drop from the average 19.6 score in 2010. ACT scores have yet to reflect increased college readiness levels; however, more of Tennessee’s students are taking and passing Advanced Placement exams, which measure students’ content mastery of college-level studies. AP courses prepare students for more rigorous coursework after they graduate from high school. They also enable some students to test out of entry-level college courses, saving them both time and money. SCORE expects the continued implementation of Common Core standards and other reforms to enhance the rigor of curriculum statewide, thereby leading to improved ACT scores and accompanying college-readiness levels in the coming years.

High School Graduation Rate



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

TVAAS Scores (3 Year Composite)



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

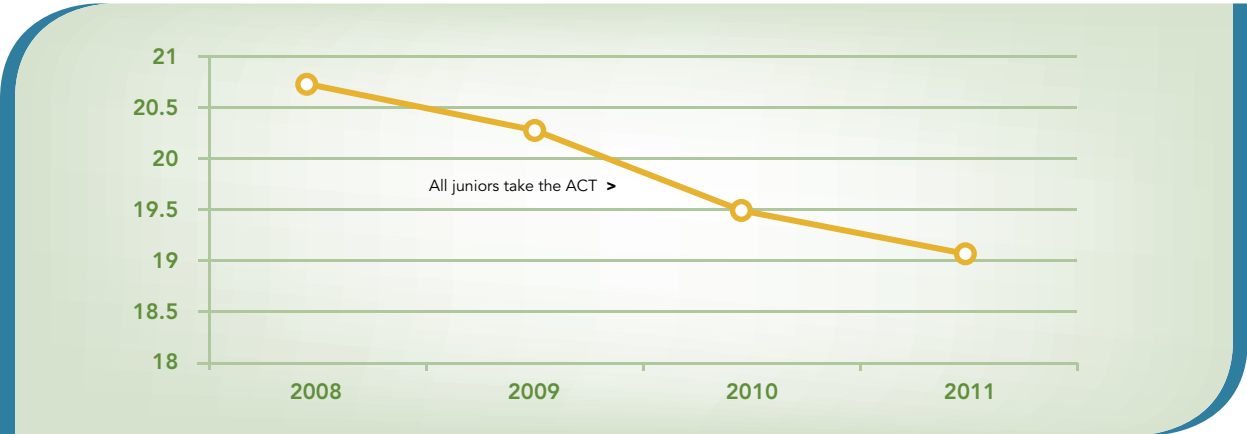


TCAP Reading Proficiency (Grades 3-8)



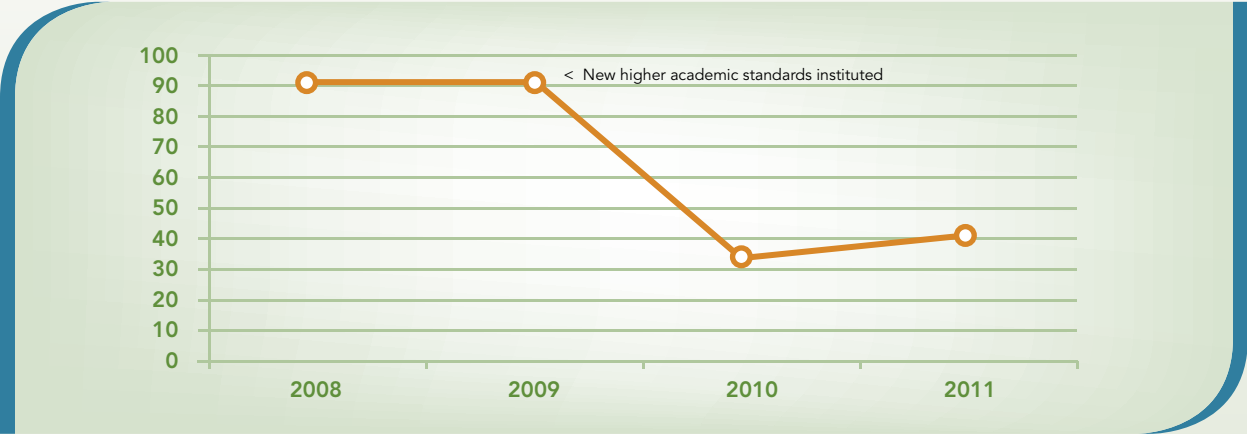
Source: Tennessee Department of Education

ACT Scores (3 Year Composite)



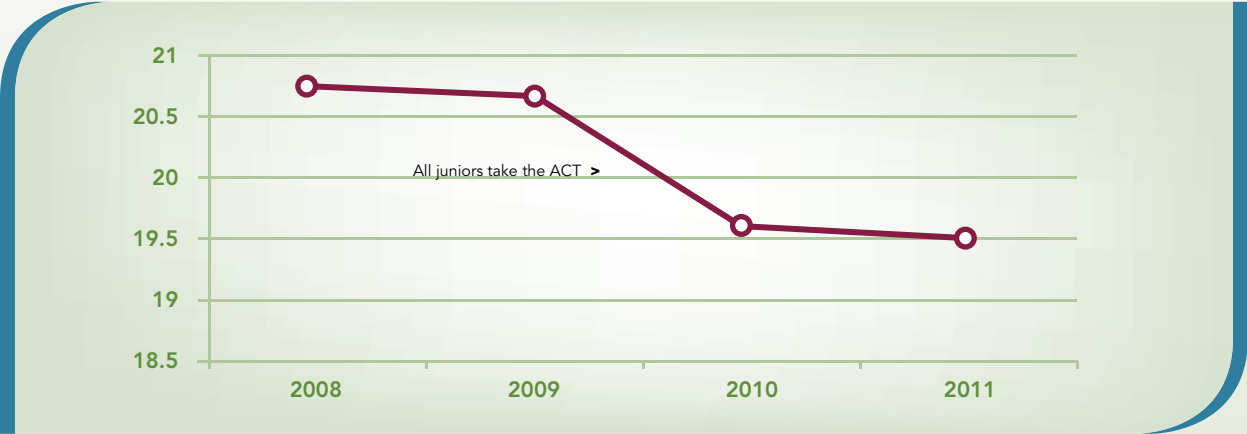
Source: Tennessee Department of Education

TCAP Math Proficiency (Grades 3-8)



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

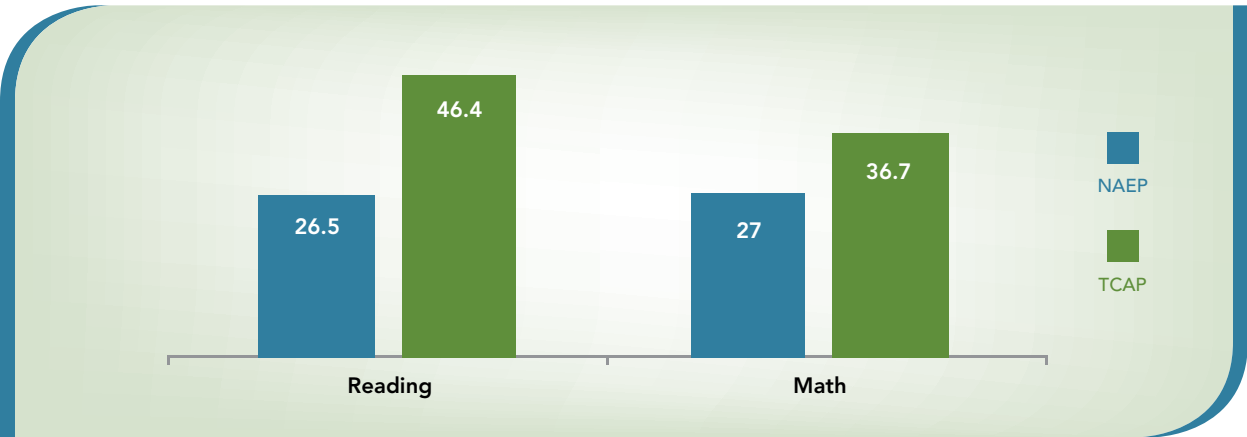
ACT Scores (1 Year Composite)



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

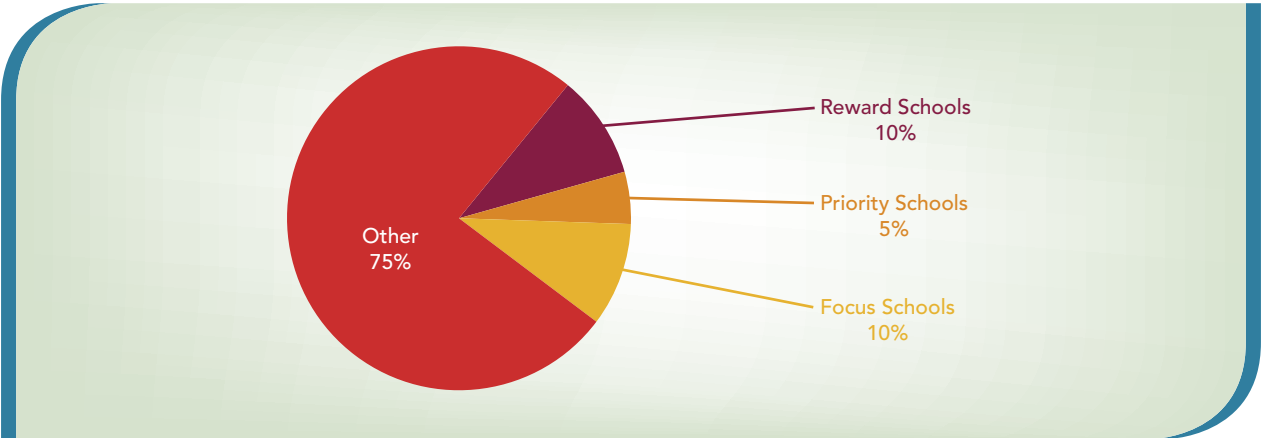
Comparison of Tennessee Proficiency on TCAP and NAEP in 2011

Percent of students scoring Proficient or Advanced (Average of 4th and 8th grade scores)



Source: Tennessee Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics

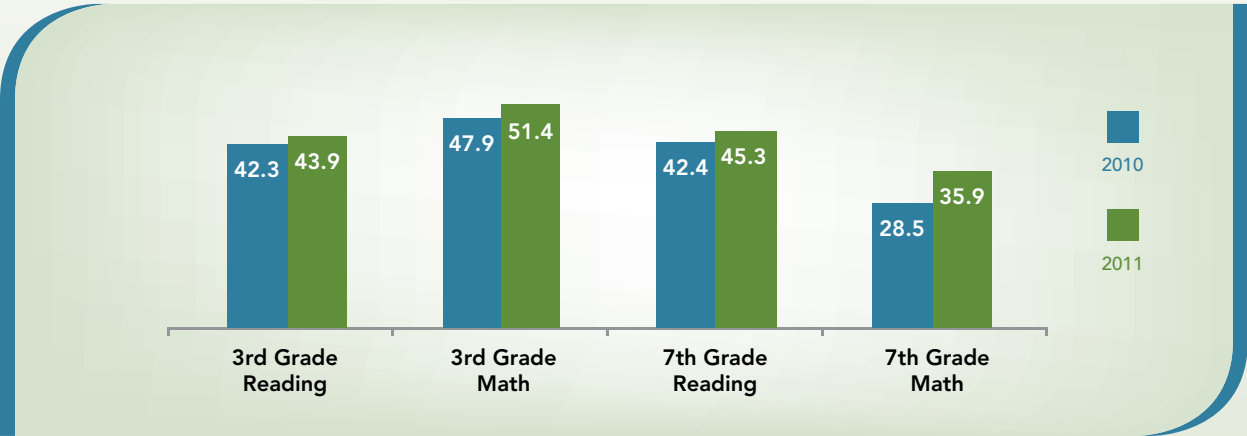
Proposed ESEA Waiver Classification



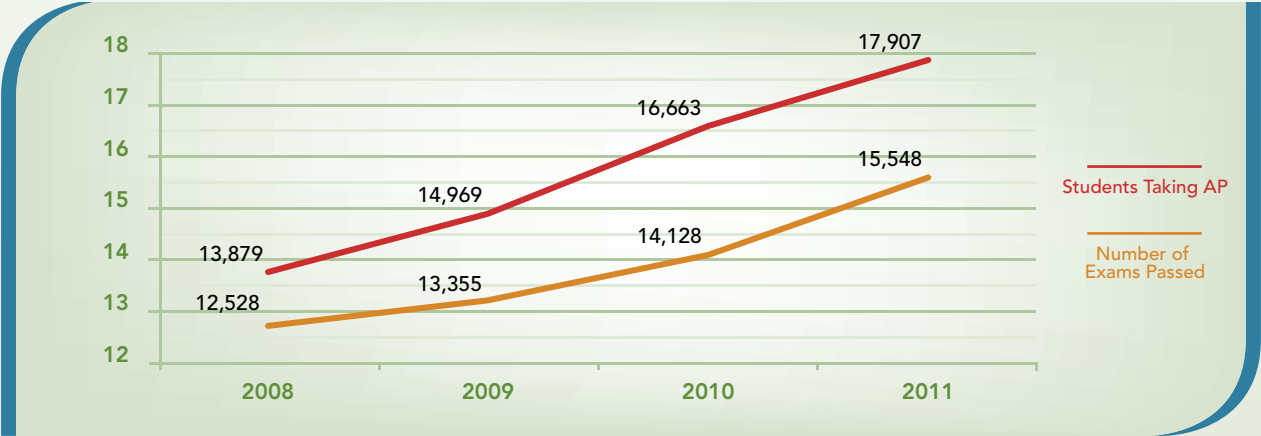
Source: NCLB Waiver Proposal, November 14, 2011

Progress on State Achievement Benchmarks, 2010-2011

Percent of students scoring Proficient or Advanced



Statewide AP Performance, 2008-2011\*



\* A passing score on the AP exam is a score of 3 or higher. Source: The College Board



District Data

Following the significant declines in student proficiency rates on the 2010 TCAP examinations that reflected the heightened expectations set by the Tennessee Diploma Project, district data reflect some promising gains in 2011. **Overall, students improved their reading proficiency by an average of 3 percentage points, with 49 districts outpacing the average. Students showed more pronounced gains in math, where the proficiency rate increased by an average of 7 percentage points across districts.** The highest one-year improvement came in Cocke County, where students improved their math proficiency by 21 points over the previous year. Five districts tied for the second most improvement over their 2010 scores,

as students improved an average of 8 points in Alamo City, Clinton City, Coffee County, Moore County, and Richard City. Bruceton Central High School's 10 point gain made its students the most improved in the state. ACT scores continued to reflect the need for enhanced college readiness efforts in the state, as average scores fell below 19 — an indicator of readiness for college-level work — in 47 districts. Encouragingly, however, the percent of Advanced Placement exams passed increased from 43 percent in 2010 to 48 percent in 2011. The significance of the higher passage rate is enhanced by the fact that both the number of students and the

number of exams taken increased over this time period. It is important to note, however, that AP exams are only taken by students in approximately half of the state's school districts. Students in many districts, especially in the state's rural communities, take dual enrollment courses that enable them to earn credit that can be directly applied toward a college degree or certificate at a public, in-state institution. Currently, data on dual enrollment in Tennessee varies widely across districts, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions. As the prevalence of dual

enrollment programs grows, so too will the need for more comprehensive data reported and published by the state. As Tennessee prepares for full implementation of Common Core standards, TCAP assessment results in reading and math may continue to fluctuate, but ultimately the rewards of implementing more rigorous curricula should be demonstrated by rising ACT scores and increased rates of successful postsecondary degree completion by Tennessee students.

The following pages contain performance data and demographics on each of the state's 136 school districts for the 2010-11 school year.

| District                | Number of Schools | Total Enrollment | % White Students | % Non-White Students | Low Income Students | Per Pupil Expenditures | % Local Funding | Graduation Rate | No. of Students Taking AP Exams* | % of AP Exams Passed* | ACT SCORE (3 Yr. Avg) | Math % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmnt in Math** | Reading % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmnt in Reading** |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Alamo                   | 1                 | 615              | 73%              | 27%                  | 64%                 | \$8,268.70             | 12%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 60                   | 12                      | 64                      | 8                          |
| Alcoa                   | 3                 | 1745             | 70%              | 30%                  | 61%                 | \$10,826.50            | 50%             | 98%             | 27                               | 32%                   | 22                    | 37                   | 1                       | 61                      | 4                          |
| Alvin C. York Institute | 1                 | 665              | 99%              | 1%                   | 67%                 | N/A                    | N/A             | 93%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.2                  | N/A                  | N/A                     | N/A                     | N/A                        |
| Anderson County         | 16                | 6826             | 97%              | 3%                   | 62%                 | \$9,200.80             | 35%             | 89%             | 63                               | 56%                   | 19.3                  | 37                   | 9                       | 52                      | 6                          |
| Athens                  | 5                 | 1776             | 75%              | 25%                  | 63%                 | \$9,788.40             | 33%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 54                   | 16                      | 59                      | 2                          |
| Bedford County          | 13                | 8118             | 72%              | 28%                  | 65%                 | \$7,990.80             | 20%             | 81%             | 17                               | 65%                   | 19.3                  | 41                   | 6                       | 52                      | 5                          |
| Bells                   | 1                 | 399              | 57%              | 43%                  | 71%                 | \$8,016.80             | 13%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 36                   | -3                      | 49                      | 1                          |
| Benton County           | 8                 | 2394             | 93%              | 7%                   | 69%                 | \$9,398.20             | 30%             | 90%             | 54                               | 3%                    | 19.7                  | 42                   | 8                       | 51                      | 2                          |
| Bledsoe County          | 6                 | 1900             | 93%              | 7%                   | 78%                 | \$9,386.40             | 14%             | 77%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.5                  | 36                   | 3                       | 44                      | -3                         |
| Blount County           | 20                | 11834            | 94%              | 6%                   | 55%                 | \$8,401.00             | 38%             | 90%             | 48                               | 49%                   | 19.7                  | 44                   | 8                       | 54                      | 3                          |
| Bradford                | 2                 | 545              | 92%              | 8%                   | 64%                 | \$9,258.80             | 24%             | 96%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.4                  | 57                   | 18                      | 59                      | 6                          |
| Bradley County          | 18                | 10490            | 93%              | 7%                   | 63%                 | \$7,539.70             | 31%             | 88%             | 25                               | 48%                   | 19.4                  | 41                   | 5                       | 57                      | 2                          |
| Bristol                 | 7                 | 4164             | 91%              | 9%                   | 52%                 | \$9,640.40             | 50%             | 84%             | 16                               | 76%                   | 21.1                  | 49                   | 10                      | 59                      | 0                          |
| Campbell County         | 13                | 6168             | 98%              | 2%                   | 75%                 | \$7,744.00             | 19%             | 85%             | 19                               | 67%                   | 18.2                  | 35                   | 5                       | 47                      | 2                          |
| Cannon County           | 7                 | 2188             | 96%              | 4%                   | 68%                 | \$8,097.00             | 19%             | 84%             | 35                               | 24%                   | 18.6                  | 28                   | 3                       | 47                      | 2                          |
| Carroll County          | 2                 | N/A              | N/A              | N/A                  | 76%                 | N/A                    | 48%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | N/A                  | N/A                     | N/A                     | N/A                        |
| Carter County           | 16                | 5907             | 96%              | 4%                   | 77%                 | \$9,129.40             | 21%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.3                  | 32                   | 7                       | 52                      | 6                          |
| Cheatham County         | 13                | 6815             | 95%              | 5%                   | 51%                 | \$8,180.60             | 25%             | 84%             | 123                              | 47%                   | 19.7                  | 47                   | 9                       | 58                      | 5                          |
| Chester County          | 6                 | 2797             | 83%              | 17%                  | 58%                 | \$7,356.90             | 15%             | 93%             | 23                               | 73%                   | 19.3                  | 41                   | 11                      | 53                      | 0                          |
| Claiborne County        | 13                | 4865             | 97%              | 3%                   | 78%                 | \$8,677.90             | 23%             | 84%             | 44                               | 2%                    | 18.5                  | 36                   | 6                       | 48                      | 0                          |
| Clay County             | 5                 | 1115             | 96%              | 4%                   | 74%                 | \$9,431.20             | 19%             | 96%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.5                  | 25                   | 4                       | 43                      | 3                          |
| Cleveland               | 8                 | 5276             | 73%              | 27%                  | 62%                 | \$9,230.40             | 35%             | 81%             | 30                               | 22%                   | 20.8                  | 42                   | -2                      | 54                      | -2                         |
| Clinton                 | 3                 | 933              | 92%              | 8%                   | 56%                 | \$9,386.60             | 38%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 55                   | 13                      | 63                      | 8                          |

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\*\*These improvements are based on the difference between rounded estimates for 2010 and 2011.

SECTION 2: SCORE Card

| District          | Number of Schools | Total Enrollment | % White Students | % Non-White Students | Low Income Students | Per Pupil Expenditures | % Local Funding | Graduation Rate | No. of Students Taking AP Exams* | % of AP Exams Passed* | ACT SCORE (3 Yr. Avg) | Math % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Math** | Reading % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Reading** |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cocke County      | 12                | 4895             | 94%              | 6%                   | 83%                 | \$8,864.90             | 22%             | 90%             | 108                              | 33%                   | 18.8                  | 52                   | 21                     | 52                      | 5                         |
| Coffee County     | 9                 | 4445             | 93%              | 7%                   | 65%                 | \$8,778.70             | 35%             | 86%             | 308                              | 21%                   | 19.4                  | 32                   | 2                      | 53                      | 8                         |
| Crockett County   | 5                 | 1852             | 73%              | 27%                  | 66%                 | \$8,093.90             | 15%             | 95%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.3                  | 34                   | 4                      | 53                      | 1                         |
| Cumberland County | 12                | 7071             | 94%              | 6%                   | 69%                 | \$7,736.20             | 29%             | 92%             | 105                              | 56%                   | 19.6                  | 50                   | 13                     | 59                      | 6                         |
| Davidson County   | 137               | 81003            | 33%              | 67%                  | 75%                 | \$11,079.90            | 56%             | 76%             | 2272                             | 48%                   | 18.4                  | 33                   | 6                      | 45                      | 4                         |
| Dayton            | 1                 | 815              | 84%              | 16%                  | 65%                 | \$8,154.70             | 20%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 45                   | 9                      | 59                      | 7                         |
| Decatur County    | 4                 | 1657             | 91%              | 9%                   | 62%                 | \$8,280.50             | 23%             | 87%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.3                  | 30                   | 3                      | 51                      | 2                         |
| DeKalb County     | 6                 | 2891             | 89%              | 11%                  | 64%                 | \$7,666.30             | 19%             | 94%             | 14                               | 36%                   | 19.1                  | 39                   | 7                      | 55                      | 2                         |
| Dickson County    | 15                | 8611             | 88%              | 12%                  | 56%                 | \$8,110.50             | 32%             | 85%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.6                  | 55                   | 9                      | 62                      | 4                         |
| Dyer County       | 8                 | 3650             | 90%              | 10%                  | 67%                 | \$8,525.40             | 34%             | 94%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 20.2                  | 51                   | 6                      | 56                      | 5                         |
| Dyersburg         | 4                 | 3308             | 56%              | 44%                  | 76%                 | \$9,992.40             | 33%             | 84%             | 136                              | 58%                   | 21.1                  | 47                   | 8                      | 49                      | 2                         |
| Elizabethton      | 6                 | 2171             | 93%              | 7%                   | 57%                 | \$9,137.40             | 34%             | 96%             | 11                               | 27%                   | 20.2                  | 45                   | 5                      | 60                      | 0                         |
| Etowah            | 1                 | 342              | 90%              | 10%                  | 78%                 | \$10,084.80            | 24%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 32                   | 14                     | 56                      | 6                         |
| Fayette County    | 10                | 3852             | 40%              | 60%                  | 82%                 | \$9,425.70             | 29%             | 79%             | 26                               | 4%                    | 16.1                  | 27                   | 6                      | 41                      | 3                         |
| Fayetteville      | 3                 | 1112             | 69%              | 31%                  | 54%                 | \$8,202.70             | 29%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 45                   | -2                     | 61                      | -3                        |
| Fentress County   | 6                 | 2427             | 98%              | 2%                   | 76%                 | \$8,363.80             | 19%             | 93%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19                    | 29                   | 12                     | 50                      | 6                         |
| Franklin          | 8                 | 4075             | 63%              | 37%                  | 41%                 | \$11,839.30            | 67%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 62                   | 5                      | 71                      | 1                         |
| Franklin County   | 11                | 5926             | 89%              | 11%                  | 58%                 | \$8,424.60             | 30%             | 90%             | 33                               | 78%                   | 19                    | 39                   | 5                      | 54                      | 3                         |
| Gibson Co Sp Dist | 9                 | 3631             | 90%              | 10%                  | 42%                 | \$6,729.90             | 27%             | 91%             | 50                               | 22%                   | 19.3                  | 59                   | 13                     | 63                      | 4                         |
| Giles County      | 8                 | 4292             | 82%              | 18%                  | 64%                 | \$9,462.60             | 31%             | 85%             | 9                                | 67%                   | 18.8                  | 26                   | 4                      | 49                      | 7                         |
| Grainger County   | 9                 | 3627             | 95%              | 5%                   | 70%                 | \$7,695.20             | 15%             | 92%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18                    | 39                   | 12                     | 47                      | 4                         |
| Greene County     | 16                | 7316             | 96%              | 4%                   | 66%                 | \$7,451.30             | 24%             | 94%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.2                  | 39                   | 5                      | 48                      | 1                         |
| Greeneville       | 7                 | 2751             | 85%              | 15%                  | 44%                 | \$10,219.60            | 43%             | 94%             | 74                               | 85%                   | 22.6                  | 51                   | 14                     | 63                      | -1                        |
| Grundy County     | 8                 | 2244             | 99%              | 1%                   | 88%                 | \$9,204.70             | 16%             | 86%             | 53                               | 5%                    | 17.9                  | 27                   | 3                      | 42                      | 2                         |
| H Rock Bruceton   | 2                 | 692              | 89%              | 11%                  | 72%                 | \$8,172.10             | 21%             | 95%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.5                  | 37                   | -2                     | 57                      | 10                        |
| Hamblen County    | 18                | 10258            | 76%              | 24%                  | 63%                 | \$7,637.70             | 40%             | 90%             | 417                              | 62%                   | 19.8                  | 45                   | 11                     | 54                      | 2                         |
| Hamilton County   | 76                | 44372            | 60%              | 40%                  | 61%                 | \$9,398.20             | 51%             | 82%             | 1048                             | 30%                   | 18.8                  | 45                   | 7                      | 51                      | 3                         |
| Hancock County    | 2                 | 1073             | 99%              | 1%                   | 89%                 | \$9,437.40             | 10%             | 74%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 17.4                  | 28                   | 10                     | 41                      | 5                         |
| Hardeman County   | 9                 | 4141             | 44%              | 56%                  | 83%                 | \$9,166.60             | 22%             | 81%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 17.6                  | 33                   | 10                     | 45                      | 3                         |
| Hardin County     | 7                 | 3907             | 91%              | 9%                   | 71%                 | \$9,790.30             | 35%             | 85%             | 32                               | 16%                   | 19.7                  | 34                   | 4                      | 52                      | 3                         |
| Hawkins County    | 18                | 7820             | 96%              | 4%                   | 64%                 | \$8,642.30             | 28%             | 91%             | 19                               | 47%                   | 18.9                  | 38                   | 10                     | 52                      | 5                         |
| Haywood County    | 6                 | 3414             | 31%              | 69%                  | 84%                 | \$8,965.30             | 21%             | 79%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 17.8                  | 25                   | 1                      | 36                      | -1                        |
| Henderson County  | 9                 | 3808             | 89%              | 11%                  | 68%                 | \$8,105.40             | 24%             | 92%             | 30                               | 17%                   | 19.3                  | 49                   | 14                     | 56                      | 3                         |
| Henry County      | 6                 | 3296             | 90%              | 10%                  | 70%                 | \$8,812.20             | 33%             | 80%             | 38                               | 20%                   | 19.6                  | 50                   | 19                     | 54                      | 3                         |
| Hickman County    | 8                 | 3841             | 95%              | 5%                   | 67%                 | \$8,293.00             | 18%             | 89%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.3                  | 36                   | 12                     | 51                      | 3                         |
| Houston County    | 5                 | 1497             | 93%              | 7%                   | 56%                 | \$8,395.10             | 16%             | 95%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.4                  | 39                   | 6                      | 51                      | -2                        |
| Humboldt          | 4                 | 1364             | 23%              | 77%                  | 93%                 | \$10,870.70            | 21%             | 77%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 17.2                  | 39                   | 16                     | 39                      | 4                         |
| Humphreys County  | 7                 | 3155             | 94%              | 6%                   | 59%                 | \$8,292.30             | 23%             | 88%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.8                  | 36                   | 3                      | 55                      | 5                         |

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| District          | Number of Schools | Total Enrollment | % White Students | % Non-White Students | Low Income Students | Per Pupil Expenditures | % Local Funding | Graduation Rate | No. of Students Taking AP Exams* | % of AP Exams Passed* | ACT SCORE (3 Yr. Avg) | Math % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Math** | Reading % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Reading** |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Huntingdon        | 3                 | 1271             | 81%              | 19%                  | 57%                 | \$7,999.80             | 23%             | 94%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.9                  | 53                   | 13                     | 53                      | 3                         |
| Jackson County    | 4                 | 1597             | 97%              | 3%                   | 76%                 | \$8,551.50             | 18%             | 89%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.4                  | 26                   | -1                     | 47                      | 2                         |
| Jefferson County  | 11                | 7746             | 91%              | 9%                   | 64%                 | \$7,867.00             | 26%             | 92%             | 70                               | 59%                   | 19                    | 36                   | 8                      | 51                      | 6                         |
| Johnson City      | 10                | 7825             | 79%              | 21%                  | 51%                 | \$9,387.20             | 50%             | 90%             | 201                              | 76%                   | 22.3                  | 68                   | 9                      | 69                      | 4                         |
| Johnson County    | 7                 | 2254             | 97%              | 3%                   | 73%                 | \$9,943.40             | 21%             | 89%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.7                  | 48                   | 5                      | 55                      | 2                         |
| Kingsport         | 12                | 6876             | 85%              | 15%                  | 51%                 | \$10,189.40            | 53%             | 93%             | 264                              | 82%                   | 22.1                  | 60                   | 8                      | 64                      | 2                         |
| Knox County       | 87                | 57639            | 78%              | 22%                  | 46%                 | \$8,507.50             | 53%             | 87%             | 2018                             | 59%                   | 20.9                  | 48                   | 6                      | 60                      | 1                         |
| Lake County       | 3                 | 932              | 69%              | 31%                  | 80%                 | \$10,081.10            | 17%             | 80%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.2                  | 24                   | 3                      | 35                      | 3                         |
| Lauderdale County | 7                 | 4636             | 55%              | 45%                  | 83%                 | \$8,890.00             | 17%             | 85%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.1                  | 25                   | 6                      | 43                      | 2                         |
| Lawrence County   | 13                | 6916             | 95%              | 5%                   | 64%                 | \$8,077.70             | 22%             | 90%             | 15                               | 13%                   | 19.4                  | 52                   | 8                      | 59                      | 1                         |
| Lebanon           | 5                 | 3395             | 71%              | 29%                  | 62%                 | \$8,541.40             | 45%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 42                   | 3                      | 57                      | 3                         |
| Lenoir City       | 3                 | 2317             | 79%              | 21%                  | 63%                 | \$8,795.00             | 43%             | 89%             | 31                               | 48%                   | 19.8                  | 35                   | 0                      | 48                      | 2                         |
| Lewis County      | 4                 | 1997             | 92%              | 8%                   | 71%                 | \$7,567.00             | 17%             | 87%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.9                  | 34                   | 2                      | 51                      | -1                        |
| Lexington         | 2                 | 1049             | 71%              | 29%                  | 55%                 | \$9,132.50             | 28%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 51                   | 3                      | 60                      | 0                         |
| Lincoln County    | 8                 | 4157             | 91%              | 9%                   | 63%                 | \$7,626.70             | 24%             | 92%             | 31                               | 88%                   | 19.2                  | 42                   | 7                      | 61                      | 3                         |
| Loudon County     | 9                 | 4640             | 87%              | 13%                  | 60%                 | \$8,543.20             | 42%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.6                  | 45                   | 11                     | 61                      | 6                         |
| Macon County      | 8                 | 3863             | 93%              | 7%                   | 64%                 | \$7,819.50             | 17%             | 79%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.3                  | 35                   | 3                      | 49                      | -1                        |
| Madison County    | 28                | 13312            | 35%              | 65%                  | 80%                 | \$9,725.80             | 42%             | 92%             | 60                               | 40%                   | 18.3                  | 30                   | 2                      | 43                      | 1                         |
| Manchester        | 3                 | 1423             | 81%              | 19%                  | 71%                 | \$10,088.90            | 43%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 44                   | 6                      | 58                      | 0                         |
| Marion County     | 10                | 4396             | 93%              | 7%                   | 72%                 | \$8,260.30             | 28%             | 83%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.1                  | 38                   | 2                      | 52                      | 2                         |
| Marshall County   | 9                 | 5387             | 84%              | 16%                  | 60%                 | \$8,309.00             | 30%             | 89%             | 38                               | 89%                   | 19                    | 39                   | 6                      | 54                      | 0                         |
| Maryville         | 7                 | 5071             | 90%              | 10%                  | 33%                 | \$9,213.70             | 52%             | 92%             | 174                              | 77%                   | 24                    | 64                   | 7                      | 75                      | 3                         |
| Maury County      | 20                | 11991            | 73%              | 27%                  | 59%                 | \$8,626.60             | 35%             | 82%             | 122                              | 74%                   | 19.3                  | 32                   | 5                      | 52                      | 4                         |
| McKenzie          | 3                 | 1400             | 83%              | 17%                  | 62%                 | \$6,941.10             | 22%             | 98%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.5                  | 54                   | 6                      | 60                      | 0                         |
| McMinn County     | 9                 | 5966             | 91%              | 9%                   | 69%                 | \$7,784.10             | 28%             | 90%             | 50                               | 36%                   | 18.7                  | 40                   | 10                     | 54                      | 4                         |
| McNairy County    | 8                 | 4436             | 90%              | 10%                  | 65%                 | \$8,114.30             | 20%             | 93%             | 23                               | 38%                   | 19.4                  | 42                   | 10                     | 54                      | 3                         |
| Meigs County      | 4                 | 1859             | 96%              | 4%                   | 73%                 | \$8,478.30             | 16%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.2                  | 43                   | 11                     | 55                      | 5                         |
| Memphis           | 207               | 113571           | 8%               | 92%                  | 85%                 | \$11,323.70            | 40%             | 73%             | 2118                             | 32%                   | 16.7                  | 24                   | 5                      | 35                      | 2                         |
| Milan             | 3                 | 2174             | 74%              | 26%                  | 62%                 | \$8,119.50             | 27%             | 95%             | 12                               | 24%                   | 20.3                  | 50                   | -2                     | 55                      | -3                        |
| Monroe County     | 13                | 5763             | 92%              | 8%                   | 69%                 | \$8,081.10             | 25%             | 91%             | 9                                | 43%                   | 18.4                  | 35                   | 3                      | 52                      | 3                         |
| Montgomery County | 36                | 32928            | 58%              | 42%                  | 48%                 | \$8,339.00             | 31%             | 93%             | 693                              | 41%                   | 19.7                  | 42                   | 3                      | 57                      | 0                         |
| Moore County      | 2                 | 977              | 96%              | 4%                   | 55%                 | \$8,624.50             | 32%             | 87%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.7                  | 50                   | 18                     | 54                      | 8                         |
| Morgan County     | 8                 | 3229             | 99%              | 1%                   | 68%                 | \$8,271.90             | 30%             | 92%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.2                  | 29                   | 7                      | 47                      | 4                         |
| Murfreesboro      | 12                | 7103             | 60%              | 40%                  | 52%                 | \$9,203.40             | 41%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 54                   | 16                     | 59                      | 7                         |
| Newport           | 1                 | 782              | 89%              | 11%                  | 59%                 | \$9,795.20             | 25%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 63                   | 19                     | 67                      | 3                         |
| Oak Ridge         | 8                 | 4707             | 72%              | 28%                  | 45%                 | \$12,111.90            | 53%             | 88%             | 307                              | 82%                   | 23.4                  | 54                   | 3                      | 65                      | 3                         |
| Obion County      | 8                 | 3930             | 91%              | 9%                   | 58%                 | \$8,326.50             | 29%             | 84%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.9                  | 44                   | 0                      | 56                      | 0                         |
| Oneida            | 3                 | 1241             | 99%              | 1%                   | 68%                 | \$8,633.90             | 21%             | 94%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.3                  | 33                   | 2                      | 55                      | -1                        |

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| District             | Number of Schools | Total Enrollment | % White Students | % Non-White Students | Low Income Students | Per Pupil Expenditures | % Local Funding | Graduation Rate | No. of Students Taking AP Exams* | % of AP Exams Passed* | ACT SCORE (3 Yr. Avg) | Math % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Math** | Reading % Prof + Adv 11 | 1-Yr Imprvmt in Reading** |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Overton County       | 9                 | 3573             | 98%              | 2%                   | 69%                 | \$7,985.10             | 16%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.5                  | 37                   | 10                     | 53                      | 3                         |
| Paris                | 3                 | 1709             | 76%              | 24%                  | 63%                 | \$8,231.20             | 35%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 51                   | 5                      | 53                      | -2                        |
| Perry County         | 4                 | 1155             | 93%              | 7%                   | 72%                 | \$9,375.70             | 20%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.5                  | 21                   | 5                      | 47                      | 5                         |
| Pickett County       | 2                 | 735              | 97%              | 3%                   | 67%                 | \$8,960.40             | 21%             | 96%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.2                  | 30                   | 0                      | 53                      | -2                        |
| Polk County          | 6                 | 2786             | 97%              | 3%                   | 74%                 | \$8,181.80             | 20%             | 93%             | 17                               | 18%                   | 18.6                  | 34                   | 16                     | 51                      | 4                         |
| Putnam County        | 20                | 10890            | 86%              | 14%                  | 59%                 | \$8,266.40             | 36%             | 85%             | 282                              | 43%                   | 21                    | 43                   | 8                      | 58                      | 2                         |
| Rhea County          | 6                 | 4275             | 92%              | 8%                   | 71%                 | \$8,253.20             | 24%             | 89%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.9                  | 44                   | 8                      | 50                      | 2                         |
| Richard City         | 1                 | 346              | 96%              | 4%                   | 78%                 | \$9,226.80             | 26%             | 79%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.3                  | 28                   | -2                     | 56                      | 8                         |
| Roane County         | 18                | 7405             | 93%              | 7%                   | 58%                 | \$8,855.50             | 46%             | 78%             | 79                               | 53%                   | 19.9                  | 39                   | 5                      | 56                      | 6                         |
| Robertson County     | 19                | 11423            | 81%              | 19%                  | 51%                 | \$8,073.10             | 29%             | 94%             | 38                               | 51%                   | 19.1                  | 39                   | 9                      | 55                      | 4                         |
| Rogersville          | 1                 | 691              | 93%              | 7%                   | 51%                 | \$8,390.80             | 32%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 56                   | 13                     | 68                      | 3                         |
| Rutherford County    | 46                | 39251            | 69%              | 31%                  | 46%                 | \$8,094.80             | 38%             | 92%             | 925                              | 51%                   | 20.3                  | 51                   | 7                      | 65                      | 2                         |
| Scott County         | 7                 | 2962             | 99%              | 1%                   | 84%                 | \$7,939.50             | 14%             | 84%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.2                  | 32                   | 8                      | 51                      | 3                         |
| Sequatchie County    | 3                 | 2395             | 94%              | 6%                   | 70%                 | \$7,610.50             | 24%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.7                  | 42                   | 7                      | 48                      | -1                        |
| Sevier County        | 27                | 15086            | 91%              | 9%                   | 64%                 | \$9,063.10             | 58%             | 80%             | 81                               | 55%                   | 20.4                  | 40                   | 8                      | 54                      | 3                         |
| Shelby County        | 51                | 47297            | 53%              | 47%                  | 38%                 | \$8,957.20             | 45%             | 89%             | 1540                             | 60%                   | 21.1                  | 50                   | 6                      | 63                      | 2                         |
| Smith County         | 10                | 3350             | 92%              | 8%                   | 60%                 | \$7,579.50             | 20%             | 92%             | 28                               | 55%                   | 19.5                  | 47                   | 8                      | 58                      | 5                         |
| South Carroll        | 1                 | 372              | 93%              | 7%                   | 54%                 | \$8,276.30             | 24%             | 100%            | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.8                  | 48                   | 16                     | 59                      | 1                         |
| Stewart County       | 5                 | 2253             | 95%              | 5%                   | 57%                 | \$8,658.00             | 19%             | 95%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.2                  | 60                   | 7                      | 62                      | 6                         |
| Sullivan County      | 25                | 11483            | 98%              | 2%                   | 55%                 | \$9,099.00             | 44%             | 91%             | 46                               | 51%                   | 20.3                  | 41                   | 5                      | 55                      | 2                         |
| Sumner County        | 46                | 28626            | 84%              | 16%                  | 41%                 | \$8,487.10             | 33%             | 90%             | 422                              | 71%                   | 20.5                  | 43                   | 7                      | 62                      | 4                         |
| Sweetwater           | 4                 | 1530             | 85%              | 15%                  | 81%                 | \$8,614.00             | 21%             | N/A             | N/A                              | N/A                   | N/A                   | 44                   | 11                     | 52                      | 5                         |
| Tipton County        | 14                | 12192            | 73%              | 27%                  | 58%                 | \$8,046.50             | 19%             | 96%             | 28                               | 62%                   | 20.3                  | 47                   | 10                     | 55                      | 2                         |
| Trenton              | 3                 | 1424             | 68%              | 32%                  | 61%                 | \$7,901.60             | 31%             | 97%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.1                  | 43                   | 9                      | 52                      | 5                         |
| Trousdale County     | 3                 | 1310             | 84%              | 16%                  | 55%                 | \$7,982.10             | 16%             | 96%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19.5                  | 49                   | 15                     | 51                      | 2                         |
| Tullahoma            | 7                 | 3438             | 82%              | 18%                  | 50%                 | \$10,498.70            | 47%             | 84%             | 132                              | 76%                   | 21.2                  | 46                   | 9                      | 57                      | 2                         |
| Unicoi County        | 7                 | 2680             | 91%              | 9%                   | 66%                 | \$8,155.40             | 23%             | 94%             | 40                               | 42%                   | 19                    | 44                   | 14                     | 58                      | 7                         |
| Union City           | 3                 | 1553             | 51%              | 49%                  | 70%                 | \$9,023.30             | 34%             | 86%             | 38                               | 15%                   | 19.9                  | 41                   | 4                      | 49                      | 1                         |
| Union County         | 7                 | 3070             | 98%              | 2%                   | 80%                 | \$9,166.80             | 16%             | 72%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.5                  | 26                   | 4                      | 44                      | 3                         |
| Van Buren County     | 2                 | 757              | 98%              | 2%                   | 59%                 | \$9,689.40             | 19%             | 86%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.4                  | 24                   | 9                      | 51                      | 2                         |
| Warren County        | 11                | 6714             | 81%              | 19%                  | 65%                 | \$8,234.70             | 24%             | 87%             | 49                               | 47%                   | 18.9                  | 36                   | 6                      | 50                      | 3                         |
| Washington County    | 16                | 9447             | 94%              | 6%                   | 52%                 | \$8,098.40             | 40%             | 90%             | 95                               | 70%                   | 19.8                  | 51                   | 9                      | 62                      | 3                         |
| Wayne County         | 8                 | 2432             | 97%              | 3%                   | 72%                 | \$9,144.70             | 13%             | 91%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 19                    | 39                   | 9                      | 51                      | 2                         |
| Weakley County       | 11                | 4944             | 87%              | 13%                  | 58%                 | \$7,889.20             | 22%             | 87%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 20.6                  | 50                   | 7                      | 63                      | 6                         |
| West Carroll Sp Dist | 3                 | 1018             | 86%              | 14%                  | 62%                 | \$8,352.00             | 22%             | 99%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.7                  | 40                   | 5                      | 56                      | 5                         |
| White County         | 9                 | 4126             | 95%              | 5%                   | 64%                 | \$7,554.60             | 17%             | 90%             | N/A                              | N/A                   | 18.9                  | 40                   | 8                      | 54                      | 2                         |
| Williamson County    | 40                | 32758            | 89%              | 11%                  | 12%                 | \$8,081.70             | 53%             | 92%             | 2198                             | 70%                   | 22.8                  | 66                   | 7                      | 80                      | 4                         |
| Wilson County        | 20                | 15661            | 87%              | 13%                  | 29%                 | \$8,333.50             | 41%             | 90%             | 302                              | 56%                   | 20                    | 43                   | 8                      | 65                      | 7                         |

\* AP data is only reported for districts in which 5 or more students took an exam during the 2010-2011 school year.  
\*\*These improvements are based on the difference between rounded estimates for 2010 and 2011.



Glossary

Achievement School District (ASD)

The Achievement School District was established by the First to the Top Act of 2010 to turn around the state’s lowest performing schools. Schools that fall in the bottom 5 percent in the state based on student achievement are eligible to be included in the Achievement School District. These schools will either be co-managed with their local district (during the 2011-12 school year only) or directly managed by the ASD. The ASD can also authorize charter management organizations to run these schools.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Adequate Yearly Progress is a measure established by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that holds schools accountable for the performance of their students on standardized tests, including sub-groups such as racial/ethnic minorities and students with disabilities. Every state administers its own examinations in reading/language arts and mathematics, and student performance on those examinations determines whether schools are successful at making sufficient progress for a given year. Graduation rates are used in calculating high school AYP, while attendance rates are used for middle and elementary schools.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Advanced Placement courses are courses 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.

Alternative Salary Schedule

Alternative salary schedules tie a teacher’s compensation and incentives to professional learning, student achievement, and other measures. They contrast traditional salary schedules, which uniformly increase the pay of teachers based on number of years teaching and level of degree completion.

Charter School

Charter schools are publicly funded schools that are independently run. In exchange for increased accountability, these schools have the flexibility to make personnel, financial, and instructional decisions at the school, rather than the district, level.

Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards are a set of English/ language arts and mathematics standards that were developed by state leaders to ensure that every student graduates high school prepared for college or the workforce, regardless of the state in which they live. Common Core standards are internationally benchmarked, and are designed to promote critical thinking and depth of understanding of course content. The initiative is led by the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve.

Dual Credit

Dual credit is 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

Dual enrollment is 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.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Act is a federal education law originally enacted in 1965 to provide funding for low income and underserved students. In 2001, ESEA was reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act, which ties the allocation of federal funds to the ability of schools and districts to demonstrate “adequate yearly progress” by key sub-groups of students historically underperforming on achievement measures. See also No Child Left Behind.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Also known as “the Nation’s Report Card,” NAEP is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics in the subject areas of mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. Exams are administered every two years to representative samples of students in grades 4, 8, and 12, and provide common metrics to indicate levels of student proficiency across states and selected urban districts.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act that established an accountability framework for all public schools based on student achievement on standardized tests. The law stipulates that all students, including historically underachieving groups of students, such as minorities and students with disabilities, must make a certain amount of progress each year, also known as “adequately yearly progress,” in order to receive federal funds. NCLB requires that school choice options and other services, such as tutoring, be offered to students who attend schools that fail to make adequately yearly progress for multiple years. See also Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers is a consortium of states that are working together to develop common, computer-based assessments that are aligned with Common Core standards. PARCC is one of two consortia receiving federal grant funds to develop assessments that can inform teachers of student progress periodically throughout the academic year, instead of just at the end of the year, beginning in 2014-15. The consortium is led by the non-profit organization Achieve.

Postsecondary Education

Postsecondary education refers to colleges, universities, and technical centers that grant certificates, credentials, and degrees beyond a high school diploma.

Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC)

The Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee is a 15-person council established by the First to the Top Act of 2010 to recommend criteria for a teacher and principal evaluation system to the State Board of Education. The committee included educators, administrators, and other education stakeholders.

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

The TCAP assesses students in grades 3-8 in Tennessee and determines levels of proficiency in reading/ language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Districts may also choose to administer TCAP assessments in selected subjects to students in grades K – 2. There are four proficiency levels on TCAP: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. TCAP will be replaced by PARCC assessments, with full implementation scheduled for the 2014-15 school year.

Tennessee Value-added Assessment System (TVAAS)

TVAAS is 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. This year, Tennessee law was amended to enable districts to grant tenure to teachers after a five-year probationary period if teachers have demonstrated a certain level of effectiveness, based, in part, on student achievement.



## **SCORE:**

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Collaboratively supporting  
Tennessee's work to  
prepare students for college  
and the workforce.



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**The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) collaboratively supports Tennessee’s work to prepare students for college and the workforce. We are an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan advocacy and research institution, founded by former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist.**

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Subject:

Reading

Lesson

Target

I can identify  
and main ideas

Subject:

Science

Lesson

Target

I can build  
using a model  
and explain

Target

I can write