



**ACT Score:** The ACT is a college readiness assessment taken by all Tennessee high school graduates, with few exceptions. Composite ACT scores for the 2016-17 school year (graduating class of 2017) are included for each school district. The average composite score for Tennessee in 2017 was 20.1.

**Adult Programs:** Adult programs serve individuals who are over the age of 17, lack a high school diploma, and legally withdrew from public education. Programs may include Adult Basic Education classes, designed to prepare students to earn a High School Equivalency diploma and enter employment and/or postsecondary education, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and civics classes for those wanting to learn English.

**Alternative Schools:** Alternative schools are public schools for students who have been suspended or expelled from their regular school but remanded to alternative school. State law allows school districts to establish alternative schools for students in grades 1 through 6; at least one alternative school must be available for students in grades 7 through 12. Student attendance in alternative schools is voluntary unless the local board of education adopts a policy mandating attendance. Students who attend an alternative school continue to generate state education funds for their regular school district. All coursework and credits earned in an alternative school are to be transferred to the student's regular school, which must grant credit earned and academic progress made while at the alternative school as if earned at the regular school.

**Average Classroom Teacher Salary:** Average salary for those teachers in the classroom. This figure does not include all licensed personnel such as principals, superintendents, or instructional supervisors.

**ASD (Achievement School District):** The Achievement School District is a state-run school district responsible for turning around the state's lowest performing schools. The ASD may take over the operation of any school that is performing in the bottom 5 percent of schools in the state in overall achievement. As of the 2017-18 school year, the ASD operates 32 schools in two districts (29 in Shelby County and three in Metro Nashville). The ASD may directly operate these schools or may convert them to charter schools.

**Charter Schools:** Charter schools are public schools operated by independent governing bodies that are authorized by one of the following three entities in Tennessee: local boards of education, the Achievement School District (ASD), or the State Board of Education (SBE). The majority of charters in Tennessee are authorized by local boards of education. Charter schools must meet the same academic performance standards as traditional public schools, but have greater autonomy in areas such as personnel and salary policies, curriculum and instruction methods, and financial decisions. In exchange for more autonomy, charter schools face a heightened level of accountability. As of the 2017-18 school year, 86 charter schools operate in four Tennessee school districts: Hamilton County Schools (4), Knox County Schools (1), Metro Nashville Public Schools (29), Shelby County Schools (51), and the State Board of Education (1). In addition, there are 32 schools within the Achievement School District (ASD).

**College Going Rate:** The college going rate measures the number of high school graduates that enroll in community college, university, in-state, out-of-state, public, or private institutions the following year (e.g.,



a student who graduates in spring 2016 and enrolls in college the following summer or fall of 2016). The data represented here reflects the 2015-16 school year.

**District Designation:** Under Tennessee's accountability system, districts must increase achievement levels for all students and show faster growth in achievement for the students who are furthest behind in order to reduce achievement gaps. Under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, the state will transition to an updated accountability model – 2016-17 is the final year of the current accountability system. Rather than expecting all districts to meet the same benchmarks year after year, the accountability model acknowledges that districts are starting from different places and rewards those that show the most growth.

**Economically Disadvantaged (Free/Reduced Price Meals):** Students identified as economically disadvantaged are those children who are directly identified as receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, those whose families participate in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, students who experience homelessness and are on the local school district liaison's list of homeless students, Head Start participants, migrant youth, runaways, foster children, and other who may be certified by state or local officials.

**Enrollment (ADM - Average Daily Membership):** ADM is one way to measure student enrollment. Another measure, often used for federal reporting requirements, is Average Daily Attendance. ADM counts how many students are enrolled in a school while ADA counts how often these students attend school. Because of factors that may result in a student missing school, such as truancy or sick days, ADA results in an overall lower student count than ADM.

**Graduation Rate:** Every student entering the 9th grade is part of a cohort of students who are expected to graduate within four years. Students may be removed from their four-year cohort only when school officials document in writing that they have transferred to another school or district (where they will be added to another cohort) or have emigrated to another country. If a student leaves school for any other reason (other than death), they remain part of the cohort. At the end of the 12th grade, only those students in the cohort who successfully complete all requirements to achieve a regular high school diploma are then counted as graduates. (The graduation rate comprises all summer terms, including the summer term after 12th grade.) Students who obtain an alternative credential, such as a high school equivalency diploma, and students who take longer than four years to graduate are not counted as graduates.

**Limited English Proficient:** Non-English speaking students and students learning English.

**Local, State, & Federal Funding:** The BEP determines state funds to be allocated to individual districts and the amount of funding local systems are required to provide to education. While the BEP determines a required local funding level, local systems may provide additional funds above and beyond the required level toward education. The primary sources of local revenue are property taxes and local sales taxes. State revenue sources for education include the state sales tax, mixed drink tax, and cigarette tax. The primary federal education dollars awarded to districts and schools are grants that are generally awarded based on the demographics of students. These grants are targeted to improve outcomes for certain student populations and address other educational needs, including low-income students, special education, professional development, and English language learners.



**Per-Pupil Expenditure:** OREA has chosen to calculate per-pupil expenditures using a different method than the method used by the Tennessee Department of Education for the state's annual Report Card. OREA calculates the figure by dividing expenditures by a district's Average Daily Membership (ADM), while the department is required by federal reporting standards to publish a per-pupil expenditure figure that divides expenditures by a district's Average Daily Attendance (ADA). The per-pupil expenditure is calculated from the department's 2017 annual statistical report (Table 7, end of year ADM, and Table 50, current expenditures). Total current expenditures are divided by Average Daily Membership (student enrollment). The per-pupil expenditures displayed in this map are different from those reported on the state's report card in several ways. They include only district-level spending and not state-level spending. They are calculated using Average Daily Membership (ADM) rather than the smaller Average Daily Attendance (ADA) counts of students. Note that the department's total current expenditure data from Table 50 does not include district spending on capital outlay or capital projects, debt service, or for certain programs such as pre-kindergarten and community services.

**Type of District:** Each district receives funding based on the Basic Education Program formula which is calculated on a district basis, using student enrollment, grade levels offered, bus miles traveled, and other inputs. Counties are required to share county education funds with special and municipal school districts located within the county based on each district's share of Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Municipal and special school districts are not required to share the local funds raised within their boundaries with other districts in the county.

**County School Districts:** State law requires each county to operate a school district unless all students within the county are served by municipal or special districts. Because counties have the statutory responsibility for public education, county districts are the "default" district type in Tennessee. Tennessee has 93 county school districts; Gibson and Carroll counties do not operate traditional countywide school districts.

**Municipal School Districts:** Municipal (or city) school districts educate students within the city limits but may not offer all grade levels. Generally, city or town charters authorize municipal districts, and the municipalities allocate a specific portion of local tax collections to support their school districts. Tennessee has 33 municipal districts.

**Special School Districts:** Special school districts educate students within the boundaries established by a private act of the state legislature and may not offer all grade levels. Special school districts, not tied to the taxing authority of a county or a municipality, must have the state legislature's approval for any tax levy to support its operations. Tennessee has 14 special school districts.

**Virtual Schools:** Virtual schools are public schools that use technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to students via the internet in a virtual or remote setting. Virtual schools must comply with the same laws as traditional public schools on curriculum standards, class size, length of the school day and school year, regular student assessments, and teacher qualifications. School districts may manage their own virtual schools or may contract for services with nonprofit and for-profit entities. As of the 2016-17 school year, nine virtual schools have been established in Tennessee.