

Defining Tennessee Education

A Glossary of Education Terms

VOLUME I / 2016

Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller of the Treasury



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Preface

It's clear that education is a legislative priority, and the language of education policy can impede understanding, even among those who are experienced policy makers. In furtherance of our office's mission to make government work better, we have created this glossary which includes definitions of commonly-used education terms and their relevance to Tennessee.

The glossary contains over 180 entries covering many essential education-related concepts and programs, from pre-K to higher education. An online version of this glossary is also available on our website.

Tennessee is in the process of fundamentally reforming education, and is one of a very small number of states to consistently increase K-12 funding during the last few years. My hope is that you will find this glossary to be a helpful resource as you discuss, debate, and make important decisions about policy and funding for education and, by extension, the future of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin P. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

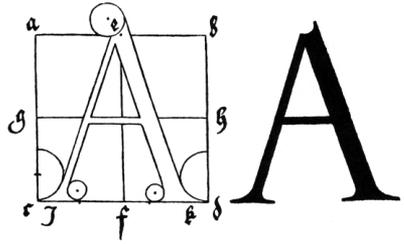
Justin P. Wilson

Guide to the Glossary

For a list of education-related acronyms and terms used in the glossary, see the pages at the end of this document. Acronyms are divided into three sections: Federal and State Laws, Key Terms, and Organizations and Agencies.

An online version of the glossary is available at the Comptroller of the Treasury's website at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/OREA/>.

The illustrations of letters at the beginning of each section are taken from a treatise, "The Art of Measurement," by Albrecht Dürer published in 1525. Dürer — also an artist — was principally concerned with setting out precise rules for the geometric construction of Roman capitals. He constructed each letter by inscribing it in a square of a specific size, "building" the character out of elements of the square, arcs of circles drawn from particular points, and so forth. Examining the construction of these simple Roman letters affords us a new way of looking at the familiar — of looking at something we see every day and realizing both its complexity and simplicity.



academic rigor

Rigor is a term widely used by educators when referring to academically challenging standards, curriculum, and instruction. For example, an academically rigorous curriculum might challenge students to not only recognize and recall facts and concepts, but to also question assumptions and analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complicated subject matter.

academic standards

Academic standards, which may also be referred to as curriculum standards, provide a common set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do at the end of a grade. Standards, which establish desired learning outcomes, differ from curriculum, which provides instructional programming designed to help students reach the learning outcomes. Each individual school district establishes its own curricular programs that support student mastery of Tennessee's academic standards.

The Tennessee State Board of Education is charged with adopting academic standards.

In 2015, the General Assembly passed a law creating a Standards Recommendation Committee to advise the State Board of Education on math and English language arts standards to be adopted and implemented in 2017-18; the law also authorizes the creation of another Standards Recommendation Committee prior to the next adoption of science and social studies standards.

See also

- curriculum
- State Board of Education

accountability

Accountability in K-12 education typically refers to the process of holding school districts and schools responsible for student performance. In Tennessee, accountability for student performance is currently administered under the state's No Child Left Behind waiver, approved by the U.S. Department of Education in July 2015. The passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, which replaces the NCLB Act as well as states' related waivers, may prompt revisions to Tennessee's accountability system.

As outlined in the state's 2015 waiver with the federal government, districts are placed in one of four categories: exemplary, achieving, progressing, or in need of improvement, based on overall student academic achievement and on reductions in the achievement gaps of historically underperforming student subgroups (students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students who are economically disadvantaged, and students who are from specified racial or ethnic groups). Academic achievement is measured by proficiency on state assessments and value-added scores, as well as graduation rates and ACT scores for high school grades.

While the state sets district level targets, districts are responsible for managing school performance within the state guidelines. Students' standardized test scores and graduation rates for certain grade levels determine a school's placement in one of three general school accountability categories: reward, focus, or priority.

See also

- achievement gap
- ACT
- economically disadvantaged students
- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- focus school
- high school graduation rates
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- priority school
- special education
- reward school
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

achievement gap

Achievement gap refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students. The term is often used to refer to the performance gaps between white students and minorities, or students from higher-income and lower-income backgrounds.

Other subgroups for which achievement gaps may be shown include male and female students, students who are learning English and native English speakers, nondisabled students and students with disabilities, and U.S. students and students from other countries.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act focused greater attention on achievement gaps by requiring schools and districts to report test scores and other performance data by subgroups of students, and holding schools and districts accountable for the academic performance targets of student subgroups. The Every Student Succeeds Act, passed in December 2015, which replaces NCLB, continues the focus on achievement gaps in its provisions.

See also

- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- international assessments
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver

Achievement School District (ASD)

The Achievement School District (ASD) was created by Tennessee's First to the Top Act as one of four interventions that the Commissioner of Education may require to turn around the state's lowest performing schools. An organizational unit of the Tennessee Department of Education, the ASD provides oversight for the operation of schools assigned to it or schools which the ASD itself authorizes. Priority schools, those schools with academic achievement levels that place them in the bottom 5 percent in the state, are eligible to be placed in the ASD.

The ASD selects priority schools to place in its jurisdiction based in part on community input and neighborhood advisory council processes. The ASD may directly operate these schools, convert them to public charter

schools, or contract with other nonprofit entities to operate them. Schools remain with the ASD for a minimum of five years before returning back to the original district. The goal of the ASD is to move its schools from the bottom 5 percent to the top 25 percent in student achievement within five years. As of the 2015-16 school year, 29 schools operate in the ASD: 27 in Shelby County and two in Metro Nashville.

See also

- First to the Top Act
- priority school
- Tennessee Department of Education

ACT

The ACT is a college admissions test created by ACT, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides assessment, research, and other services to support college and career readiness. ACT offers several assessments for students to gauge their skills and knowledge in middle school, high school, college, and career. State law requires that students take three exams to assess postsecondary readiness: an exam in 8th grade, an exam in 10th grade, and an exam in 11th grade.

The Tennessee Department of Education has used the ACT series (ACT Explore in 8th grade, ACT Plan in 10th, and the ACT in 11th) to fulfill these requirements. ACT is scheduled to eliminate the Explore and Plan exams in school year 2016-17, and replace them with a new set of exams.

The state requires and provides funding for students to take the ACT one time; students have the option to substitute the SAT in its place. The ACT includes subject level tests in English, Math, Reading, and Science. Students receive scores that range from 1 to 36 on each subject and an overall composite score. The ACT composite score for the class of 2015 in Tennessee was 19.4, out of a possible 36.

See also

- college and career readiness
- SAT
- Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE)

adequate yearly progress (AYP)

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) was, in previous federal law, a measure of how well each public school and school district in the country was progressing toward the goal of all students achieving academic proficiency in reading/language arts and math based on state standardized tests.

Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

The AYP measure was established in the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, as was the goal of 100 percent proficiency by 2014, and failure to meet AYP for two or more consecutive years triggered federally-prescribed interventions to improve school or district operations.

To comply with AYP, schools and districts had to achieve all their annual measurable objectives (AMOs) – their yearly targets for the percentage of students expected:

- to score at or above the proficient level on state math and reading tests, and
- to meet at least one other indicator (for high schools the indicator had to include graduation rates; for other schools a common indicator was attendance rates).

Schools and districts had to achieve AMOs not only for all students in the aggregate, but also for various student subgroups, such as students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students who are economically disadvantaged, and students who are from specified racial or ethnic groups.

Under NCLB waivers

Since 2011, the U.S. Department of Education has offered states waivers of certain NCLB requirements in return for states pursuing certain education reforms, and, as of 2015, the majority of states, including Tennessee, were operating under waivers. States with waivers had to set and measure progress on AMOs for the student subgroups required by NCLB, but no longer had to comply with AYP or face the same prescribed interventions. States could use other accountability measures and set alternative goals to NCLB's goal of 100 percent proficiency for all students.

The passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, which replaces the NCLB Act as well as states' related waivers, may prompt revisions to Tennessee's accountability system.

See also

- accountability
- economically disadvantaged students
- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- high school graduation rates
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- special education

adolescent pregnancy rates

Tennessee state law requires all school districts in counties with a pregnancy rate exceeding 19.5 per 1,000 females, ages 15-17, to create and implement a family life education program. Family life education programs are to be locally developed or districts may adopt the curriculum approved by the State Board of Education.

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH) calculates pregnancy rates by county for several age ranges, including those for females ages 15-17. TDOH publishes updated rates online annually.

See also

- family life education

adult education

Adult education refers to educational services provided to adults (over age 18) without a high school diploma or its equivalent. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development administers federal and state funds to provide adults with the basic skills and knowledge necessary for literacy and to complete a secondary degree. School districts, community colleges, or community-based organizations provide adult education programs in all 95 counties. Programs include Adult Basic Education, high school equivalency test preparation (GED and HiSET), and English for speakers of other languages. Some additional adult education services are also provided and funded by nonprofits, businesses, and other state and local agencies.

See also

- General Education Development (GED) test
- high school equivalency exam
- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)

Advanced Placement (AP) program

The Advanced Placement (AP) program, which is administered by the College Board, provides high school students with rigorous, college-level courses taught by high school teachers in over 30 different subject areas. If students score a 3 or higher on the 5-point AP exams offered at the end of each course, many postsecondary institutions will award students college

credit. The University of Tennessee’s three primary campuses, and all the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities and community colleges, award college credit to students with passing AP exam scores.

In 2013-14, about two-thirds of Tennessee high schools offered at least one AP course, and nearly 37,000 AP exams were administered. The statewide passing rate for that year was 55 percent.

The chart shows College Board AP exams available as of 2014-15. All but a few science and world language courses were offered in at least one district in Tennessee.

Discipline Area	AP Exams
Arts	Art History; Music Theory; Studio Art: Drawing, 2-D Design, and 3-D Design
English	English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition
History & Social Science	Comparative Government and Politics, European History, Human Geography, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, United States Government and Politics, United States History, World History
Math & Computer Science	Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Computer Science A, Statistics
Sciences	Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, Physics C: Mechanics, Physics 1: Algebra-Based, Physics 2: Algebra-Based
World Languages	Language and Culture: Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish; Spanish Literature and Culture; Latin

See also

- College Board

after-school programs

After-school programs are generally K-12 learning and enrichment programs held outside regular school hours with the goal of enhancing academic opportunities for students. The Tennessee Department of Education administers two after-school programs: the federally-funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the Lottery for Education After-school Programs (LEAPs), funded with unclaimed lottery prizes.

The competitive grant programs are available for school districts, community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and other public and private organizations. The programs are required to provide academic enrichment activities targeting low-income and educationally disadvantaged students. In 2014-15, 76 LEAP grantees served 16,982 at-risk students in 49 counties across Tennessee. The 124 21st Century grantees served 30,837 students in 61 counties.

See also

- economically disadvantaged students

alternative schools

In 1984, the General Assembly passed legislation authorizing the establishment of alternative schools for students who have been suspended or expelled from their regular 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.

Alternative schools are operated according to rules established by the State Board of Education (SBOE), and state law requires the SBOE to provide a curriculum for alternative schools to ensure students receive the specialized attention needed to maximize their success. The SBOE defines an alternative school as “a short term intervention program designed to develop academic and behavioral skills for students who have been suspended or expelled from the regular school program.”

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.

See also

- school board
- State Board of Education

American Council on Education (ACE)

The American Council on Education (ACE) is a higher education association that includes the presidents of U.S.-accredited, degree-granting

institutions. Members include over 1,700 two- and four-year colleges, private and public universities, and nonprofit and for-profit entities. As of August 2015, Tennessee members of ACE included 12 private institutions, nine public institutions, and six higher education governing bodies. Primary activities include representation and advocacy on federal higher education issues, leadership development, and policy research and information sharing. In recent years, issue areas for ACE have included Pell grant funding, scientific research, tax funding, access for adult learners, programs for veterans, and internationalization of higher education.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is a union of education professionals that describes itself as championing fairness, democracy, economic opportunity, and high quality public education, healthcare, and public services. AFT is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO and represents 1.6 million members in more than 3,000 local affiliates nationwide. In July 2015, no Tennessee affiliates were listed on the national website.

Membership includes teachers and other school-related personnel in pre-K through high school; higher education faculty and staff; early childhood educators; government employees from the federal, state, and local levels; nurses; and healthcare professionals. Activities include community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining, and political activism.

See also

- National Education Association (NEA)

Aspire Award

The Aspire Award is a lottery-funded, need-based supplement to the HOPE scholarship; a student must be eligible for a HOPE scholarship and have an adjusted gross income that does not exceed \$36,000. The Aspire Award amount is set in the general appropriations act and is \$750 per semester at four-year institutions and \$250 per semester at two-year institutions for fiscal year 2015-16. A student may receive either the Aspire Award or the General Assembly Merit Scholarship, but not both.

See also

- General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS)
- HOPE Scholarship
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

assessment

Assessment is a process used to evaluate student progress in learning and success in achieving educational goals. The use of tests is considered a part of assessment, which may also involve other demonstrations or indicators of student progress, such as portfolios or laboratory assignments.

Assessment may be used in different contexts to refer to large-scale educational assessments, such as state standardized testing programs, or classroom assessments developed and administered by individual teachers.

Formative assessments are generally given frequently throughout a learning term to gauge each student's progress and help teachers plan the instruction that follows based on students' learning needs. Formative assessments can take multiple forms, including a writing assignment, a test, an assigned project or performance, and asking questions. Formative assessments are generally low-stakes tests, meaning they have little, if any, point value for students.

A *summative assessment* is given at the end of a unit (e.g., every six weeks or the end of a school year) to assess students' mastery of a topic after instruction. Examples of summative assessments include a final paper, a midterm exam, and a senior recital. Summative assessments are generally high-stakes tests, meaning they have a high point value for students.

See also

- standardized test
- Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)
- TN Ready

average daily attendance (ADA)

Average daily attendance, or ADA, is the average number of students present at a school during the time it is in session. ADA differs from average daily membership, or ADM, which represents how many students are enrolled in 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. When per-pupil revenues or expenditures are divided by a district's ADA, it results in a higher figure than if divided by a district's ADM. For reporting purposes, the federal government requires districts to calculate per-pupil expenditures based on ADA as opposed to ADM, resulting in a higher per-pupil expenditure figure than districts actually spend.

Tennessee law requires counties to divide any county revenues collected

for general school operations and maintenance among all public school districts in the county on the basis of ADA. If a county issues school bonds and taxes all properties to pay interest on the bonds, then the bond proceeds must be divided among any city or special school districts in the county on the basis of each district's ADA.

See also

- average daily membership (ADM)
- county school district

average daily membership (ADM)

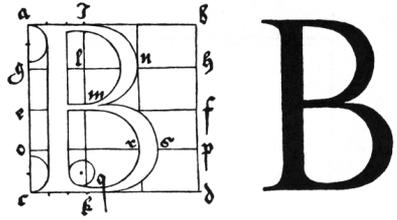
Average daily membership, or ADM, is a measure of student enrollment. ADM represents how many students are enrolled in school and is commonly used for per-pupil funding calculations.

ADM is also the primary driver of funds generated by the state's education funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP). A district's ADM generates funding calculated by the BEP formula for a variety of components, including positions, supplies, equipment, and textbooks. Each school district is responsible for reporting ADM each month from October through June to the Office of Local Finance within the Department of Education, which, in turn, calculates BEP funds for each school district. To determine each district's share of state funding, the BEP funding formula uses a weighted average for months two (12.5 percent), three (17.5 percent), six (35 percent), and seven (35 percent). Because each school district operates under its own calendar, the months are based on 20-day funding months (e.g., funding month two is attendance days 21 to 40). ADM is used to determine the per-pupil funding calculations for charter schools and the Achievement School District.

ADM is different from average daily attendance (ADA), which calculates the average number of students present at school during the time it is in session. 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.

See also

- average daily attendance (ADA)
- Basic Education Program (BEP)



Basic Education Program (BEP)

The Basic Education Program (BEP) is a formula that determines the funding level required for each school system to provide a common, basic level of service for all students. Adopted in 1992, the formula consists of 45 components grouped into three categories: instructional, classroom, and non-classroom. The BEP does not require district budgets or spending to reflect the specific funding levels of each component; however, districts are required to spend instructional category funding on teachers, and classroom category funding on either teachers or other classroom needs. Non-classroom category funding can be spent at the districts' discretion. Thus, the BEP is generally termed a funding formula rather than a spending plan.

Total state funding of the BEP for 2014-15 was \$4.05 billion. The required local share of BEP funding in the same year totaled \$2.1 billion; local funding exceeded the required match, totaling \$3.2 billion.

Calculations using the BEP formula are performed as a two-step process: (1) determination of total funding levels, and (2) division between state and local shares, with adjustments for local jurisdictions' ability to pay.

Part 1 – Determination of Total Funding

Calculations to determine the funding level of each component are based primarily on average daily student enrollment, also known as average daily membership, or ADM. The BEP funding formula has been classified as a unit cost funding model, allocating a set dollar amount per unit. For example, the BEP allocates the pre-determined unit cost of one teaching position for every 25 students in grades 4-6.

Part 2 – Division between State and Local Shares

Each of the three BEP categories is funded with a different state-local split:

- Instructional (salary and benefits unit cost for teaching positions): 70 percent state and 30 percent local
- Classroom (unit costs for textbooks, instructional equipment, etc.): 75 percent state and 25 percent local
- Non-classroom (unit costs for capital outlay, transportation, etc.): 50 percent state and 50 percent local

The state and local shares are calculated on the statewide total funding levels for all districts.

The state's total funding share for each category is allocated among the districts based on the county's ability to pay, known as its fiscal capacity. (A county's fiscal capacity is determined by a 50/50 blend of two formulas, one created by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) and one created by the University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER).)

The application of the resulting fiscal capacity determinations (a process known as equalization) can cause state and local shares of BEP funding to differ from the statewide splits bulleted above. For example, after fiscal capacity is accounted for, one district's instructional funding might be 57 percent state and 43 percent local, while another district's instructional funding might be 85 percent state and 15 percent local. Because fiscal capacity is based on a county's ability to generate local education revenue, all school districts within a county, including municipal and special school districts, are assigned the same fiscal capacity.

The local BEP share calculated is the minimum required funding a local jurisdiction must pay in order to receive the state BEP share. This is commonly referred to as the local match. Most Tennessee jurisdictions fund their school districts at levels that exceed the required local match.

BEP 2.0

Revisions made to the BEP in 2007 are generally referred to as BEP 2.0. Some provisions of BEP 2.0 remain at the halfway point of implementation, as of fall 2015. Continued implementation of certain provisions would result in higher costs for the state and more funding for school districts; others would have no impact on the state but would redistribute existing dollars among districts. A 2014 estimate for full implementation of BEP 2.0 was an additional \$134 million.

See also

- average daily membership (ADM)
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)
- fiscal capacity
- local match
- school district (or LEA)
- Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR)

BEP Review Committee

State law requires the State Board of Education to establish a review committee for the Tennessee K-12 education funding formula, the **Basic Education Program (BEP)**. The committee is directed to meet at least four times a year and regularly review the BEP components. The committee is to provide an annual report on or before November 1 of each year to the Governor, the State Board of Education (SBOE), and the education committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The report is to include recommendations on needed revisions, additions, and deletions to the formula, as well as an analysis of instructional salary disparity among school districts, including an analysis of disparity in benefits and other compensation among districts.

As directed by state law, the members of the **BEP Review Committee** are:

- the Executive Director of the State Board of Education,
- the Commissioner of Education,
- the Commissioner of Finance and Administration,
- the Comptroller of the Treasury,
- the Director of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations,
- the chairs of the standing committees on education of the Senate and House of Representatives,
- the Director of the Office of Legislative Budget Analysis, and
- at least one member from each of the following groups: teachers, school boards, directors of schools, county governments, municipal governments that operate school districts, and district finance directors (one each selected from urban, suburban, and rural school systems).

Any changes recommended by the **BEP Review Committee** must be approved by the Commissioner of Education and Commissioner of Finance and Administration before being submitted to the State Board of Education. Changes approved by the SBOE may then be introduced as legislation in the General Assembly for passage into law.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)

blended learning

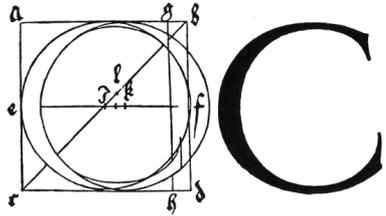
Although there is no commonly used definition for blended learning, in general it refers to the combination (or “blend”) of face-to-face classroom instruction with online delivery of content and instruction. Students spend some amount of time during a course, for example, learning in a traditional classroom with a teacher and also spend some amount of time learning course material online.

block schedule

A block schedule, which may be used in middle and high schools, consists of three or four longer periods of daily instruction compared to the six-, seven-, or eight-period schedule in a traditional school day.

Common forms of block scheduling include:

- “4x4” semester plan - where students meet for four 90-minute blocks every day over four quarters
- alternate day schedule - where students and teachers meet every other day for extended time periods rather than meeting every day for shorter periods
- trimester plan - where students take two or three courses every 60 days to earn six to nine credits per year.



capital outlay

Capital outlay refers to expenditures for the acquisition of, or additions to, major fixed assets such as land or buildings. Capital outlay also includes the repayment of debt related to such expenditures.

Capital outlay is included in the state's education funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP), as a non-classroom component. The formula takes into account a certain cost per square foot, per student, at the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. The formula also adjusts for equipment costs, architects' fees, debt retirement, and a building lifespan of 40 years. A district's average daily membership (ADM) is then applied to the formula to determine the number of square feet per school system to determine the total amount of state funding to be provided. As a non-classroom component of the BEP, capital outlay is funded at the statewide level based on a 50/50 split between the state and local governments. Each individual district's local match may be higher or lower than 50 percent, however, depending on its fiscal capacity to raise local funds.

See also

- average daily membership (ADM)
- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- local match

career academy

A career academy is a program within a high school that is linked to a specific career. Career academies link students with peers, teachers, and community partners in a structured environment that encourages academic success. Career academies are one type of small learning community (SLC), and federal discretionary grants have been awarded to school districts through the No Child Left Behind SLC program to

support career academies in large public high schools.

Examples of career academies in Tennessee high schools include the Academy of International Business and Communication and the Academy of Aviation and Transportation, both in Metro Nashville Public Schools.

See also

- small learning community

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Career and Technical Education (CTE), also referred to as vocational education, comprises programs of sequenced courses aligned with industry needs that provide students with skills and knowledge in specific career areas.

Tennessee's career and technical education programs of study are aligned with the following 16 nationally recognized career clusters:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
- Business Management and Administration
- Education and Training
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Health Sciences
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

Four of the 16 clusters accounted for 55 percent of student CTE enrollment in 2013-14: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Business Management and Administration; Health Sciences; and Human Services. In 2013-14, approximately 187,000 high school students in Tennessee were enrolled in a CTE course; about 19 percent of those students were considered “concentrators,” earning three or more credits in one career cluster.

CTE is not exclusive to high schools and may be offered in other settings, including career academies, regional career and technical centers, Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs), and community colleges. Students may also participate in CTE through dual enrollment or dual credit programs.

See also

- career academy
- community college
- dual credit and dual enrollment
- Student Industry Certification (SIC)
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)

Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)

The Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) is housed at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and conducts research on national and state economic trends for a variety of organizations, including state agencies.

In education, CBER is known for its formula to determine the fiscal capacity of counties, which the Tennessee Department of Education uses (along with the formula created by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations) to set the state and local funding shares of each district’s Basic Education Program funding.

CBER also prepares the annual economic report to the Governor, maintains the econometric model that provides fiscal forecasts of the state’s economy, serves as the State Data Center for U.S. Census Bureau data, and provides other analysis for state agencies.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- fiscal capacity
- Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR)

chairs of excellence

Chairs of excellence are endowed college or university faculty positions to attract teachers of regional or national prominence. Tennessee's Chairs of Excellence (COE) Trust has funded 99 chairs since its creation in 1985 by the General Assembly; the state has appropriated \$44.4 million since the trust's creation. Including matching funds and investment income, expenditures for the chairs as of June 30, 2015, have totaled more than \$176 million.

The COE Trust is governed by a board of trustees and administered by the Department of Treasury.

charter school

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent nonprofit 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 (SBOE). The majority of charters in Tennessee are authorized by local boards of education.

As of the 2015-16 school year, 76 charter schools operate in four Tennessee school districts: Hamilton County Schools (3), Knox County Schools (1), Metro Nashville Public Schools (27), and Shelby County Schools (45). In addition, there are 29 schools within the ASD.

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. A public charter school must be closed if the Tennessee Department of Education has designated it as a priority school, with academic achievement in the bottom 5 percent in the state, on both the 2015 and 2017 priority school lists. A charter school may be closed if it demonstrates poor academic performance, violates the charter agreement, or fails to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

Tennessee law allows for the creation of new charter schools and the conversion of traditional public schools into charter schools. State law prohibits virtual charter schools and the management or operation of charter schools by for-profit corporations.

Eligibility to attend a charter school

If a charter school is authorized by a district, any student who resides within the district may attend the charter school. If applications to the charter school exceed the number of seats available, a lottery shall determine which students attend. Charter schools may also enroll students from other school districts in accordance with their district's out-of-district enrollment policy.

If an existing public school is converted to a charter school, the conversion charter school serves the students zoned to attend the school prior to conversion, but parents have the option to enroll their child in another public school without penalty.

Charter schools in the ASD must accept students who are either zoned to attend or enrolled in a school that is eligible to be placed in the ASD. If capacity remains after admitting all students within the zone, the children of a teacher, staff member, sponsor, or member of the governing body, as well as students who failed to test proficient on the statewide assessment or who are eligible for free or reduced price meals, may enroll in the ASD school. However, no school's enrollment of such students can exceed 25 percent of the school's total enrollment.

Funding for charter schools

State law requires that local boards of education allocate to charter schools an amount equal to the school district's per-student state and local funding, including funds that exceed the BEP local match requirement (with the exception of local funds designated for debt obligations and associated debt service). Charter schools in the ASD receive the same funding as charter schools authorized by the local board of education (i.e., an ASD charter school in Memphis receives the same per-student allocation as a charter school authorized by Shelby County Schools). Charter schools are entitled to all applicable federal dollars, including Title I and other Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funds.

See also

- Achievement School District (ASD)
- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- capital outlay
- charter school authorizer
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)
- local match
- priority school
- school board
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act

charter school authorizer

A charter school authorizer is the entity designated by law as responsible for oversight of a charter school. Authorizers are responsible for approving or denying applications to open a charter school; drafting and negotiating charter agreements and any fee for service agreements; overseeing the academic, organizational, and financial health of the schools; and renewing contracts with successful charters while closing those that fail to meet academic and financial expectations.

In Tennessee, local boards of education, the Achievement School District (ASD), and the State Board of Education (SBOE) may authorize charter schools. The majority of charter schools are authorized by local boards of education.

A local board of education may authorize any qualified charter school applicant that seeks to be located within the boundaries of the school district.

The ASD may authorize charter schools within the jurisdiction of an existing school district. The ASD may either recruit charter operators to convert an existing traditional public school that has been identified as a priority school or open a new charter school. All ASD-authorized charter schools must serve students zoned to attend or enrolled in schools that are eligible to be placed in the ASD. The ASD serves as authorizer of the charter school for the duration of the charter agreement, which is for a period of 10 years. The charter school may return to school district control at the end of the 10-year charter contract if specific academic goals have been met.

The SBOE hears appeals from charter school applicants which have been denied by local boards of education. On review, the SBOE may uphold or overturn the district decision to deny the charter application. Should the SBOE overturn the district denial, the SBOE may direct the school district to approve the application, in which case the school district must act as authorizer to the charter school applicant. Alternatively, the SBOE will serve as the authorizer in cases where it rules in favor of a charter school applicant seeking to open a school in a district with at least one priority school. The SBOE's decision is final. The SBOE may also act as an authorizer if a school district seeks to sponsor a charter school.

See also

- Achievement School District (ASD)
- charter school

- priority school
- school board
- State Board of Education

civic education

Civic education refers to the study of government and citizenship with the aim of increasing students’ understanding of the principles, values, institutions, and history of constitutional democracy.

The Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation in 2012 requiring that school districts assess students in civics at least once in grades 4 through 8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12. The civics assessments, which began in the 2012-13 school year, differ from other state-mandated assessments in two ways: (1) they are not standardized tests developed by vendors according to state-determined specifications, but instead are developed and implemented by school districts, and (2) they are required to be project-based.

class size

Tennessee imposes class size restrictions for all grade levels and for Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes, as set out in state law and State Board of Education rule. The average size of any grade level unit (for example, grades K-3) in a school building may not exceed the required average, though any individual class in the unit may exceed the average. No class may exceed the maximum size.

Grade Level	Average	Maximum Class Size
K-3	20	25
4-6	25	30
7-12	30	35
Career and Technical Education	20	25

The average class sizes for grades K-3, 4-6, and 7-9 are used in the Basic Education Program (BEP) funding formula to determine the number of regular education teachers that are funded per district.

The General Assembly established class size limits following the Tennessee Project STAR study undertaken in 1985, which concluded that smaller class sizes in the early grades had positive and lasting effects on student learning.

In certain cases, state law permits an individual virtual school to increase the enrollment in virtual classes by up to 25 percent over the maximum class size limits in the table above. To exceed the class size limits, the virtual school must have achieved a school effect score (TVAAS) of 3 or higher as reported by the Tennessee Department of Education in the prior year.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)
- virtual school

collaborative conferencing

Collaborative conferencing is a process used by local school boards and teachers to establish agreements about employment conditions. A 2011 Tennessee law requiring collaborative conferencing replaced the former provisions on collective bargaining. The current law specifies issues that can be addressed in conferences, allows multiple organizations to represent teachers, prescribes the final result of conferencing to be memoranda of understanding that are binding for up to three years, and allows school boards to set policy on any conferencing issues for which agreements have not been reached.

The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS), with representatives of school leaders and administrators and professional employee organizations, was required by law to develop a training program on the principles of collaborative conferencing to be implemented within each local school district.

See also

- Professional Educators of Tennessee (PET)
- Tennessee Education Association (TEA)
- Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS)

college and career readiness

College and career readiness generally refers to whether students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills needed for success in first-year college courses or entry-level work. Tennessee measures achievement of college and career readiness using specific scores on college entrance exams or other college placement tests, primarily ACT testing products. Tennessee requires all public high school juniors to take the ACT, although students have the option to substitute the SAT.

See also

- ACT
- SAT

College Board

The College Board is a nonprofit organization founded in 1900 to expand access to higher education. The College Board administers the Advanced Placement (AP) program and the SAT college admission exam, as well as other SAT-related exams.

See also

- Advanced Placement (AP) program
- SAT

community college

Community colleges are two-year public schools that provide affordable postsecondary education leading to associate degrees, and may also provide a pathway to a four-year degree at other postsecondary institutions. Community colleges generally serve their surrounding geographical areas. The Tennessee Board of Regents oversees the 13 community colleges in Tennessee, which offer Associate of Arts (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), and Associate of Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) degrees in a range of degree programs.

See also

- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)

Community College Reconnect Grant

The Community College Reconnect Grant, passed by the General Assembly in 2015, creates a grant program for adults who have completed some college credit, but have not yet attained a degree. The grant provides eligible students with a last-dollar scholarship, meaning that a student would use Pell and other grant aid before Community College Reconnect funds are applied for the tuition and mandatory fees at a public two-year institution. The Community College Reconnect Grant is a pilot program to be awarded during the 2016-17 academic year on a first-come, first-served basis and is not to exceed \$1.5 million throughout the life of the program. The grant pilot program is administered by the Tennessee

Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC).

Grant eligibility is limited to individuals who:

- have earned a minimum of 30 credit hours toward an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree,
- have not been enrolled or attended a postsecondary institution in the past 24 months,
- are independent for tax-filing purposes,
- have an adjusted gross income that does not exceed \$36,000, and
- meet other criteria specified in state law.

Students receiving the grant are expected to enroll in classes leading to their A.A.S., maintain a 2.0 GPA, maintain continuous enrollment, reapply as specified, and enroll in at least nine hours per semester.

See also

- community college
- Drive to 55
- Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)

community school

A community school is a traditional K-12 school that actively partners with community organizations to provide enrichment and additional life skill opportunities for students, parents, and other community members. Established in 2014, the Tennessee Community Schools Act allows a traditional school to partner with community organizations to coordinate resources and provide students and community residents with the following services:

- primary medical and dental care;
- mental health prevention and treatment;
- academic-enrichment activities designed to promote a student's cognitive development and provide opportunities to practice and apply academic skills;
- programs designed to increase school attendance, including reducing early chronic absenteeism rates;
- youth development programs designed to promote young people's social, emotional, physical, and moral development, including arts, sports, physical fitness, youth leadership, community service, and service-learning opportunities; and

- early childhood education, including voluntary pre-K, Head Start, and Early Head Start programs.

See also

- service learning

competency-based learning

Competency-based learning is an approach to education that allows students to learn at their own pace and awards credit for evidence of proficiency, not for the amount of time students spend in a classroom.

In some contexts, the term is synonymous with “proficiency based learning,” which the Education Commission of the States defines as

an option for students to demonstrate mastery of key knowledge and skills in a given course in lieu of completing seat time.

Competency-based learning may also be referred to as “mastery-based learning.”

Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA)

The Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) of 2010 focuses on increasing college completion at Tennessee’s public higher education institutions. The CCTA requires the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to:

- develop a statewide master plan that seeks to increase the education attainment levels of Tennesseans, recognize higher education institutions’ different missions, and address the economic, workforce, and research needs of the state,
- develop a funding formula that distributes public funds to colleges and universities based on their success in achieving higher education outcomes such as student retention, timely progress toward degree completion, degree production, and end of term enrollment, and
- collaborate in the development of Tennessee Transfer Pathways, an initiative designed to ease the path to a four-year degree for community college students.

The CCTA also directs the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) to transition its community college system from independently managed institutions to a unified system and prohibits the four-year universities of the TBR and the University of Tennessee system from offering remedial or developmental education courses.

See also

- higher education funding: outcomes-based funding formula
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)
- Tennessee Transfer Pathways (TTP)
- University of Tennessee (UT)

coordinated school health

Coordinated school health programs support the connection among good health practices, academic achievement, and lifetime wellness.

Coordinated school health initiatives consist of eight core components:

- health education
- health services
- nutrition
- physical education
- healthy school environment
- school counseling, psychological, and social services
- student, family, and community involvement
- school staff wellness

Tennessee's coordinated school health program began as a pilot program in 2000, before expanding to all 95 counties in 2006. Tennessee is unique in the nation in requiring and funding a coordinated school health initiative in all school districts.

See also

- physical education and physical activity

cost differential factor (CDF)

The cost differential factor (CDF) is used to adjust salary calculations in the state's education funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP), for school districts in counties where the cost of living is greater

than the statewide average. Counties with above-average wages receive an increase in funding, and counties with average or below-average wages do not receive an increase.

BEP 2.0, passed in 2007, eliminated CDF from the funding formula. Because BEP 2.0 has not been fully phased in, counties receiving an adjustment for CDF currently receive 50 percent of the calculated CDF. As of 2015, 16 districts receive CDF funding each year.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- fiscal capacity

county school district

State law assigns counties the responsibility for operating public school districts, and each of the state's 95 counties has the ultimate responsibility for educating all students at all grade levels, kindergarten through grade 12. County school districts do not have the option to cease or transfer school operations as do the municipal and special school districts. The two exceptions to the law requiring county school systems are when:

- all students within the county are served by city or special districts, or
- a combination of counties operates a multi-county system.

Tennessee has 93 county school districts. Gibson County does not operate a district since all students are served through other districts (municipal and special). Carroll County's district does not operate a K-12 program; it provides transportation, vocational education, and special education services to the five special school districts within Carroll County. No multi-county systems have been established.

County boundaries (with the exception of areas carved out for any municipal or special districts) geographically define which students are eligible for county school district enrollment and which voters are eligible to elect county school boards.

Counties must apportion any county revenues collected for general school operations and maintenance among all the public school districts within the county on the basis of average daily attendance. Similarly, if a county issues school bonds and taxes all county properties to pay interest on the bonds, then the bond proceeds must be divided among any city or special school districts in the county on the basis of each district's average daily attendance.

See also

- average daily attendance (ADA)
- municipal school district
- public school
- school district (or LEA)
- special school district

credit recovery

Credit recovery is a strategy that permits high school students who have failed courses to recover course credits, allowing them to graduate. Successfully providing credit recovery options for students may also help schools, districts, and states improve their graduation rates.

Schools may provide credit recovery in a variety of settings, including traditional classrooms and online or a combination of the two, and at various times, including before, during, and after school, as well as during the summer months. Students may repeat entire courses or credit recovery may be designed to target student deficiencies in specific concepts. The latter approach is more likely to occur in an online setting.

Most Tennessee districts with high schools provide a credit recovery option for students in the high school grades. As of October 2015, the state does not have an official policy regarding how districts should implement credit recovery.

curriculum

Curriculum is instructional programming designed to help students reach learning outcomes set out in academic standards. Each local school district uses the academic standards approved by the Tennessee State Board of Education as the basis for developing curriculum – the subject matter that teachers and students cover in class.

See also

- academic standards

cut scores

As defined by the Educational Testing Service, a nonprofit company that develops, administers, and scores a variety of tests used in K-12 and postsecondary education,

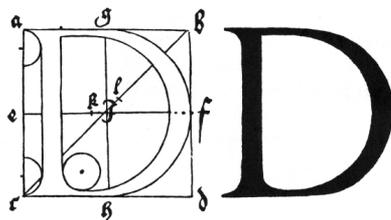
Cut scores are selected points on the score scale of a test. The

points are used to determine whether a particular test score is sufficient for some purpose. For example, student performance on a test may be classified into one of several categories such as basic, proficient, or advanced on the basis of cut scores.

The setting of cut scores on widely used tests in educational contexts requires the involvement of policymakers, educators, measurement professionals, and others in a multi-stage, judgmental process. Cut scores should be based on a generally accepted methodology.

See also

- standardized test



Department of Children's Services education services

Most children in the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) attend public schools in the communities where they reside. For children in state custody who are placed in one of the state's three Youth Development Centers (YDCs), state law authorizes DCS to serve as a school district. The Commissioner of DCS serves as the board of education and director of schools for the DCS district. DCS receives state funding through the Basic Education Program (BEP), using the same formula as for other school districts.

The DCS Education Division central office is primarily responsible for operating the DCS school district. The division works with the YDC schools to ensure compliance with Tennessee State Board of Education rules and regulations related to state mandated testing, special education/Section 504 law, teacher licensure, textbook services, curriculum implementation, and graduation standards. In addition, the central office education staff is responsible for providing technical assistance and general oversight to residential treatment facilities that have in-house schools, and for supervising the daily activities of the regional Education Specialists throughout the state.

DCS employs an Education Specialist in each of the department's 12 regions. Education Specialists advocate for students in state custody who attend both public schools and provider agencies that have in-house schools throughout the state. Specialists meet with school staff and attend child and family team meetings and Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings to assist with issues regarding school enrollment, school records, discipline, and the provision of special education and related services. They also provide educational training for resource parents, family service workers, and other DCS staff.

See also

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- special education
- Youth Development Center (YDC)

distance education

Distance education refers to academic programs that allow students who are not physically present in the classroom to attend classes online, either synchronously (in real time), or asynchronously (at any time).

Many of Tennessee's public and private higher education institutions offer distance education, either as individual courses or as full online degree programs. Some higher education programs allow students to complete their degree coursework entirely online, although students may be required to physically attend an orientation session or meetings on campus at some point during the program. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) requires any institution that offers distance education programming to Tennessee students to maintain school authorization and establish a physical presence in the state.

The State Board of Education has policies on distance learning and e-learning for K-12 students in Tennessee public schools. Districts may offer online programming for students with health-related issues, for credit recovery, for alternative learning settings, and for other reasons.

See also

- virtual school

Drive to 55

Drive to 55 is a statewide initiative, begun in 2013, to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential to 55 percent by 2025. Approximately 37.8 percent of Tennesseans, ages 25-64, had a postsecondary credential in 2013, according to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Under this initiative are several programs designed to improve access to postsecondary education and increase degree completion, such as the Tennessee Promise, Tennessee Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect, and Tennessee Community College Reconnect.

See also

- Community College Reconnect Grant

- Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)
- Tennessee Promise
- Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship

dropout rates

See high school dropout rates.

dual credit and dual enrollment

Dual credit and dual enrollment courses are similar in that both can result in high school students earning postsecondary credits. They are different in that dual credit courses are *high school* courses and dual enrollment courses are *postsecondary* courses.

Tennessee has two types of dual credit courses: statewide and local.

Statewide dual credit courses are high school courses that are aligned to postsecondary standards. Students can earn credit that can be applied to any Tennessee public postsecondary institution. High school and postsecondary faculty work together to develop the learning objectives and a challenge exam for each course, which are tied to current postsecondary expectations. The Consortium for Cooperative Innovative Education – comprised of the chief executives or their designees of the Tennessee Board of Regents, the Tennessee Department of Education, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the State Board of Education, and the University of Tennessee – must approve all statewide dual credit courses before they can be offered as a part of the state’s current pilot program, created by the General Assembly in 2012.

A local dual credit course is provided through a partnership with an individual postsecondary institution. High school students earn credit through an assessment that is developed and/or approved specifically for credit at that institution.

Dual enrollment courses are postsecondary courses. A high school student is enrolled at the postsecondary institution and earns postsecondary credit after successfully completing a course. High school credit is awarded based on local policy. Dual enrollment courses may be taught at the postsecondary campus, the high school, or online.

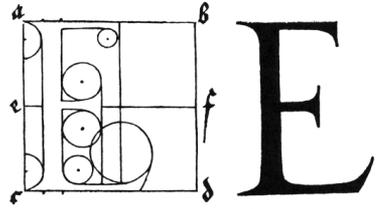
Dual enrollment courses are taught by postsecondary faculty or

credentialed adjunct faculty, who may also be employed as high school teachers. Dual enrollment instructors must meet postsecondary requirements, but do not have to meet specific Tennessee teacher licensure or endorsement requirements.

The dual enrollment grant is one of the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships, and it provides grant funding for dual enrollment tuition and fees. The grant awards up to \$300 per semester. A student is eligible for an additional course per semester (award amount of \$600) if he or she is also eligible for the HOPE scholarship, though students who receive more than four dual enrollment grants over their time in high school will have the additional amount reduced from their HOPE Scholarship awards.

See also

- HOPE Scholarship
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)



economically disadvantaged students

Economically disadvantaged students are identified in different contexts for multiple purposes. Economically disadvantaged students may have financial needs (addressed by the Free and Reduced Price Meals program, for example) and academic needs (for example, the No Child Left Behind Act required student achievement data to be reported by subgroups of students and held schools and districts accountable for the academic performance of student subgroups, including those identified as economically disadvantaged).

Historically, the most common measure used to classify K-12 students as economically disadvantaged has been eligibility for the National School Lunch Program. Students from families with an annual income at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for free meals; reduced-price meals are provided to students from families with incomes above 130 percent but no more than 185 percent of the poverty level. In 2014-15, the way some Tennessee schools and school districts collected information about their economically disadvantaged students changed after the implementation of an optional universal meal plan called Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) under the National School Lunch Program. Free meals are provided to all students, regardless of income status, under the CEP. Students in these schools and districts are no longer required to submit household income eligibility applications, which has implications for school accountability and funding purposes.

Beginning in 2015-16, the Tennessee Department of Education will define economically disadvantaged students for accountability purposes as those children who are directly identified as receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (or food stamps), 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 others who may be certified by state or local officials. This group of students is commonly referred to as “directly certified.”

A large portion of federal education funding is directed to local school districts through Title I grants to help provide services for economically disadvantaged children, primarily those from low-income families. All school districts in Tennessee receive some Title I funding. State funding through the Basic Education Program (BEP) is based on a broader definition of disadvantage (called at-risk) that also includes students classified as eligible to receive Free and Reduced Price Meals or eligible for CEP, as well as pre-K economically disadvantaged students. The BEP generated \$519.38 per at-risk student in fiscal year 2014.

See also

- accountability
- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- Free and Reduced Price Meals (FRPM)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Education Commission of the States (ECS)

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) was created by states in 1965. ECS tracks state policy trends, summarizes and explains academic research, provides nonpartisan advice, and creates opportunities for state leaders to learn from each other. The Commission’s work encompasses all education levels, from pre-K through higher education. ECS is funded mostly from the states it serves. Each state or territory is represented by seven Commissioners who are selected through a process specified in their statutes. Commissioners serve on various committees, which guide ECS’s policy directions, oversee the budget and investments, and plan an annual meeting.

ECS maintains a searchable database of state education laws from 1994 to the present, as well as 50-state databases on specific education issues, such as kindergarten, remedial education, and dual enrollment.

See also

- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

education savings account (ESA)

At the K-12 level, an education savings account (ESA) typically refers to a type of school choice program through which parents may remove a child from public schools and receive public funds deposited into a government-authorized savings account to be used on approved educational expenses. Such expenses might include private school tuition and fees, online learning programs, private tutoring, educational therapies, and certain higher education expenses. In 2015, Tennessee created an education savings accounts program (known as Individualized Education Accounts) for students with disabilities.

At the postsecondary level, an ESA typically refers to programs that allow families to save for college expenses through federally authorized, tax free plans operated by a state or educational institution. These are sometimes referred to as 529 plans, after the relevant section of Internal Revenue Service law. Earnings in these accounts are not taxable if used for qualified education-related purposes. The Tennessee Department of Treasury operates Tennessee's College Savings 529 program.

See also

- Individualized Education Account (IEA)
- special education
- vouchers

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) is a worldwide, nonprofit educational research and assessment organization founded in 1947. ETS administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually. ETS tests used in Tennessee include:

- HiSET, a high school equivalency test,
- GRE, a professional and graduate school admissions test,
- Praxis Series educator licensure tests, and
- TOEFL, an English language test.

ETS also conducts educational research, analysis, and policy studies,

and develops customized services and products for teacher certification, English language learning, and elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

See also

- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)
- Praxis

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) is a federal law primarily aimed at helping states pay for the education of disadvantaged children. The act initiated a greater federal role in education, and provided money to states to distribute to school districts through basic and special incentive grants “to contribute particularly to meeting the special needs of educationally deprived children.”

Title I, which targets grant funds at the lowest-achieving students in high poverty schools, is the most well-known and largest program under the ESEA.

The ESEA has been reauthorized several times since its enactment, including in 1974, 1978, 1981, 1994, and 2001, when it was signed into law as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Over time, the ESEA has been revised to address the needs of specific at-risk groups, including English language learners, homeless students, and Native American students.

In December 2015, Congress passed and the President signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the newest iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).

See also

- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- homeless students
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act

End of Course (EOC) exams

End of Course (EOC) exams are associated with a specific academic

course and are typically given at the high school level. Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the state’s new Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) testing program, TN Ready, will expand the number of EOC exams from seven to 12.

- Algebra I
- Algebra II
- Biology
- Chemistry
- English I
- English II
- English III
- Geometry
- Integrated Math I
- Integrated Math II
- Integrated Math III
- U.S. History

State Board of Education policy states that “only students who are enrolled in a course with an associated end-of-course examination shall take the end-of-course examination.” EOCs count for 25 percent of the second semester grade. Students are not required to pass any EOCs to graduate from high school.

See also

- standardized test
- Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)
- TN Ready

English Learner students

According to federal law, an English Learner student is one “whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the challenging state academic standards, the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate fully in society.”

There are a variety of terms used to refer to these students, including, but not limited to, English Learners (EL), English Language Learners

(ELL), Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, or English as a Second Language (ESL) students. These terms are often used interchangeably in a general sense, but some school districts and states may define the terms differently for distinct classifications of students. The Tennessee Department of Education generally uses the term English Learner.

In the 2014-15 school year, according to the State Report Card, Tennessee school districts served 45,739 EL students, about 4.6 percent of the state's total student population. According to the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee students speak about 140 different languages.

Under the federal Title III formula grant program of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the U.S. Department of Education distributes funding by formula to states, which then make subgrants to school districts based on the number of EL students enrolled and on significant increases in the number of immigrant students. For fiscal year 2014, Tennessee received \$5,273,464 under Title III out of a total of \$723,400,000 allocated to all states.

Under Title I of ESSA, states must have English language proficiency standards that specify what students who are new to English should know and be able to do on their way to becoming fluent in English, as well as assessments aligned to those standards, which assess EL students annually in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Tennessee adopted the WIDA English Language Development standards in 2013. The WIDA Consortium is a nonprofit cooperative group housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

In 1982, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plyler v. Doe* that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states from denying a free public education to undocumented immigrant children, regardless of their immigration status.

See also

- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act

E-rate program

E-rate is a federal program that provides discounts of up to 90 percent to help eligible public and nonprofit K-12 schools and libraries obtain affordable telecommunications services and Internet access. Schools, school districts, and libraries, individually or as a consortium, must conduct a competitive bidding process for services and may then apply for the E-rate discount. The level of funding support and discounts depend on the level of poverty and the urban/rural status of the population served.

E-rate is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company, an independent, not-for-profit corporation, which is under the oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.

Between 1998 and 2014, eligible Tennessee schools, libraries, and consortia received an average of \$53 million each year through the E-rate program.

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law December 2015, is the most recent version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the previous version of the 1965 education law, and is deemed in effect for the next four years. ESSA's overall framework is similar to NCLB, and the new law leaves many of the old provisions in place. States are still required to test students in reading and math each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. States must also continue reporting performance for students as a whole and specific subgroups of students (i.e., economically disadvantaged children and English language learners, among others). Additionally, states must maintain or revise their academic standards and systems to measure academic progress.

While many of NCLB's original elements remain, ESSA's legislative intent was to provide state and local governments with more control over education policy. State NCLB waivers, including Tennessee's, will become void and no longer have legal effect on or after August 1, 2016. Several of the requirements that prompted states to apply for waivers have been written out of the new law. For example, ESSA does not mandate 100 percent student proficiency by a certain date, as did NCLB. Furthermore, while states must intervene in low-performing schools, they are no longer required to follow federally prescribed turnaround models.

Other changes in NCLB law and many states' waiver provisions include:

- more flexible requirements regarding alternate academic standards and assessments for special education students;
- at least one additional indicator used to measure school performance, such as student engagement or school climate, although academic factors must have "much greater weight";
- consolidation of funding for many individual programs - including physical education, Advanced Placement classes, and school counseling - into a \$1.6 billion block grant; and

- removal of federal requirements to include student performance as a factor in teacher evaluations.

See also

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act

expulsion

Tennessee state law and State Board of Education rule define expulsion as

removal from attendance for more than ten (10) consecutive days or more than fifteen (15) days in a month of school attendance. Multiple suspensions that occur consecutively shall constitute expulsion. The school district shall not be eligible to receive funding for an expelled student.

See also

- suspension
- zero tolerance

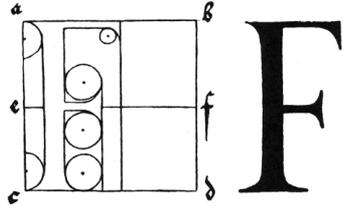
extended learning time

Extended learning time (ELT) in schools, either through more hours in the day or more days in the week or year, is one of many reforms designed to improve student achievement in low-performing schools, especially those in urban, disadvantaged neighborhoods. The number of hours schools add when implementing extended learning time can vary significantly, ranging from 90 hours per year (30 minutes added per day) to more than 320 hours per year (two hours added to most days and five days more per year).

ELT is one of several required strategies for low-performing schools that accept federal School Improvement Grants, though the U.S. Department of Education does not require that schools add a specific number of hours to comply with federal grant conditions. ELT is also a common practice in many charter schools.

See also

- School Improvement Grant (SIG)



Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records, including:

- the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school; and
- the right to request that a school correct records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading, and the right to a hearing and to place a written statement within the record if the school disagrees with the parents.

These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent (or eligible student) in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- school officials with legitimate educational interest;
- other schools to which a student is transferring;
- specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

- organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- accrediting organizations;
- to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow them a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

family life education

Tennessee law defines family life education as an abstinence-centered sex education program that builds a foundation of knowledge and skills relating to character development, human development, decision-making, abstinence, contraception, and disease prevention. Among the requirements, the curriculum must be abstinence-based, provide factually and medically accurate information, and educate students on topics such as the age of consent, puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and healthy relationships. The curriculum shall not encourage students to experiment with sexual activity or provide or distribute materials on school grounds that condone, encourage, or promote sexual activity among unmarried students.

The law requires all school districts in counties with a pregnancy rate exceeding 19.5 per 1,000 females, ages 15-17, to create and implement a family life education program. Family life education programs are to be locally developed or districts may adopt the curriculum approved by the State Board of Education. Under current law, districts must provide the instruction when they exceed the 19.5 rate, based on data maintained by the Department of Health, State Center for Health Statistics.

See also

- adolescent pregnancy rates
- coordinated school health

First to the Top Act

The General Assembly passed the Tennessee First to the Top Act in January 2010, as part of the process to become eligible for the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top (RTTT) competitive grant for K-12 education. Tennessee was successful, receiving one of the first two grants awarded in 2010, totaling \$500,741,220 for the four-year grant period. The act included provisions that laid the foundation for the reforms described in the state's application for RTTT.

Among the act's provisions:

- the creation of the Achievement School District, an organizational unit of the Tennessee Department of Education that may take over priority schools, defined as those performing in the bottom 5 percent academically in the state,
- allowing TVAAS data and teacher evaluation scores to be factored into tenure decisions,
- creating a new teacher and principal evaluation system, with the requirement that 50 percent of the evaluation criteria be based on student achievement data,
- requiring teachers and principals to be evaluated annually, and
- allowing local school districts to create their own pay schedules for teachers and principals, subject to state approval.

Additional reforms in Tennessee's application for RTTT included the creation and adoption of:

- new academic standards and assessments,
- a data dashboard to assist teachers with their instruction,
- school turnaround procedures, including interventions for schools classified as priority and focus based on academic performance on state achievement tests, and
- the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network to promote and expand the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

See also

- academic standards
- Achievement School District (ASD)
- focus school
- priority school

- Race to the Top (RTTT)
- reward school
- STEM
- teacher evaluation
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

fiscal capacity

Fiscal capacity is a statistical estimate of a county’s relative ability to raise revenue. When applied to the Basic Education Program (BEP), the state’s K-12 education funding formula, fiscal capacity estimates result in the state directing a higher proportion of state funds to districts with less ability to raise local revenue, a process known as equalization.

Under the BEP, the state funds 70 percent of instructional components, 75 percent of classroom components, and 50 percent of non-classroom components on a statewide basis. The level of state funding for individual districts varies considerably, however. For example, a district with higher fiscal capacity has been determined through the BEP formula to possess a greater ability to raise revenue through local sources and may receive state funds of 50 percent for classroom components, while a district with lower fiscal capacity has been determined through the BEP formula to possess less ability to raise local revenues, and as a result may receive state funds of 75 percent for the same classroom components.

Pending full implementation of BEP 2.0, the fiscal capacity of each county is determined through a 50/50 blend of two indices, one created by the University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and one created by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR). The CBER model determines a county’s capacity to raise local revenues for education from its property and sales tax base. The TACIR model evaluates factors such as the per-pupil own-source revenue (i.e., revenue raised directly by local governments), per-pupil equalized property assessment, per-pupil taxable sales, per-capita income, tax burden, and service burden of the county.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)
- cost differential factor (CDF)
- Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR)

fiscal year

In general, a fiscal year is an official 12-month accounting period. In Tennessee, the fiscal year for state and local governments is July 1 through June 30. The federal fiscal year is October 1 through September 30.

focus school

Under Tennessee’s education accountability system, focus schools are the 10 percent of schools in the state with the largest achievement gaps between groups of students, such as racial and ethnic groups, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, students with disabilities, and English Learners. The most recent focus schools list was approved by the State Board of Education on August 26, 2014.

Identification criteria for focus schools are as follows:

- **Gap Pathway:** the school has the largest gaps between the highest-achieving and lowest-achieving subgroups.
- **Subgroup Pathway:** the school has a composite proficiency rate below 10 percent for the indicated subgroup (e.g., students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities).
- **Graduation Rate Pathway:** the school has a graduation rate below 60 percent.

In July 2015, a new waiver for Tennessee was approved by the federal government, which allows schools to be designated “Focus Exit” or “Focus Improving” if they demonstrate progress in the areas for which they are identified as a focus school. Under Tennessee’s previous No Child Left Behind waiver, a school retained the focus designation for three years or until the Tennessee Department of Education released a new list or the school met its gap closure objectives two years in a row.

The passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, which replaces the NCLB Act as well as states’ related waivers, may prompt revisions to Tennessee’s accountability system.

See also

- accountability
- achievement gap
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- First to the Top Act
- high school graduation rates
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver

- priority school
- reward school

Free and Reduced Priced Meals (FRPM)

Free and Reduced Price Meals are provided to eligible students as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (often referred to as the Free and Reduced Price Lunch or FRPL program); the programs are administered by the Tennessee Department of Education. All public schools in Tennessee participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which makes nutritious, affordable lunches available for purchase to all students. The lunches, and breakfasts offered at participating schools, are provided free or at a reduced cost for eligible students.

Students are eligible for free meals if their family income is at or below 130 percent of the poverty level; students from families with incomes above 130 percent, but no more than 185 percent, of the poverty level are eligible for reduced price meals.

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is an option that allows all students, regardless of economic status, to participate in the NSLP. Eligibility for CEP requires a district or school or group of schools to have at least 40 percent of students who are directly certified, meaning that they participate in other federal programs or have other risk factors (e.g., homelessness).

See also

- economically disadvantaged students
- homeless students

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The federal government requires that individuals complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to qualify for federal student aid and federal loan programs in postsecondary institutions. Federal student aid comes in several forms: grants, work-study, and student loans. The FAFSA is also required for several Tennessee-specific scholarship and grant programs, including the HOPE lottery scholarships, the Tennessee Promise, and the Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship.

The Office of Federal Student Aid, a federal office, is responsible for

managing student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

See also

- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)
- Tennessee Promise
- Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)
- Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965

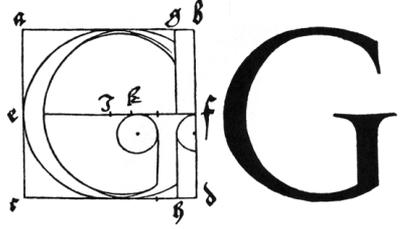
Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is an educational right of children with disabilities that is guaranteed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). One of the purposes, as stated in the IDEA, is

to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

See also

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- special education



General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS)

The General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS) is a lottery-funded, merit-based supplement to the HOPE Scholarship for students who have an overall weighted high school grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.75 and a minimum ACT score of 29 (or minimum SAT score of 1280). Students must meet all of the other HOPE Scholarship requirements. The GAMS award amount is set by the general appropriations act; in 2015-16 the award amount was \$500 per semester. A student may receive either the GAMS or the Aspire Award, but not both.

See also

- ACT
- Aspire Award
- HOPE Scholarship
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

General Education Development (GED) test

The General Education Development (GED) test is an exam that individuals not currently enrolled in high school can pass to earn a high school equivalency diploma. The GED was redesigned in 2014 as a computer-based test with four content areas (or sub-tests): reasoning through language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. GED results also indicate an individual's level of preparedness for postsecondary courses needed to qualify for certain jobs.

The GED is one of two high school equivalency exams offered in

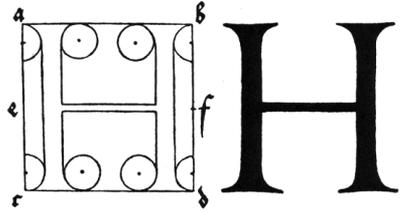
Tennessee; the other exam is the HiSET. The cost of the GED exam in Tennessee, as of June 30, 2015, was \$120.

See also

- high school equivalency exam
- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)
- high school graduation rates

graduation rates

See high school graduation rates.



Helping Heroes Grant

The Helping Heroes Grant is for certain eligible veterans to attend postsecondary institutions. Recipients can receive up to \$1,000 per semester for completion of 12 or more semester hours with no failing final grade. The grant is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and is available for up to eight full semesters. Helping Heroes is a lottery scholarship program.

See also

- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

high school dropout rates

The Tennessee Department of Education defines a student who has dropped out as an individual who:

- was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;
- was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;
- has not graduated from high school or completed a state-approved educational program; and
- does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
 - transfer to another public school system, private school, or specifically approved state education program
 - temporary absence due to suspension or excused illness
 - death

The definition is derived from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Tennessee also uses methodology developed by NCES to calculate a dropout rate.

There are three kinds of dropout rates commonly cited:

- *Event dropout rates* describe the proportion of students who leave school each year without completing a high school program.
- *Status dropout rates* provide cumulative data on dropouts among all young adults within a specified age range. Status rates are higher than event rates because they include all dropouts ages 16 through 24, regardless of when they last attended school.
- *Cohort dropout rates* measure what happens to a single group, or cohort, of students over a period of time – for example, how many students starting in grade 9 drop out before the end of grade 12.

The statewide event and cohort dropout rates, as well as the rates for each district and high school, appear on the State Report Card. In school year 2014-15, Tennessee had an event dropout rate of 2.6 percent and a cohort dropout rate of 6.0 percent.

See also

- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

high school equivalency exam

A high school equivalency (HSE) exam is a test individuals who are not currently enrolled in high school can pass to earn a high school equivalency diploma. As of 2015, there are three HSEs offered in the United States:

- the General Education Development test (GED) designed by Pearson Vue and GED Testing Services,
- the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) designed by Educational Testing Services and Iowa Testing Programs, and
- the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) designed by CTB/McGraw-Hill.

As of 2015, Tennessee offers two HSEs: the GED and the HiSET.

The Division of Adult Education in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development administers Tennessee’s HSE programs, which include preparatory courses and counseling services provided by nonprofit organizations, postsecondary institutions, and K-12 school districts, for most applicants. HSE recipients are eligible for some postsecondary scholarships and grants funded by the Tennessee lottery.

See also

- General Education Development (GED) test
- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)
- high school graduation rates
- standardized test
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)

The High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) is an exam individuals who are not currently enrolled in high school can take to earn a high school equivalency diploma. The HiSET consists of five sub-tests: language arts/reading, language arts/writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. The HiSET has been available in Tennessee since January 2014, and it is one of two high school equivalency exams offered in the state; the other exam is the GED.

In August 2015, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development announced the HiSET would be offered at no cost by the Adult Education program.

See also

- Educational Testing Service (ETS)
- General Education Development (GED) test
- high school equivalency exam
- high school graduation rates

high school graduation rates

In 2008, the U.S. Department of Education revised its regulations concerning the calculation of high school graduation rates. The change requires states and school districts to calculate four-year adjusted cohort graduation rates and report them on state report cards. Prior to this change, states used a variety of methods for calculating graduation rates, resulting in state graduation rates that could not be compared.

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. The basic calculation used is depicted below:

Graduation Rate =

Number of cohort members who earned a regular high school diploma
by the end of a specific school year

Number of first-time 9th graders in fall of first year of cohort (starting cohort)
plus students who transferred in, minus students who transferred out, emigrated, or died
during the four school years of the cohort

See also

- accountability
- adequate yearly progress (AYP)

higher education funding: outcomes-based funding formula

The Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA) required the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to establish an outcomes-based funding formula to reward higher education institutions for desired outcomes. Some of the measures in the formula include student progression (by credit hour), degree completion, and degrees/certificates awarded per 100 full-time enrolled students, among others. Institutions' total funding is a combination of funds calculated on the outcomes measures, plus funds for fixed costs and quality assurance funding (incentives for institutions to maintain and improve quality of academic programming and student satisfaction).

The CCTA also created a Formula Review Committee that is responsible for reviewing formula components, identifying needed revisions, additions, or deletions, and assuring that the formula is linked to the state's master plan for higher education. In July 2015, THEC approved changes to the outcomes-based funding formula.

See also

- Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA)
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

home school

A home school is a school conducted or directed by a parent or legal guardian for his or her own children. Tennessee law allows parents to home school their children in grades K-12 using an independent home school, a church-related umbrella school, or an accredited online school.

Independent home school students must register with their local school district and comply with certain attendance, instruction, and testing requirements. Parents who home school may also register with a church-related umbrella school. The parents must notify their local school district that their child is enrolled in a church-related school, but do not have to register with the district as required for independent home school students. Home school students may also enroll in a non-public accredited online school or distance education program.

State law does not require home school students to adhere to state academic standards or any particular curriculum; however, independent home school students are required to take the same standardized tests taken by public school students in grades 5, 7, and 9 for reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies.

	Parent's Education Requirements	Standardized Testing	Registration with local school district	Attendance
Independent Home School Students	High school diploma or GED	Same State Board of Education-approved standardized tests taken by public school students in grades 5, 7, 9	Yes	4 hours per day, 180 days per year
Church-Related Umbrella School Students	High school diploma or GED to teach grades 9-12	No requirements	No requirements	No requirements
Online Non-Public School Students	Qualifications are set by the school in which the child is enrolled	No requirements	No requirements	No requirements

homeless students

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, originally signed into law in 1987, provides a range of services to homeless individuals and families. One section of the law, added in 1994 to the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and now a part of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), places certain requirements on states and school districts to ensure that each homeless child and youth has access to the same public educational services as other children and youth. The act defines homeless children and youth as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- children and youths who are
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up”);
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
 - abandoned in hospitals.
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

The U.S. Department of Education awards McKinney-Vento funds annually to states by formula, based on the proportion of funds each state receives under Title I, Part A of the ESEA. The award is conditional – if states choose to accept McKinney-Vento funding, and currently all do, then they must carry out the act’s provisions. States are required to award at least 75 percent of the total state allocation to school districts through competitive grants. If a state chooses to accept McKinney-Vento funding, every school district in the state must provide services to homeless children and youth whether or not the district receives a subgrant, and the state is responsible for providing technical assistance to all school districts. The remaining grant funds not distributed as subgrants may be used to carry out the functions of the State Coordinator for Education of

Homeless Children and Youths, which is required to be established in each state.

The Tennessee Department of Education was awarded \$1,274,112 in federal McKinney-Vento funds for the period of July 1, 2015, to September 30, 2016.

In school year 2013-14, Tennessee school districts served 17,272 homeless children and youths.

See also

- economically disadvantaged students
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

HOPE Scholarship

Tennessee's HOPE Scholarship is a lottery-funded, merit-based scholarship for postsecondary education. Eligible students must have either an overall weighted high school grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 or attain a composite ACT score of at least 21 (or combined SAT score of at least 980). GED and HiSET recipients may also qualify with a minimum score of 170 (for GED) and 15 (for HiSET). Beginning fall 2015, full-time freshmen and sophomores at four-year institutions and two-year institutions with on-campus housing will receive up to \$1,750 per semester; full-time juniors and seniors will receive up to \$2,250 per semester. The HOPE Scholarship awards up to \$1,500 per semester for other two-year institutions.

To continue receiving a HOPE Scholarship, a student shall maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.75 at the 24- and 48-semester hour thresholds, maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 at the end of any subsequent academic year, reapply for the grant at specific points in time, and continue to meet non-academic requirements. A student can receive the award until five years have passed from the date of initial enrollment at any postsecondary institution, the student has attempted 120 semester hours (or 136 hours for programs exceeding 120 semester hours), or the student has completed eight full-time semesters.

The HOPE Scholarship includes three programs designed for students who meet certain criteria: the HOPE Access Grant, the Nontraditional HOPE Scholarship, and the HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant.

HOPE Access Grant

The HOPE Access Grant requires students to have a weighted cumulative high school GPA of at least 2.75 and an ACT score of at least 18 (or SAT combined score of at least 860), as well as an adjusted gross income of \$36,000 or less. The HOPE Access Grant amount is set by the general appropriations act; in 2015-16 the award amount was up to \$1,250 at a four-year institution and \$875 at a two-year institution.

The HOPE Access grant is available only for the first 24 semester hours attempted by eligible students. On meeting certain GPA requirements at the end of the 24 semester hours, a HOPE Access Grant recipient may gain eligibility to receive the HOPE Scholarship or Aspire Award.

Nontraditional HOPE Scholarship

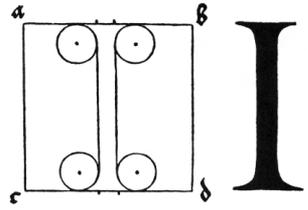
The Nontraditional HOPE Scholarship is for eligible students who are 25 or older, have an adjusted gross income of \$36,000 or less, and meet other basic eligibility criteria. The award amount is the same as for the HOPE Scholarship. To maintain the award, a student must be continuously enrolled and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.75 at the 24- and 48-semester hour thresholds and maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 at the end of any subsequent academic year. Recipients of the award are not eligible for the Aspire Award or the General Assembly Merit Scholarship.

HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant

A student eligible for the HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant must certify foster child status and meet the requirements of the HOPE Scholarship or HOPE Access Grant. The award amount shall be the cost of attendance (tuition and mandatory fees), less any gift aid. The grant shall not exceed the statewide average for tuition and mandatory fees.

See also

- Aspire Award
- General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS)
- General Education Development (GED) test
- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)



Individual Health Plan (IHP)

The Tennessee State Board of Education defines an Individual Health Plan (IHP) as

A health care plan developed by a Registered Nurse for children with acute or chronic health issues. Parents and other health care providers involved with the child participate in the development/approval of the plan.

State law requires public school nurses to update and maintain an IHP for students with acute or chronic health issues.

Individualized Education Account (IEA)

The Tennessee General Assembly's passage of the Individualized Education Act in 2015 created an Individualized Education Account (IEA) program for children with disabilities, sometimes referred to as an education savings account or a special education voucher program. The program allows parents to remove their eligible child from a public school and instead accept public funds deposited in their IEA equal to the amount of the per-pupil state and local funds generated and required through the Basic Education Program (BEP) for the district in which the student resides and is zoned to attend (a statewide average of approximately \$6,600 per student). The funds can be used for certain education-related services and costs (such as tuition, fees, transportation, and technology devices). The first IEAs will be awarded in January 2017.

Eligible students must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) before enrolling for an IEA. At least one of the following disabilities must be documented in the IEP:

- autism
- deaf-blindness
- hearing impairments
- visual impairments
- intellectual disability
- orthopedic impairments
- traumatic brain injury

Students remain IEA-eligible until they return to public school, graduate from high school, or reach the age of 22.

A parent or guardian's IEA is administered by the Tennessee Department of Education, which may deduct 4 percent of the allowance to cover administration and oversight costs. As of 2015, five states, including Tennessee, had similar education savings account programs. Participating schools in Tennessee that accept IEA funding must comply with government regulations (e.g., health and safety codes, non-discrimination requirements).

See also

- education savings account (ESA)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- special education
- vouchers

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement that ensures a student with a disability has access to the general education curriculum and is provided the appropriate learning opportunities, accommodations, adaptations, specialized services, and supports needed to progress toward meeting the same learning standards as students without disabilities, and to meet his or her unique needs related to the disability. Each student receiving disability services through a school must have an IEP in effect by the beginning of each school year. Federal and state laws and regulations specify the information that must be documented in each student's IEP.

An IEP team must initially develop, annually review, and, if appropriate, revise the IEP. The development of the IEP occurs following an evaluation of the child to determine if the disability is affecting his or her ability to learn. The composition of the IEP team is stipulated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The school district is responsible for ensuring that the IEP team for each child includes the parents or guardians of the child, a special education teacher, at least one regular education teacher, a school district representative who is knowledgeable of resources available to the child, and someone who can interpret evaluation results. The IEP team may also include, at the discretion of the parents or the school district, related services personnel, such as a school psychologist, an audiologist, an English Learner instruction professional, and others.

Tennessee includes additional categories beyond the 13 disability categories listed in federal law for which students are required to have an IEP. The federal categories are:

- autism
- deaf-blindness
- deafness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment
- intellectual disability
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment
- specific learning disability
- speech or language impairment
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairment

Tennessee additionally includes these three categories:

- developmental delay
- functional delay
- intellectually gifted

See also

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- special education

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

In 1975, Congress passed the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In order to receive federal funds, states are required to develop and implement policies that assure a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all children with disabilities.

IDEA defines “child with disabilities” as a child

with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance . . . , orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth through age 2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3 through 21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

Prior to the passage of the 1975 federal law, several states, including Tennessee, passed laws providing education services for disabled students. The Tennessee General Assembly in 1972 passed Tennessee’s Mandatory Education Law for Handicapped Children and Youth:

It is the policy of this state to provide, and to require school districts to provide, as an integral part of free public education, special education services sufficient to meet the needs and maximize the capabilities of handicapped children.

See also

- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- special education

Innovation Zone (I-Zone)

Innovation Zones (I-Zones) are one method of intervention a school district may pursue to monitor, oversee, and improve the performance of schools designated as priority schools (i.e., schools performing in the bottom 5 percent in the state in overall achievement). The Tennessee Department of Education must approve a district's plan to create an I-Zone as well as any schools designated for inclusion. Once approved, the district must establish an I-Zone office, appoint an office leader with management authority to hire staff for the office, and appoint a leader for each school placed in the I-Zone. I-Zone schools remain under the management of the local school district but have autonomy over financial, programmatic, and staffing decisions, similar to the autonomy granted to schools placed in the Achievement School District.

Only districts with multiple priority schools can establish I-Zones. As of 2015, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Shelby County Schools, Hamilton County Schools, and Knox County Schools have established I-Zones.

See also

- Achievement School District (ASD)
- priority school

Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education. The mission of IES is to provide rigorous and relevant evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share information broadly. IES reports a budget of over \$200 million and a staff of nearly 200, and conducts in-house research and provides funding for education research nationwide. IES resources include the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, which is also known as the Nation's Report Card), the What Works Clearinghouse, and ERIC education databases.

See also

- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)

international assessments

The United States participates in three major international assessments designed to provide information about the performance of the nation's K-12 education system relative to education systems in other countries: the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS); the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS); and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). (Another international assessment to measure cognitive and workplace skills for adults, the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), was conducted in the U.S. in 2011-12.)

The three assessments for elementary and secondary students differ in purpose, subjects tested, and grade (or age) of students tested. Both PIRLS and TIMSS are designed to measure how well students are learning what they are taught in the classroom – PIRLS tests 4th grade reading every five years and TIMSS tests 4th and 8th grade mathematics and science every four years. PISA is designed to measure whether 15-year-olds are able to practically apply what they have learned both in and out of school in reading, mathematics, and science; the test is administered every three years. PISA tests students in all three subjects, but focuses more heavily on one of the three subjects each time the test is given. For example, the 2012 PISA focused on mathematics and the 2015 PISA focused on science.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsors all four assessments in the U.S. Two of the tests – PIRLS and TIMSS – are products of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). PISA and PIAAC are products of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The table below provides basic information for the four assessments, including the year of origin, how often the tests are conducted, when the most recent assessments were taken, the target populations, what is assessed, and the purpose of the assessments.

See also

- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)
- Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)
- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

International Assessments Taken in the United States

	PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study)	TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study)	PISA (Program for International Student Assessment)	PIAAC (Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies)
What year did the study begin?	2001	1995	2000	2011
How often is the study conducted?	Every 5 years	Every 4 years	Every 3 years	Every 10 years
When was the most recent data collection for the assessment?	2011	2015	2015	2011-12
What is the target population?	Fourth-graders	Fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders	15-year-olds	Adults ages 16-65
What is assessed?	Reading literacy	Mathematics, science	Reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy, with one subject assessed in depth at each administration (on a rotating basis) and the other two subjects as minor domains	Literacy, numeracy, problem solving in technology-rich environments, reading components (components of reading comprehension at lower end of literacy spectrum)
What is the purpose of the study?	PIRLS measures students' reading comprehension of literary and informational text, broadly aligned with curricula of the participating countries.	TIMSS measures the mathematics and science knowledge and skills broadly aligned with curricula of the participating countries.	PISA measures how well students can apply their knowledge and skills to problems within real-life contexts. PISA is designed to represent a 'yield' of learning at age 15, rather than a direct measure of attained curriculum and knowledge.	PIAAC measures relationships between individuals' educational background, workplace experiences and skills, occupational attainment, use of information and communications technology, and cognitive skills in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a nonprofit educational foundation founded in 1968, which offers rigorous coursework and examinations based on an internationally developed curriculum. IB programs operate within existing schools as authorized by the IB organization, and are referred to as IB World Schools.

IB has four programs: primary years (ages 3-12), middle years (ages 11-16), diploma (ages 16-19), and career-related (ages 16-19). As of August 2015, there were four primary programs, nine middle year programs, 14 diploma programs, and one career-related program operating in Tennessee. Four elementary schools, six middle schools, and 14 high schools offered IB programs in Tennessee. These programs were in operation in 24 schools (23 public and one private). Successful IB high school students can earn college credit, advanced standing, and scholarships at some universities, including the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Middle Tennessee State University; and Tennessee Technological University.

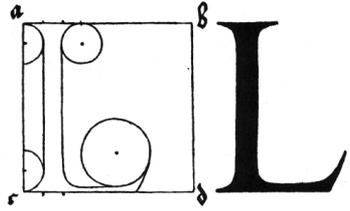
See also

- Advanced Placement (AP) program

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards

ISTE Standards (formerly the NETS) were developed and are maintained by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). ISTE is a nonprofit educator membership organization dedicated to supporting the use of information technology to aid in learning and teaching. ISTE created and maintains education technology standards for students, teachers, administrators, technology coaches, and computer science educators.

The Tennessee Educational Technology Association (TETA) is an ISTE affiliate. TETA individual members are employed in 103 Tennessee school districts and seven other educational organizations.



local education agency (LEA)

See school district.

local match

Local match is the commonly used term for the required share of total Basic Education Program (BEP) funds that local jurisdictions must allocate to schools in order for the school district to receive its state-funded share of BEP dollars. The Tennessee Department of Education uses the BEP funding formula to calculate a total dollar amount for each public school district, which is then funded on a shared basis between the state and each local jurisdiction that operates a school system (county, city, or special school district). The majority of districts are funded by their local jurisdictions at levels above their required BEP local match.

The state and local shares of BEP funding are prescribed by law for the three BEP categories:

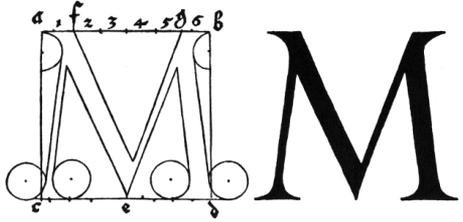
- Instructional (salary and benefits for teaching positions): 70 percent state and 30 percent local,
- Classroom (textbooks, instructional equipment, etc.): 75 percent state and 25 percent local,
- Non-classroom (capital outlay, transportation, etc.): 50 percent state and 50 percent local.

These prescribed state and local shares are calculated on the total, statewide BEP funds of all districts combined. The resulting dollar amount of the total local shares is then divided between each district based on the local county's ability to pay, known as its fiscal capacity. (Municipal and special school districts within a county are assigned the same fiscal capacity as the county school district.) After fiscal capacity formulas have been

applied, the resulting local share for an individual district may differ from the state and local splits required for the statewide totals. For example, after fiscal capacity is accounted for, one district's instructional funding might be 57 percent state and 43 percent local, while another district's instructional funding might be 85 percent state and 15 percent local.

See also

- average daily membership (ADM)
- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- fiscal capacity



maintenance of effort

Maintenance of effort laws for education require that local funding bodies allocate at least the same amount of funding to school districts that they budgeted the previous year for operating expenditures, excluding capital outlay and debt service, unless there is a decline in student enrollment. Maintenance of effort laws ensure that financial contributions by one funding body are used to enhance existing financial support from another. For example, these laws ensure that new or increased state funding provides additional support to schools, and does not result in simply replacing existing local funding, also known as supplanting.

The Tennessee Department of Education confirms each school district's compliance with maintenance of effort laws by comparing the total budgeted local revenues for day-to-day operations with the budgeted local revenues from the previous year, excluding capital outlay and debt service. In cases of declining enrollment, the department compares budgeted local revenues on a per-pupil basis.

Maintenance of effort provisions are not unique to education funding. In Tennessee, several other county departments have maintenance of effort provisions, including law enforcement, public libraries, highways, and election commissions, although they may be calculated in different ways. There are also maintenance of effort requirements that states must meet for certain federal funds, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B funds.

See also

- capital outlay
- revenue sources

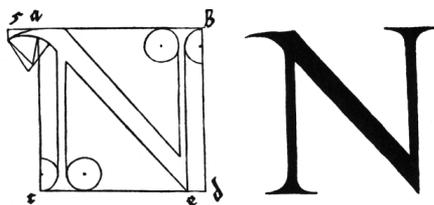
municipal school district

Municipal, or city, school districts are generally authorized under city or town charters and do not have to offer all grade levels. Tennessee has 33 municipal school districts across 22 counties. Municipal boundaries geographically define which students are eligible for enrollment and which voters are eligible to elect municipal school boards. Municipal school districts typically receive a designated portion of city tax revenues, in addition to their share of county tax revenues and their state Basic Education Program (BEP) funds. A municipality can choose to cease school district operations and transfer administration of its district to the county board of education under procedures set by state law.

A statutory ban on the creation of any new municipal school districts was lifted in 2013, allowing the formation of six new municipal school districts in Shelby County, which opened to students in 2014-15. Municipalities that want to create a new school district must meet State Board of Education minimum standards to serve at least 1,500 students and allocate city revenues to the schools that are equivalent to at least \$0.15 per \$100 of taxable municipal property.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- county school district
- school district (or LEA)
- special school district



National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national system of testing in K-12 schools to measure what U.S. students know and can do in core subjects. NAEP collects and reports academic achievement results at the national level and, for certain assessments, at the state and district levels. NAEP results are not reported at the school or individual student level. Assessment results are referred to as “The Nation’s Report Card” once they have been processed and compiled into results that are presented to the public.

NAEP assesses several subject areas at the *national* level: mathematics, reading, science, and writing, as well as the arts, civics, economics, foreign language, geography, technology and engineering literacy, and U.S. history. NAEP assesses mathematics and reading at the national level every two years, and assesses science, writing, and the other subject areas less frequently. The national NAEP includes students at grade levels 4, 8, and 12.

NAEP assesses four subjects at the *state* level: mathematics, reading, science, and writing. Since 2003, all 50 states have participated in state-level NAEP assessments for reading and mathematics at grades 4 and 8. The state-level NAEP is also given at grade 12 in some states. The state-level assessments for reading and mathematics occur every two years, and are administered along with the national level assessments. Science and writing are assessed less frequently. NAEP state assessments began in 1990; Tennessee first participated in 1992.

The national NAEP assesses students in public and private schools. State-level NAEP assesses students in public schools only.

Not every school or student participates in NAEP assessments. NAEP tests small samples of students at grades 4, 8, and 12 for the national and state-level assessments. To ensure that a representative sample of students is assessed, NAEP is given in schools with students that reflect the varying demographics of a specific jurisdiction – i.e., the nation, a state, or a district.

On November 7, 2013, the National Assessment Governing Board released the results from the 2013 NAEP in math and reading. Tennessee was one of only three states/jurisdictions that scored higher in 2013 than in 2011 in both subjects at grades 4 and 8. On three of the four assessments, Tennessee’s average score was within one point of the national average; although the state is still well below the top scoring states, its gains on NAEP were significant.

The National Assessment Governing Board released the results from the 2015 NAEP in math and reading on October 28, 2015. Tennessee scores in mathematics at grades 4 and 8 stayed at about the same level as the 2013 scores, with no increase. Tennessee scores in reading at grades 4 and 8 stayed about the same as the 2013 scores, with a slight decline.

See also

- standardized test

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), commonly referred to as the “National Board,” is an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1987. The mission of the board is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by developing professional standards for accomplished teaching and certifying teachers who have proven they meet those standards. The organization was created in the wake of a 1986 report by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, which called for the creation of a national board to set standards for the profession. Since 1994, the NBPTS has certified over 110,000 teachers in the United States, about 3 percent of all teachers in the nation. As of August 2015, NBPTS reports 660 teachers in Tennessee hold a past or current certification.

See also

- teacher professional development

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education. NCES is located within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). NCES fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally.

NCES activities include administering:

- national assessments, which are the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the National Assessments of Adult Literacy.
- international assessments, including the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).
- the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grant Program to help states develop and implement longitudinal data systems in K-12 and postsecondary systems. Tennessee received a grant of \$6,917,059 in October 2015; it previously received \$3,226,313 under the program in 2006.

See also

- Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
- international assessments
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)
- Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)
- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

National Education Association (NEA)

The National Education Association (NEA) describes itself as the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing over three million members at every level of education – from pre-school to university graduate programs. The stated mission of the NEA is to advocate for education professionals and to unite its members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

NEA has affiliates in all states, including the Tennessee Education Association (TEA). NEA provides research, advocates, and takes positions on federal and state education issues. NEA educational activities include conferences, seminars, and training programs for members, as well as teaching tools and education-related publications.

See also

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- Professional Educators of Tennessee (PET)
- Tennessee Education Association (TEA)

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

In December 2001, Congress passed and the President signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the newest iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Prior to that, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) constituted the federal education law. The NCLB Act, passed by Congress in 2001 and signed into law in 2002, made significant alterations to the ESEA, requiring that states test students in reading and math in grades 3-8 and once in high school based on state standards. States are required to report the results for the entire student population and for subgroups of students (i.e., racial minorities, children from low-income families, English language learners, and students with disabilities). Assessment results are used to identify schools not making adequate yearly progress (AYP) and to implement a system of sanctions and rewards based on each school's AYP status.

The law has been controversial since its inception, with critics charging that NCLB is too reliant on standardized testing and that its emphasis on math and reading have crowded out other subjects. The act also required that all

students achieve academic proficiency by school year 2013-14, an unmet goal.

Prior to the passage of ESSA in 2015, Congress had abandoned several efforts to reauthorize a new version of the ESEA. Beginning in 2011, the U.S. Department of Education permitted states to seek waivers from many of the NCLB mandates in exchange for making some alterations to their educational practices in specific areas, such as state standards and teacher evaluation processes.

Titles under the NCLB Act include Title I, which requires state accountability systems with plans for addressing poorly performing schools and targets funding at disadvantaged students; Title II, which requires schools and districts to ensure that educators have appropriate qualifications; and Title III, which directs funds to the teaching of English Learner students.

Other titles concern a variety of education-related issues, including school safety, school choice, and grants for the education of homeless children.

See also

- adequate yearly progress (AYP)
- assessment
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- English Learner students
- homeless students
- standardized test
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver

Beginning in 2011, the U.S. Department of Education permitted states to seek waivers from many of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act mandates in exchange for making some alterations to their educational practices in specific areas, such as state standards and teacher evaluation processes.

The U.S. Department of Education approved a four-year renewal of Tennessee's NCLB waiver in July 2015. The renewed waiver included changes to the state's accountability system such as:

- assessment of a district’s student performance in grade bands (example: grades 3-5 math) as opposed to individual grade levels.
- reduction of the number of student subgroups from nine to four: Black, Hispanic, and Native American; economically disadvantaged; English Learners; and students with disabilities.
- inclusion of performance metrics such as the ACT composite and subject-specific scores as a measure of postsecondary and/or career readiness for students taking advanced coursework such as Advanced Placement (AP) or dual credit in their junior year.

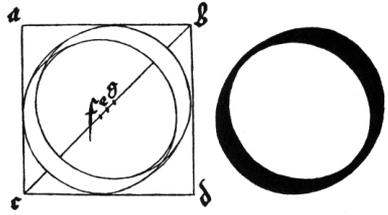
The new federal education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in December 2015, replaces the No Child Left Behind Act and makes the waivers unnecessary. State waivers, including Tennessee’s, will become void and no longer have legal effect on or after August 1, 2016.

See also

- accountability
- ACT
- Advanced Placement (AP) program
- dual credit and dual enrollment
- economically disadvantaged students
- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

non-public schools

Non-public schools (also called private schools or independent schools) in Tennessee are classified by law into six categories with varying levels of oversight from the Tennessee Department of Education and approved agencies such as the Catholic Diocese or the Association of Christian Schools International.



opportunity scholarship

See vouchers.

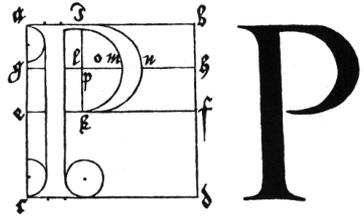
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is an international organization with a focus on economic development. OECD is composed mainly of industrialized countries. Current membership consists of 34 countries, including the United States.

The OECD coordinates two education-related international assessments: the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) given to 15-year-olds and the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) given to adults between the ages of 16 and 65. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsors the administration of PISA and PIAAC in the United States.

See also

- international assessments
- Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)
- Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)



physical education and physical activity

Physical education is a planned, sequential pre-K through grade 12 curriculum that includes basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythm and dance; cooperative games; team, dual, and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics. Qualified professionals, such as physical education teachers and physical activity specialists, provide physical education and related fitness activities.

The State Board of Education (SBOE) has adopted physical education standards for pre-K and grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The SBOE does not require a minimum number of minutes or days per week that students should be in physical education class. According to SBOE Rules:

The health education and physical education programs, provided annually, shall be based on state curriculum standards and shall be developmentally appropriate with instruction focusing on activities which will promote good health habits and enhance physical fitness.

Per SBOE rule, students must achieve one high school level unit of Wellness and half-unit of Physical Education in order to graduate with a high school diploma.

Physical education is a broader term that includes physical activity. Tennessee state law requires school districts to integrate a minimum of 90 minutes of physical activity per week into the instructional school day for elementary and secondary school students. Physical activity includes walking, jumping rope, playing volleyball, or other forms of activity that promote fitness and well-being. In 2014, the General Assembly amended state law to clarify that walking to and from class does not constitute physical activity for the purpose of this law.

Encouraging adequate physical activity and providing physical education for all students are central tenets of Tennessee’s Coordinated School Health Program, piloted in Tennessee in 2000 and expanded in 2006 to all 95 counties. The Office of Coordinated School Health in the Tennessee Department of Education publishes an annual report on physical activity and physical education in Tennessee’s public schools.

See also

- academic standards
- coordinated school health
- curriculum

Praxis

The Praxis Series are tests taken by individuals as part of the teacher licensing and certification process required by most states. ETS (Educational Testing Service), a nonprofit testing organization, develops and administers the Praxis tests. Each state and licensing organization determines its own certification and Praxis score requirements. Tennessee requirements for teacher certification include a Praxis test for admission to an approved educator preparation program. After program completion, Tennessee teachers must satisfactorily complete the Praxis Subject Assessment and separate subject tests for each area of endorsement sought.

See also

- Educational Testing Service (ETS)
- teacher licensing

pre-kindergarten

Tennessee’s voluntary pre-kindergarten (pre-K) program, offered in all 95 counties, served over 18,000 students in 2013-14. Enrollment in pre-K is prioritized for students identified as economically disadvantaged and those students with disabilities, identified as English Learners, in state custody, or educationally at-risk due to circumstances of abuse or neglect. The Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005 provided \$25 million in excess lottery dollars to assist school districts in establishing pre-K programs through a competitive grant process. In 2013-14, pre-K classrooms received over \$85 million in funding allocated from the state’s general fund.

See also

- economically disadvantaged students
- English Learner students

priority school

A priority school is a public school that is generally identified as being in the bottom 5 percent of schools in student achievement. The priority school designation was originally created by the U.S. Department of Education through its program to grant waivers from certain requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act to states. Under the waiver, the Tennessee Department of Education released a priority school list every three years. On the most recent list, released in 2014, 85 Tennessee schools were included from six districts.

If a priority school demonstrates growth (using a one-year success rate) so that it is no longer in the lowest-performing 15 percent of schools it will be considered “priority exit” and taken off the priority school list.

A priority school that demonstrates growth in academic achievement so that it is no longer in the lowest-performing 10 percent of schools, but remains in the lowest-performing 15 percent, is labeled “priority improving.” Priority improving schools may be taken off the priority school list in a subsequent year if they continue to demonstrate growth.

A priority school will undergo one of four interventions:

- placement in the Achievement School District (ASD)
- turnaround under the governance of a school district innovation zone
- turnaround through one of the federal School Improvement Grant plans
- district-led school improvement planning processes, subject to direct ASD intervention in the absence of improved results.

The passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, which replaces the NCLB Act as well as states’ related waivers, may prompt revisions to Tennessee’s accountability system.

See also

- accountability
- Achievement School District (ASD)
- First to the Top Act
- focus school
- Innovation Zone (I-Zone)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- reward school
- School Improvement Grant (SIG)

private school

See non-public school.

Professional Educators of Tennessee (PET)

Professional Educators of Tennessee (PET) is a statewide professional organization that includes teachers, administrators, and non-certified staff from kindergarten to graduate school level in public and private schools. PET's primary stated mission is to create a quality educational experience in a safe environment for Tennessee students. Primary activities of PET include advocacy on statewide education issues, professional development, and shared resources for teachers and parents. PET describes itself as an alternative to union participation. PET does not endorse candidates or support strikes or work stoppages.

See also

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- National Education Association (NEA)
- Tennessee Education Association (TEA)

Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

The Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is an international assessment with the goal of assessing and comparing the basic skills and the broad range of competencies of adults around the world. PIAAC was conducted for the first time in 2011-12 in the U.S. and other countries with a sample of adults between the ages of 16 and 65. PIAAC focuses on cognitive and workplace skills needed for successful participation in 21st-century society and the global economy. Specifically, PIAAC measures relationships between individuals' educational background, workplace experiences and skills, occupational attainment, use of information and communications technology, and cognitive skills in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and problem solving.

PIAAC is coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an international organization of industrialized

countries, and is conducted in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Because only a sample of students throughout the U.S. is assessed using PIAAC, results are provided in the aggregate and by sub-group for the U.S. and not by state.

See also

- adult education
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years. PISA was first administered in 2000; the most recent assessment was given in 2015. PISA is designed to measure whether 15-year-olds are able to practically apply what they have learned both in and out of school in reading, mathematics, and science. PISA tests students in all three subjects, but focuses more heavily on one subject area each time the test is given. For example, the 2012 PISA focused on mathematics and the 2015 PISA focused on science.

PISA is coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an international organization of industrialized countries, and is conducted in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Because only a sample of students throughout the U.S. is assessed using PISA, results are provided in the aggregate and by sub-group for the U.S. and not by state. A state can choose at its own expense to participate in PISA as an individual education system – as Connecticut, Florida, and Massachusetts did in 2012 – and in that case a sample is drawn that is representative of that state.

See also

- international assessments
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international comparative study of the reading literacy of young students. PIRLS studies the reading achievement and reading behaviors and attitudes of 4th-grade students in the U.S. and students in the equivalent of 4th grade in other participating countries. The assessment was last administered in 2011. Since 2001, PIRLS data have been collected from a sample of U.S. students at grade 4 every five years, generally. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsors the administration of PIRLS in the U.S.

Because only a sample of students throughout the U.S. is assessed using PIRLS, results are provided in the aggregate and by sub-group for the U.S. and not by state. The exception to this was in 2011, when the state of Florida took the test as a separate education system.

See also

- international assessments
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

promotion and retention

In general, promotion refers to a student progressing from one grade level to the next after successfully meeting academic requirements, and retention refers to a student being retained to repeat an academic year of school.

In Tennessee, local school systems develop and implement grading, promotion, and retention policies for grades kindergarten through eight (K-8). The policies are required to be communicated annually to students and parents.

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) reports annually the number of students promoted and retained by school district. In the 2013-14 school year, TDOE reported that a total of 866,889 students were promoted and 22,473 were retained. According to the State Report Card, TDOE reported a statewide promotion rate of 98.4 percent for school year 2014-15.

In 2011, the General Assembly passed legislation requiring that students may not be promoted past grade 3 unless they “have shown a basic understanding of curriculum and ability to perform the skills required in the subject of reading as demonstrated by the student’s grades or standardized test results.” Students who meet this description may be promoted, however, if they participate in a district-approved research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year. Special education students are exempted from the requirement.

See also

- academic standards
- curriculum

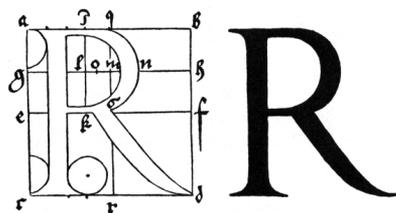
public school

A public school is the basic administrative unit of a state, county, city, or special school district, consisting of one or more grade groups, one or more teachers to give instruction, and one principal. Public schools are subject to the state statutes of Tennessee, and to rules, regulations, and minimum standards of the Tennessee State Board of Education.

According to the Tennessee Department of Education, there were 1,811 public schools in Tennessee in school year 2014-15.

See also

- school district
- State Board of Education



Race to the Top (RTTT)

Race to the Top (RTTT) is a federal competitive grant that awarded funds to states and districts implementing educational reforms. The RTTT program required states to adopt reform efforts such as:

- the creation of rigorous standards and assessments,
- using data systems for improved academic instruction,
- recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals, and
- turning around persistently low performing schools

RTTT funds were awarded in four-year grant periods, beginning with the 2010-11 school year. Tennessee was awarded \$501 million in federal RTTT funds in 2010 in order to implement education reforms throughout the state, as outlined in the Tennessee First to the Top Act. Districts received 50 percent of the RTTT funds awarded to Tennessee. The funds were distributed to districts based on their Title I funding allocation. Tennessee's final year of grant funding was 2013-14.

See also

- accountability
- First to the Top Act

remediation

Remediation, also known as developmental education or learning support, generally refers to academic requirements for students assessed as underprepared for postsecondary education. Remediation is designed to address students' weak reading, writing, and/or math skills so that students are more successful in entry-level college courses.

The form remediation takes varies and can include specific coursework

to address academic weaknesses or supplemental assistance tied to a core academic course. Community colleges require additional non-credit coursework for students assessed as underprepared. Under the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010, universities cannot offer remedial or developmental courses, but do include supplemental learning support as part of college-level courses. Postsecondary institutions also consider measures of college readiness when determining a student's college courses (e.g., basic math, algebra, or calculus).

Higher education institutions in Tennessee primarily use ACT scores to determine whether students are college-ready and for course placement. In 2014, 68 percent of Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) community college students and 33 percent of TBR university students did not meet the TBR criteria for college-readiness in math, reading, and/or writing, and were assigned to learning support.

See also

- ACT
- college and career readiness
- community college
- Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA)
- Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS)
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- University of Tennessee (UT)

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a tiered approach K-12 educators use to identify and address learning needs for individual students. In Tennessee, RTI is known as RTI², which stands for Response to Instruction and Intervention. Under RTI², general education teachers, special educators, and specialists identify which students are underperforming and to what degree, then target academic interventions accordingly.

Students are placed in one of three tiers based on academic need and intensity of the intervention:

- Tier I instruction is provided to all students in the general education classroom. Following this, students are given a universal screening test to ensure they are staying on track and determine if they need additional interventions. The Tennessee Department of Education estimates that between 80 and 85 percent of students will not require instruction beyond Tier I.
- Tier II includes students who fall below the 25th percentile on a universal screening (brief assessments focused on target skills) and

struggle academically or behaviorally. These students are placed in small groups to work on specific skills during the regular school day.

- Tier III contains students who either did not progress in Tier II, fall below the 10th percentile on universal screening, or are more than one-and-a-half grade levels behind. These students are placed in smaller groups than for Tier II or receive one-on-one instruction.

Progress of Tier II and Tier III students is regularly monitored by instructors. According to the Tennessee Department of Education, the state's K-12 system is moving to this framework over the next few years.

See also

- credit recovery
- remediation

revenue sources

Revenue sources for school districts include those from federal, state, and local government funding. In fiscal year 2013-14, Tennessee's districts overall received 48 percent of current revenues from state funds, primarily through the Basic Education Program (BEP). The state's BEP funding comes from state sales taxes, and mixed drink and cigarette taxes. Districts received another 40 percent of their revenues from local sources, primarily from property taxes or payments in lieu of property taxes, local option sales taxes, and – for municipal districts – appropriations from city general funds. The remaining 12 percent of districts' revenue came from federal funding, primarily from grants passed through the state for school breakfast and lunch programs, Title I programs that serve low-income students, and IDEA programs for students with disabilities.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- maintenance of effort
- municipal school districts
- Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act

reward school

Under Tennessee's education accountability system, reward schools are the top 5 percent of schools for academic performance and the top 5 percent of schools for academic progress, or growth, each year.

Reward schools based on academic *performance* are determined annually by a one-year success rate for overall student achievement. The success rate is calculated by adding together the total number of proficient or advanced students across each eligible subject and dividing by the total number of test takers across each eligible subject.

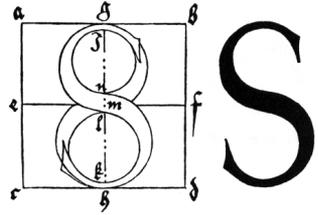
Reward schools based on academic *progress* have high levels of student growth as determined by one-year, schoolwide value-added data.

In 2015, 170 schools received reward status in 59 districts – 76 for academic performance, 85 for academic progress, and nine for performance and progress.

The passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, which replaces the NCLB Act as well as states' related waivers, may prompt revisions to Tennessee's accountability system.

See also

- accountability
- First to the Top Act
- focus school
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- priority school



SAT

The SAT is a college admissions test created by the College Board. The SAT assesses critical reading, writing, and math skills.

Tennessee requires and provides funding for students to take the ACT one time, although students may substitute the SAT in its place.

See also

- ACT
- College Board

school approval

School districts must demonstrate compliance with state laws and State Board of Education (SBOE) rules by submitting an annual compliance report to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). Department staff use the compliance report to approve each school district annually. The Commissioner of Education grants approval to school districts that are either in compliance with state education laws and board rules, or have a plan for compliance. The compliance report form, which TDOE provides to districts, states that all districts are responsible for checking the status of compliance with all applicable laws and rules. The compliance report requires the signatures of the district director of schools and the school board chair attesting to the following statement: “I certify that, except for those items listed in the attached document which includes a compliance plan for each item, the LEA is in compliance with all Tennessee statutes and board rules.”

TDOE also uses data sources other than the compliance report to determine whether a district is in compliance.

The Commissioner of Education provides school districts that are not in compliance with laws and rules a written explanation and affords

district officials the opportunity to respond. If corrective action is not made within the timeframe specified, the Commissioner is authorized to impose sanctions, which may include withholding part or all of state school funding to the district.

The department's Internal Audit Division annually audits a sample of districts' documentation to verify compliance with state laws and board rules.

TDOE is required to report annually to the SBOE regarding each school system's compliance with the rules and regulations. The report includes the approval status of each local school system, deficiencies by school as identified during the approval process, an assessment of action needed to attain approval, local school system response, and sanctions imposed on systems that do not comply.

See also

- school district (or LEA)
- State Board of Education
- Tennessee Department of Education

school board

In general, a school board is a local board or authority responsible for the provision and maintenance of schools.

State law specifies the duties and powers of the local boards of education in Tennessee, members of which must be residents and voters of the county in which they are elected. Members of county legislative bodies or other county officials are not eligible to be elected to a local board of education.

Members of special school district boards of education are elected according to special or private act.

Except in Davidson and Shelby counties, members of municipal boards of education may be elected in the same manner as the members of the municipality's governing body, either from districts or at large, or a combination of the two.

State law and State Board of Education rule require that every school board member receive seven hours of annual training.

The local board of education is required to hold regular meetings at least quarterly and to elect a member as chair annually.

Duties of a local board of education include:

- employing and evaluating annually a director of schools
- managing and controlling all public schools under its jurisdiction
- approving tenure for teachers recommended by the director of schools
- dismissing tenured employees (after providing hearings, if requested)
- purchasing supplies, furniture, fixtures, and materials of every kind
- suspending, dismissing, or alternatively placing students who are disruptive, threatening, or violent
- establishing standards and policies governing student attendance
- preparing and approving a budget, and submitting the budget to the appropriate legislative body

Tennessee school boards vary in size, between three and 12 members, with the most common size at seven members.

See also

- school district
- State Board of Education

school buses

Tennessee state law authorizes local boards of education to provide school transportation for public school students. State law also sets the length of time that school buses may remain in service.

State Board of Education rules govern the operation of school buses, and the State Board reviews and maintains school bus standards for the state.

The Tennessee Department of Safety oversees all school bus inspections and determines whether public school bus systems are in compliance with the safety requirements in state law. The Department of Safety also provides mandatory annual training for school bus drivers.

Buses are classified as Class A, B, C, or D. Class C and D buses are larger, and may continue to be used until they have been in service for 18 years. At that time, the Commissioner of Safety may approve additional years of service, as long as the bus has not been operated more than 200,000 miles and meets all requirements for continued safe use and operation. Class

D buses that are in use for more than 15 years must be inspected at least twice annually.

Some funding for pupil transportation is provided by the state's funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP), as a non-classroom component. Funds are allocated to school districts based on the number of pupils transported, miles transported, and density of pupils per route mile.

The Tennessee Department of Education reports school bus statistics from school districts in the Annual Statistical Report. In school year 2013-14,

- 8,864 school buses transported students
- 654,786 students used school transportation
- 54 students sustained injuries
- one student died

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)

school choice

School choice is a reform movement that focuses on granting parents the right to choose which school their child attends. While parents have traditionally had the option to choose private schools over the public schools their students are zoned for, the school choice movement has focused on choice within the public school sector.

In Tennessee, some school districts offer school options such as charter schools, magnet schools, virtual schools, Achievement School District schools, or traditional public schools with a specialized focus on a subject area such as STEM or the arts. Student eligibility and school admission criteria vary by school choice option. Districts may allow students to enroll in traditional public schools regardless of whether or not the student lives in the school's geographical zone.

Non-public school choice options include home schools, and in some states, programs that allow parents to use public school funds for private school tuition (often called vouchers, opportunity scholarships, or individualized education accounts). The Tennessee General Assembly's passage of the Individualized Education Act in 2015 created an Individualized Education Account (IEA) program for children with disabilities, also known as a special education voucher program.

See also

- Achievement School District (ASD)
- charter school
- home school
- Individualized Education Account (IEA)
- non-public schools
- STEM
- virtual school
- vouchers

school climate

School climate refers to factors in the school environment that impact whether students feel:

- safe – physically, socially, and emotionally,
- academically challenged,
- valued, and
- connected to their school settings.

A positive school climate is based on norms, values, and patterns of behavior that support a safe and engaging school culture and learning environment. Research studies have recognized the importance of positive school climate in increasing student achievement and school performance, reducing achievement gaps, enhancing healthy development and life skills, and reducing problem behaviors and violence. Elements contributing to a positive school climate include clear rules, high expectations, fair enforcement of discipline measures, an orderly and welcoming school environment, parent and community involvement, and collaboration among administrators, faculty, and students.

Tennessee’s school climate measurement system uses surveys of students, parents, and teachers to assess schools on three dimensions: school engagement for students, school safety, and school environment. The results of these surveys are posted on the Tennessee Department of Education’s website.

The department received a federal Safe and Supportive Schools Demonstration Grant beginning in 2010, which provided \$3.4 million annually for four years for the development of a measurement system to assess school climate and the implementation of related programming in 27 pilot districts. The department also contracted with Vanderbilt University to develop a center for training and technical assistance on improving school climate.

See also

- school safety

school district (or LEA)

School districts – also called school systems or local education agencies (LEAs) – are the organizing structure for operating and managing most public schools. Usually governed by an elected school board, also known as a board of education, and run by a director of schools hired by the board, most districts in Tennessee are one of three main types: county, municipal, or special. Districts outside of these three types include the state’s Achievement School District (ASD) and the Department of Children’s Services’ education programs. The types of districts vary by funding sources, applicable state laws requiring certain revenues to be shared, and their ability to begin or end operations.

As of July 2015, there were 140 county, municipal, and special school districts in the state. Districts vary widely in the number of schools administered and the number of students served, from Shelby County Schools’ 293 schools and 116,000 students, to Richard City Special School District’s one school and 280 students. Tennessee’s districts differ from those in many other states in that most are not financially independent; all but the special school districts are financially dependent on another government body, either a county or a city.

See also

- Achievement School District (ASD)
- county school district
- Department of Children’s Services education services
- municipal school district
- public school
- school board
- special school district

School Improvement Grant (SIG)

School Improvement Grants (SIGs) provide federal funding to schools with poor academic performance. SIG funds are awarded by the Tennessee Department of Education on a competitive basis to schools that have been persistently low achieving and demonstrate a commitment to use the funds to improve student academic achievement. In Tennessee,

the primary grants are awarded to schools that have been identified as “priority schools” (i.e., schools performing in the bottom 5 percent in the state in overall achievement) under the state accountability system; some additional SIG funds are available to focus schools (i.e., the 10 percent of schools in the state with the largest achievement gaps between groups of students). Many, but not all, of the schools that receive SIG funding are in district-run Innovation Zones and the Achievement School District.

Priority schools receiving SIG funding must implement one of four turnaround models:

- **Transformation:** Replace the principal and evaluate teachers on student growth. Other changes include increased learning time, community engagement, and structural changes to school governance in areas such as staffing, calendars, time, and budgeting.
- **Turnaround:** Replace the principal and half the staff and implement a new governance structure and instructional reforms.
- **Restart:** Convert the school to a charter school or reopen it under a charter school operator, charter management organization, or education management organization.
- **Closure:** Close the school and enroll former students in other schools within the district with higher achievement scores.

See also

- accountability
- Achievement School District (ASD)
- First to the Top Act
- focus school
- Innovation Zone (I-Zone)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- priority school
- Race to the Top (RTTT)

school safety

School safety refers to policies and programs to ensure the safety of students and school personnel. In Tennessee, the Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act of 2007 established state-level comprehensive planning and accountability requirements to ensure that school districts address school safety and implement violence prevention efforts. The SAVE Act includes specific requirements for emergency response plans, violence prevention, and data collection to assess school safety. The act also incorporates other state requirements toward

addressing school violence such as written codes of conduct and discipline, prohibition of guns and drugs, character education, and conflict resolution programs.

See also

- school climate

Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS)

The Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS) program is a computer-based program that provides high school students an opportunity to complete postsecondary math remediation requirements as a supplement to their fourth year high school math course. Currently, in participating high schools, students are identified to participate in SAILS if their ACT math subject score is below 19. An ACT math score below 19 triggers the need to complete postsecondary math remediation if a student attends a Tennessee Board of Regents community college or university. In the 2014-15 school year, 11,000 students statewide participated in SAILS math. Some of the students completing SAILS were also able to complete a college-level math course during their high school senior year. SAILS English is being piloted in the 2015-16 school year to provide reading and writing remediation to high school seniors.

See also

- ACT
- remediation
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs or activities that receive federal funding. Because public school districts, institutions of higher education, and other state and local education agencies receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education, they are subject to the provisions of Section 504. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR), within the U.S. Department of Education, enforces Section 504.

Section 504 contains many of the same provisions as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): disabled students have the right to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and have due process rights to protect them from discrimination. In the educational setting, it protects all students with disabilities whether or not they are categorized as special education students. Section 504 is broader than IDEA and contains no funding provisions.

See also

- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

service learning

Service learning is a form of experiential learning through which students develop knowledge and critical thinking skills while performing community service activities. Models for integrating service learning into a course of study include preparation and background understanding of the issue, the service action itself, and meaningful reflection on the experience.

Tennessee teachers who wish to integrate service learning teaching methodology in their classes must complete a one day training course offered by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). A set of five curriculum standards guide teachers through the process of developing a service learning approach.

See also

- community school
- work-based learning

small learning communities

Small learning communities (SLCs), also known as schools within a school, are autonomous programs designed to offer more personalized learning environments for groups of students in large high schools. SLCs generally have their own academic program, culture, personnel, students, budget, and school space.

See also

- career academy

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), created in 1948, is a regional compact for education policy comprising 16 states, including Tennessee. SREB advises states on what works in policy and practice, garners consensus on education initiatives among member states, and can work directly with public schools and educators for educational improvement. SREB provides resources for policymakers, educators, and parents on a wide range of education policy areas.

The Board includes the governor and four gubernatorial appointees, including a state legislator and an educator, from each member state. SREB is funded through appropriations from member states, grants and contracts, and other support.

See also

- Education Commission of the States (ECS)

special education

The term “special education” generally refers to programs designed to serve children with mental and physical disabilities.

Two principal federal laws protect the educational rights of children with disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Local school districts receive funding to provide special education services through federal IDEA formula grants and through the Basic Education Program (BEP) funding formula. In school year 2014-15, more than 139,000 Tennessee students with disabilities received special education services, or about 14 percent of all enrolled students.

See also

- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Individualized Education Account (IEA)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS)

special school district

Unlike county and municipal school districts, special school districts are established by private acts of the state legislature. The private acts establish special school districts' boundaries – which do not necessarily align with existing city or county boundaries – and geographically define which students are eligible for enrollment and which voters are eligible to elect district school boards.

Because special school districts are not tied to the taxing authority of a county or a municipality, they must have the state legislature's approval for any tax levy to support operations. These revenues provide additional funding to the district's prescribed share of county education revenue and its state Basic Education Program (BEP) funding. Special school district tax revenues do not have to be shared with any other district.

A 1982 state law preventing the creation of any new special school districts was revised in 2011 to allow the creation of new special school districts in specific situations in which a transfer of the administration of a special school district to a county school district would result in at least a 100 percent increase in enrollment. A special school district board can choose to cease operations and transfer administration of its district to the county board of education under procedures set by state law.

Tennessee has 14 special school districts across seven counties. Special school districts do not have to offer all grade levels.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- county school district
- municipal school district
- school district (or LEA)

standardized test

A standardized test requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or questions from a common bank of questions, in the same way, and is scored in a “standard” or consistent manner, making it possible to compare the relative performance of individual students or groups of students. Achievement tests, aptitude tests, college-admission tests, international comparison tests, and psychological tests are examples of the most common types of standardized tests.

Standardized tests can be classified as either criterion-referenced or norm-referenced.

Criterion-referenced tests (or standards-referenced tests) are designed to measure student performance against defined standards or requirements. These are the tests used to measure the progress of groups of students in meeting proficiency levels. The TN Ready tests that will be administered for the first time in 2015-16 are criterion-referenced tests.

Norm-referenced tests are designed to identify differences between students, comparing their performance to that of others who have taken the same test. Test scores are generally reported as percentages or percentile rankings and are expected to follow a bell curve, with most students' performance in the middle (at average levels) and few students scoring at the high and low ends of performance. Tennessee's optional assessment for grades K-2 (formerly known as SAT 10) is an example of a norm-referenced test.

See also

- Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)
- TN Ready

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is the governing and policy-making body for the Tennessee system of public elementary and secondary education. Its work involves all facets of education, from accountability and evaluation to standards and teacher education. The SBOE coordinates its efforts with the Tennessee Department of Education, which implements laws established by the General Assembly and policies developed by the board. Through its annual report on student, teacher, and school performance, the SBOE provides the General Assembly and the public with information about the status of education in Tennessee.

The SBOE is composed of nine appointed members – one from each of Tennessee's nine congressional districts – and one high school student member. In addition, the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission is an ex officio, nonvoting member of the SBOE. The Governor makes all appointments of members, subject to confirmation by the Senate and House of Representatives. Board members serve a five-year term; the student member serves a one-year term.

As of December 2015, the SBOE employs an Executive Director and eight full-time employees.

The SBOE's duties as listed in the law include:

- studying programs of instruction in public schools, analyzing the needs of public schools, and including its conclusions in its annual recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly for the funding of public education;
- developing a master plan for public education;
- setting policies in areas that include:
 - completing academic levels (elementary, middle, high school)
 - evaluating student progress and achievement
 - evaluating teachers
 - measuring the educational achievement of individual schools
 - review, approval or disapproval, and classification of all public schools
 - the qualifications, requirements, and standards for public school teachers, principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and superintendents
 - graduation requirements
 - courses of study in public schools
 - the use of textbooks and other instructional materials
- developing and adopting policies and formulas for the fair and equitable distribution of funds for public education and establishing a review committee for the K-12 public education funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP), to make recommendations regarding use of the funds;
- meeting jointly with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the Commissioner of Education at least annually to review the expenditures and programs of public education and jointly providing a report to the Governor, the General Assembly, and all public schools and institutions of higher learning and their respective governing boards; and
- determining ways and means of improving teacher, student, and school performance and setting policies to accomplish these improvements.

See also

- Tennessee Department of Education

State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE)

The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) is a Tennessee nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy and research institution, founded in 2008 by former U.S. Senator Bill Frist. SCORE supports high academic standards, development of excellent district leaders, school leaders, and classroom teachers, the use of data to improve student learning, and preparing students for college and the workforce. SCORE also advocates for public policy decisions at state and local levels.

SCORE is governed by a 16-member board of directors comprising Tennessee philanthropic and business leaders. The organization's work, including an annual report on the state of education in Tennessee, is guided by a 37-member steering committee comprised of education stakeholders across the state.

state special schools in Tennessee

There are four state special schools in Tennessee:

- Tennessee School for the Blind, located in Nashville, provides residential and educational programs for students, grades pre-K through 12, with multiple disabilities (primarily visually impaired)
- Tennessee School for the Deaf, located in Knoxville, provides residential and educational programs for students, grades pre-K through 12, with multiple disabilities (primarily hearing impaired)
- West Tennessee School for the Deaf, located in Jackson, provides educational programs for students, ages two through 13, with multiple disabilities (primarily hearing impaired)
- Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute, located in Jamestown, a public school operated by the state. The York Institute was founded as a private agricultural school in 1926 by World War I hero and Tennessee native Alvin C. York. In 1937, the school was transferred to the state of Tennessee.

Programs offered at the schools for the blind and deaf include academic instruction, self-care skills, counseling, pre-vocational training, child health and safety, independent living skills, consultation services to local school

districts, and diagnosis and identification of learning problems.

State law does not designate the special schools as part of any school district, instead giving the State Board of Education (SBOE) the responsibility to control the state's four special schools. The state special schools are almost entirely state-funded. SBOE approves the budgets for the schools before they are submitted to the Governor and Commissioner of Revenue for approval and transmission to the General Assembly.

Information about the state special schools appears on the State Report Card.

State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission

Created in 2014 to replace the former State Textbook Commission, the State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission is responsible for recommending a list of textbooks and instructional materials for approval by the State Board of Education for use in Tennessee's public schools. The commission publishes the list of board-approved textbooks and material (which also includes electronic textbooks, computer software, and other electronic materials) that may be adopted by local boards of education for use in their districts. The commission can also develop rules related to the physical standards for durability of textbooks and materials, conditions under which it contracts with publishers, and the distribution of all textbooks and materials under contract.

The commission may establish advisory panels of teachers and subject experts to assist in reviews and advise the commission. Reviews are to determine whether the textbooks and other materials conform to state academic standards, are free of substantive factual or grammatical errors, and reflect the statutory values related to the founding of the state and the nation and the associated foundational documents. The commission and advisory panels are required to review public comments on the textbooks and materials under consideration for adoption. The Tennessee Department of Education provides training to new commission members and to advisory panel members on their duties.

The commission consists of 10 members: the speakers of the house and senate of the General Assembly and the governor each appoint

three members, one from each grand division of the state, and the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee serves as a voting member and ex officio secretary of the commission. Of the appointed members, at least one shall be a county director of schools, a city or special district director of schools, and a school principal; three are to be teachers or instructional supervisors, each in one of the grade groups K-3, 4-8, and 9-12; and the final three are to be citizens not employed in the public education field.

See also

- State Board of Education
- Tennessee Department of Education

STEM

STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is an initiative designed to improve students' skills and knowledge in these disciplines. STEM initiatives typically include more in-depth coverage of math and science topics and instruction in how to integrate and apply multi-disciplinary knowledge to solve problems. STEM education is designed to develop skills in critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, and entrepreneurship.

Expanding STEM education is a priority nationally and in Tennessee. Tennessee used federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funding to create the STEM Innovation Network, a public-private collaboration to promote and expand the teaching and learning of STEM in K-12 public schools. As of school year 2013-14, the network has established 10 STEM Platform Schools across the state, serving 4,000 students, and six regional STEM Innovation hubs.

See also

- Race to the Top (RTTT)

Student Industry Certification (SIC)

Student Industry Certifications (SICs) are industry-recognized occupational credentials developed by industry groups or professional associations. SICs may be used in particular industries as requirements or considerations for career entry and job placement, and can be accepted for credit hours in some fields by postsecondary institutions.

Examples of SICs include First Responder, Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified EKG Technician, Certified Pharmacy Technician, and ServSafe (food preparation and serving safety). To receive certification, students must pass an exam after completing a designated course or series of courses in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. The cost of SIC exams vary based on the industry area and type of exam.

See also

- Career and Technical Education (CTE)

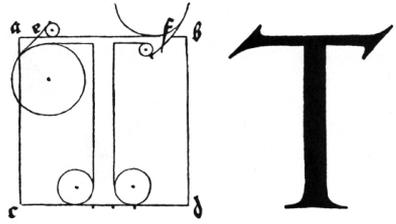
suspension

Tennessee state law and State Board of Education rules define suspension as

dismissed from attendance at school for any reason for not more than ten (10) consecutive days. The student on suspension shall be included in ADM (average daily membership) and will continue to be counted for funding purposes. Multiple suspensions shall not run consecutively nor shall multiple suspensions be applied to avoid expulsion from school.

See also

- expulsion
- zero tolerance



teacher evaluation

In Tennessee, state law requires that teacher evaluations be used by school and district officials to inform decisions such as hiring, promotion, tenure, dismissal, and compensation. Teacher evaluations are required annually and consist of three main components: classroom observations and other qualitative measures, student achievement (such as TCAP scores, graduation rates, and ACT scores), and student growth (TVAAS scores for individual teachers or schools, or approved alternative growth measures). Districts may use either the state's teacher evaluation model – the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) – or one of four alternative models (Project Coach, TIGER, TEM, and AFET). Districts may modify TEAM with State Board of Education approval. All models use the same student achievement and growth measures with the same weighting; the models differ primarily in how they evaluate classroom instruction and other qualitative components.

See also

- ACT
- high school graduation rates
- Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

teacher licensing

The purpose of teacher licensure (also called certification) is to ensure that individuals who serve in Tennessee classrooms and schools meet the state's minimum standards. The Tennessee State Board of Education (SBOE) establishes the standards educators must meet to earn and renew a teaching license, and to advance from one license level to another.

A new teacher licensing policy took effect September 1, 2015, affecting teachers, school services personnel, and occupational teachers. (Current

licenses will remain valid until their expiration dates.) Under the new licensing policy, teachers beginning their careers must obtain a Practitioner License. After three years of experience and either a recommendation from the Director of Schools or documentation of 30 professional development points, teachers are eligible to advance to a Professional License. If the conditions for advancement are not met, the Practitioner License will be renewed for an additional three-year period. If a teacher does not earn a Professional License after six years, or does not meet licensure expectations, the license will become inactive and he or she will be unable to teach. Educators may renew a license only during the year immediately preceding the date of expiration.

See also

- teacher preparation
- teacher professional development

teacher preparation

Teacher preparation refers to an aspiring teacher's training, which has traditionally consisted of college-level coursework and student teaching experiences offered through postsecondary institutions. As of 2014, 36 traditional teacher preparation programs exist in Tennessee. There are also six alternative teacher preparation programs, such as Teach for America and Teach Tennessee, not managed by an institution of higher education. All providers of teacher preparation programs that lead to licensure must be approved by the State Board of Education.

The Tennessee Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs is published annually by the Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. The report card, which is required by law, provides an overall picture of teacher preparation programs in the state and snapshots of individual programs.

See also

- teacher licensing
- teacher professional development

teacher professional development

Teacher professional development refers to activities designed to expand the content knowledge and instructional skills of educators. The

Tennessee State Board of Education requires teachers to complete a certain amount of professional development to advance beyond their initial licensure status and, once the teacher has advanced beyond initial status, to renew their license. Teachers earn professional development points for completing professional development activities, such as training, coursework, or achievement of National Board Certification. To advance from the initial Practitioner License to a Professional License, 30 points are required, and renewing a Professional License requires 60 points. Practitioner Licenses are valid for three years and may be renewed one time for an additional three-year period if a teacher has not met the criteria for advancement to a Professional License. Professional Licenses are valid for six years.

State law requires that five days out of the 200-day mandatory minimum for a school year are to be allocated to in-service education (teacher professional development).

In Tennessee, teacher professional development is primarily provided for and funded at the local level.

See also

- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
- teacher licensing
- teacher preparation

teacher tenure

Tenure is a continuing employment status for teachers. A tenured teacher cannot be fired without just cause and due process, and tenured teachers' employment contracts are automatically renewed until they resign, retire, are dismissed for cause (fired), or are returned to probationary status (a status used to determine if an employee is a right fit for the job).

In Tennessee, teachers are first eligible for tenure following completion of a five-year probationary period if they have received an evaluation score of 4 or 5 in the last two years of the period. Teachers may also become eligible for tenure by receiving an evaluation score of 4 or 5 for any two consecutive years following completion of the probationary period.

A teacher who fails to receive an evaluation score of 4 or 5 for two consecutive years but does not receive an evaluation score lower than 3 can remain in probationary status indefinitely.

Tenured teachers who receive an evaluation score of less than 3 for two consecutive years return to probationary status and must receive

an evaluation score of 4 or 5 for two consecutive years to regain tenure eligibility.

A teacher who becomes eligible for tenure, whether initial status or regaining, must be recommended for tenure by the director of schools to the local school board. School boards are not bound to accept a director of school's tenure recommendations. If the school board does not grant tenure, the teacher can no longer continue employment in the district.

See also

- school board
- teacher evaluation
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

TELL Survey

The TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning) Survey is administered by the New Teacher Center (NTC), a national nonprofit with a focus on new teacher effectiveness. Since 2008, NTC has surveyed over one million educators across 20 states, including Tennessee. The survey results provide educators with tools and direct support to improve schools, and also provide information to state policymakers for use in reforming teaching policies and practices. The survey questions focus on teaching conditions such as instructional practices and support, community engagement and support, managing student conduct, and facilities and resources, among others. For example, in the 2013 Tennessee survey, over 70 percent of teachers responded positively that teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions in school, and 80 percent or more responded positively about the appropriateness of their school facilities and resources.

Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR)

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR), created by the state legislature in 1978, is a 25-member board of state and local public officials and private citizens that serves as a forum for the discussion and resolution of intergovernmental issues. In

total, 10 members have local government as their primary affiliation, 11 represent the state legislature, two are drawn from the executive branch, and two are private citizens. Commission staff produce research reports for commission members and other state and local policymakers to use in improving the overall quality of government in Tennessee and the effectiveness of the intergovernmental system.

Education financing and accountability has been one area of TACIR's research over several years. TACIR developed the fiscal capacity index adopted by the Tennessee State Board of Education to fulfill the requirements of the Education Improvement Act of 1992 for fiscal equalization in the Basic Education Program (BEP). Currently, the TACIR index is used in conjunction with another index developed by the University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research to determine state and local funding shares for each school system. Other areas of education research include capital expenditures for public schools and school renovations and replacement needs by county.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)
- fiscal capacity
- Tennessee Education Improvement Act (EIA)

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)

In 1972, the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) was created by the General Assembly to establish, govern, manage, and control Tennessee's public universities (other than the University of Tennessee system) and community colleges.

The board consists of 18 members: 12 citizens (one from each congressional district and one from each of the state's three grand divisions); one faculty member from a system institution, and one student from a system institution, all appointed by the governor; as well as four ex officio members (the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission).

TBR includes 46 institutions: six universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 colleges of applied technology.

See also

- community college
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)
- University of Tennessee (UT)

Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)

Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs), previously known as Tennessee Technology Centers, are overseen by the Tennessee Board of Regents. There are 27 TCATs located within the state. TCATs provide students with technical skills and professional training in areas such as nursing, automotive technology, and industrial maintenance.

Each TCAT is accredited by the Council on Occupational Education. TCATs use a competency-based curriculum, which allows students to work at their own pace in mastering skills. In addition, for some programs, industry-developed standards and assessments are used to measure student learning. The completion of a program of study at a TCAT culminates in a diploma or certificate.

The Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant and the Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship are two Tennessee scholarship initiatives that offer financial aid to students enrolled in TCATs.

See also

- career and technical education (CTE)
- competency-based learning
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship
- Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

In Tennessee, public school students' skills and academic progress are measured by a set of statewide assessments called the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). TCAP tests include:

- End of Course exams taken by high school students
- the Achievement Test taken by students in grades 3-8

- the optional K-2 assessment for districts that choose to participate

The results of these assessments are reported to parents, teachers, and administrators, and are used for accountability purposes. TCAP results can be found on the Tennessee Department of Education's TCAP Results page and on the annual State Report Card, which is released each fall.

In November 2014, the state completed the process to replace the current TCAP assessments in English language arts and math. Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, TN Ready will become the state's new TCAP test for English language arts and math in grades 3-11.

See also

- End of Course (EOC) exams
- standardized test
- TN Ready

Tennessee Department of Education

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) is the state department charged with implementing the elementary and secondary education laws and policies established by the General Assembly and the State Board of Education (SBOE). The many statutory duties of the Commissioner or the department include those in the areas of:

- **Policy:** making recommendations to the Governor for improvements of the public school system and developing rules, to present for SBOE's approval, to implement education laws and policies.
- **Funding:** calculating and disbursing Basic Education Program (BEP) funds to school districts.
- **Compliance:** approving and monitoring a variety of district activities, such as school improvement plans and differentiated pay plans, and withholding BEP funds if necessary to enforce school district compliance with state requirements.
- **District Oversight:** developing and prescribing a standardized system of financial accounting and reporting for all school districts, reviewing public school district fiscal records to ensure expenditure of funds are properly accounted for and safeguarded, and prescribing a management information system through which local school districts report information to the department.
- **Teachers:** preparing an annual minimum state salary schedule

for all licensed personnel in local school districts, and determining that the rights and privileges of teachers (salary, pension and retirement, tenure, contract) are not impaired or diminished when the governance of school systems is changed due to unification, transfer, consolidation, abolition, or reorganization.

- **School Data Collection and Reporting:** collecting and reporting public school system information, including data on school district revenues and expenditures, student achievement, student discipline, school staffing, as well as results of compliance and performance audits of local school systems.
- **Other:** from inspecting and approving child care programs operated by public schools and church-related schools to developing a tracking system of students who leave charter schools, as well as working with other agencies and providing assistance on numerous initiatives impacting student health and safety, parental involvement, and other issues.

State law specifically requires TDOE to include a division of Career and Technical Education and the Achievement School District as organizational units.

See also

- State Board of Education
- U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)

Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS)

The Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) is a voluntary educational program for families with very young children with disabilities or developmental delays. TEIS helps connect these families to appropriate supports and services.

Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), every state is required to provide a program for children from birth through two years of age and their families. Federal funds are allocated to each state to help support Part C programming. Each state determines its own eligibility rules for its Early Intervention System.

See also

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- special education

Tennessee Education Association (TEA)

The Tennessee Education Association (TEA) is a union that represents elementary and secondary teachers, school administrators, education support professionals, higher education faculty, and students preparing to become teachers. TEA is an affiliate of the National Education Association (NEA).

See also

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- National Education Association (NEA)
- Professional Educators of Tennessee (PET)

Tennessee Education Improvement Act (EIA)

The Education Improvement Act of 1992 (EIA) was one of the most sweeping pieces of K-12 education legislation in Tennessee history. The 88 sections of the EIA brought about significant changes in state and local administration of schools, including the establishment of a new funding formula (the Basic Education Program, or BEP) for public schools, the creation of a new local governance structure for public education (including the appointment, rather than the election of, directors of schools), and the enactment of an accountability system requiring local schools and school systems to meet state standards and goals, which included use of the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to review teacher, school, and school district effects on educational progress.

Among other major changes, the EIA:

- raised the state's compulsory education age (from 16 to 17 years of age);
- established average and maximum class size limits;
- made kindergarten mandatory for all Tennessee children; and
- included funding for classroom technology.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- class size
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

The Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) programs provide financial assistance for Tennesseans to attend postsecondary institutions. The programs are funded through lottery proceeds. A lottery scholarship recipient must be a Tennessee resident, file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and be admitted to an eligible postsecondary institution, among other eligibility criteria. The following are specific TELS programs described in more detail under separate glossary entries:

- Aspire Award
- dual enrollment grant (see dual credit and dual enrollment)
- General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS)
- Helping Heroes Grant
- HOPE Scholarship

The Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Programs are overseen by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC).

See also

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)

Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly to coordinate the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institutions and the University of Tennessee (UT) institutions.

THEC is responsible for developing a statewide master plan that addresses state economic and workforce needs, ensures increased degree production, and uses differences in institutional mission to recognize efficiencies across the higher education sector. In addition, THEC has developed and continues to update an outcomes-based funding formula that rewards institutions for desired outcomes, such as student progression and degree completion, among others.

THEC has other roles and responsibilities that are described in statute, such as making annual funding recommendations to governing boards, the Governor, and General Assembly; approving the mission statements of public higher education institutions as part of the statewide master plan revision process; approving new degree programs; and studying the need for programs, departments, and divisions, to minimize duplication and overlapping services, among others.

The 15-member commission is appointed by the Governor, and is made up of one member from each of the state's nine congressional districts, the Comptroller of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, the State Treasurer, the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (non-voting), and two student members (with alternating voting responsibilities by higher education system, TBR or UT, each year).

See also

- higher education funding; outcomes-based funding formula
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- University of Tennessee (UT)

Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA)

The Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA) is a membership organization of many of Tennessee's private higher education institutions. TICUA is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1956 to promote better cooperation among private institutions in Tennessee. TICUA members collaborate on public policy issues, cost containment, and professional development.

TICUA membership includes all independent, nonprofit, regionally accredited colleges and universities with a traditional arts and science curriculum. TICUA members include Christian Brothers University; Rhodes College; Fisk University; Watkins College of Art, Design and Film; Maryville College; and Carson-Newman University, among others. TICUA is run by a board of directors, which includes representatives of TICUA institutions, local nonprofit organizations, and foundations, and other organizations.

Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS)

The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS) is a nonprofit advocacy organization for public education in Tennessee. TOSS was established in 1975, and full membership is open to active superintendents or directors of public school systems within Tennessee. TOSS provides information, proposes legislation, and takes positions on public education issues in the Tennessee General Assembly. In addition, TOSS provides school superintendents with policy resources and professional development opportunities.

See also

- collaborative conferencing
- Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA)

Tennessee Promise

The Tennessee Promise is a scholarship and mentoring program that provides a last-dollar scholarship for high school graduates seeking a degree or certificate at a community college, Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT), or other eligible institution. The maximum scholarship amount is the average cost of tuition and mandatory fees at a Tennessee public community college. The scholarship for each student will vary based on their remaining financial need after all other grant aid is applied. Students who graduated from high school in 2015 were the first class eligible for the program.

To participate in Tennessee Promise, students must submit an application, file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), attend two mentor meetings, apply to an institution, complete FAFSA verification, and complete eight hours of community service for each semester.

Participants are assigned a mentor to guide them through the college admissions process. There are three mentoring organizations associated with the Tennessee Promise: TN Achieves, the Ayers Foundation, and the Regional Economic Development Initiative.

See also

- community college
- Drive to 55
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)

Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA)

The Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA) is a nonprofit, private service organization with a mission to assist school boards in effectively governing school districts. The Tennessee legislature in 1953 officially recognized TSBA as “the organization and representative agency of the members of schools boards of Tennessee” and authorized TSBA to provide services through membership dues paid by local school boards. The association represents members on legislative and other public education issues and provides training, conferences, and communication services for members and staff. TSBA also provides services to school boards in areas such as legislation, education law, school board policies, and community relations. TSBA develops and conducts the majority of required training for all local school board members per State Board of Education rules.

See also

- Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS)

Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA)

The Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA) is a financial assistance program administered by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) for undergraduates with financial need. TSAA awards are granted to students who are residents of Tennessee, are enrolled or intend to enroll in an eligible institution, have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and are otherwise eligible under state law.

Awards are based on the financial need of the student and cannot exceed the cost of tuition and mandatory fees charged by the institution. Awards are renewable, and the length of time for renewal varies based on the postsecondary credential sought (i.e., four academic years for a baccalaureate degree or six months for a certificate). Awards can be revoked if students do not meet minimum academic achievement levels or are expelled or suspended.

In 2013-14, 32,606 students received TSAA awards of approximately \$61.4 million in appropriations from the General Assembly. The General Assembly appropriated \$67.8 million for TSAA for 2015-

16. Prior recipients who are eligible for renewal are the first to receive funds, followed by eligible applicants with the greatest financial need who complete their FAFSA by March 1, until TSAA funds are exhausted.

See also

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)

Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)

The Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) is a nonprofit corporation that is responsible for the administration of postsecondary education loan programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and is Tennessee's designated federal guaranty agency. TSAC also administers other federal and state financial assistance programs, such as the HOPE Scholarship program.

Created by the General Assembly in 1974, TSAC is governed by a Board of Directors, including the Governor, the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), the president of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA), the State Treasurer, the Comptroller of the Treasury, the Commissioner of Finance and Administration, the Commissioner of Education, the Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), the president of the University of Tennessee (UT), the president of the Tennessee Proprietary Business School Association, the president of the Tennessee Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, a representative of a commercial lender, two students enrolled in a higher education institution in Tennessee, and three private citizens.

See also

- HOPE Scholarship
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)
- Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965

Tennessee Transfer Pathways (TTP)

Tennessee Transfer Pathways (TTP) was designed to ease the path to a four-year degree for community college students. TTP was created as a part of the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA).

TTP requires Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee institutions to develop transfer pathways for at least 50 undergraduate majors, each consisting of 60 hours of credit (41 of general education and 19 of pre-major coursework). Undergraduate majors that are part of the TTP include accounting, biology, and political science. In addition, the two systems are required to implement common course numbering and course offerings that clearly identify courses not designed for transfer. TTP also applies to some private four-year institutions, including Fisk University, Maryville College, and Union University.

A related program is Tennessee Reverse Transfer, which awards credit for associate degrees while students complete their bachelor's degrees. This program is for students who transfer to a four-year institution after completing at least 15 credits at a community college, but before completing all the credits for an associate's degree. Upon completion of all remaining credits at the four-year institution, a student is eligible to earn an associate's degree.

See also

- Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA)
- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- University of Tennessee (UT)

Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System, known as TVAAS, is a statistical method based on standardized test data that is used to measure the influence of a district, school, or teacher on the academic progress (growth rates) of individual students or groups of students from year to year. The concept behind TVAAS is that schools should add value every school year for each student, regardless of whether the student begins the year above, at, or below grade level. The use of value-added assessment was enacted in Tennessee law in 1992 as part of the Education Improvement Act. State law requires the use of TVAAS annual estimates of teacher, school, or school district effects on student progress in teacher evaluations and the state's education accountability system for schools and districts. These estimates are sometimes referred to as teacher effect or school effect scores.

See also

- accountability
- standardized test

- teacher evaluation
- Tennessee Education Improvement Act (EIA)

Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Title I, originally passed as part of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), is a program under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The purpose of Title I is “to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close educational achievement gaps.” Title I uses a combination of four formulas to allocate funds to districts with greater numbers and higher concentrations of students in poverty.

All school districts in Tennessee receive some Title I funding. In fiscal year 2014, the state’s school districts received approximately \$280 million from Title I.

School districts have some discretion in how their Title I funds are distributed. Title I schools may operate either as targeted assistance or schoolwide programs. Targeted assistance schools identify students who are at risk of not meeting the state’s content and performance standards and provide individualized instructional programs to the identified students to assist them in meeting the state’s standards. Schoolwide programs use their funds to improve the entire program of the school, which affects all students.

See also

- economically disadvantaged students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)

Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Title II, Part A, a part of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, authorizes formula grants for improving teacher and principal quality. States may use the funds to assist districts in improving teacher and principal evaluation programs, reform teacher and principal certification programs, and expand alternative certification options.

The Tennessee Department of Education is responsible for applying to the U.S. Department of Education for grants to be disbursed to individual

school districts. Between 2005 and 2014, Tennessee received an average of \$45.3 million each year in Title II, Part A, funding.

School districts may use Title II, Part A, funds to conduct a variety of programs and professional development for teachers, principals, and staff. Examples include:

- programs to recruit and retain teachers, principals, and staff members, including monetary incentives such as scholarships, signing bonuses, or differential pay options; and
- professional development for improving content knowledge and classroom practices for special populations, such as low-achieving or special education students.

See also

- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- teacher professional development

Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Title III is a part of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

Under Title III, the U.S. Department of Education awards grants to states, which, in turn, award federal funds through subgrants to school districts to improve the education of students with limited English proficiency (LEP), including immigrant children and youth, to assist them in learning English and meeting state academic content and achievement standards. These students may also be referred to as English Learners (or EL, the term commonly used in Tennessee), English Language Learners, and English as a Second Language students, among other labels.

In the 2014-15 school year, according to the State Report Card, Tennessee school districts served 45,739 English Learner students, about 4.6 percent of the state's total student population. According to the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee students speak about 140 different languages. For fiscal year 2014, Tennessee received \$5,273,464 under Title III out of a total of \$723,400,000 allocated to all states.

See also

- English Learner students
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)

Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965

The federal Higher Education Act, originally passed in 1965, established financial assistance programs for students in postsecondary institutions, among other provisions. The act is reauthorized by Congress periodically, most recently in 2008. Title IV governs a variety of federal financial aid programs including:

- grants – such as Pell grants, GEAR UP, Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships, and Teach grants;
- loans and loan forgiveness programs – including Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans (also known as Stafford loans) and Direct Plus Loan programs; and
- the federal work-study program – funding for part-time work for low-income students at participating institutions.

The Pell Grant program is the largest federal student assistance program, providing \$33 billion in grants to nine million eligible low-income students in 2014. The Tennessee Promise program, a last-dollar scholarship program for students enrolling in community or technical college, depends on students first accessing available funds from other sources, such as the Pell Grant program.

See also

- Tennessee Promise

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in any federally funded education program or activity. The principal objective of Title IX is to avoid the use of federal money to support gender discrimination in education programs and to provide individual citizens effective protection against those practices. Title IX applies, with a few specific exceptions, to all aspects of federally funded education programs or activities, though it is likely best known for its application to athletic programs offered by schools. In addition to traditional educational institutions such as colleges, universities, and elementary and secondary schools, Title IX applies to any education or training program operated by a recipient of federal financial assistance.

The Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education enforces Title IX.

See also

- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

TN Ready

TN Ready is Tennessee's new assessment for math and English/language arts which students in grades 3 through 11 will take for the first time in 2015-16 as part of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) testing. TN Ready will be aligned with the state's updated academic standards and will include essay and short answer questions, as well as multi-step math problems, which are considered better measures of student understanding than multiple choice questions alone. The assessments will, in most cases, be taken by students online.

See also

- accountability
- assessment
- standardized test
- Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) provides data on the mathematics and science achievement of U.S. students compared to that of students in other countries. TIMSS data have been collected every four years from a sample of students in grades 4 and 8 since 1995, generally. TIMSS data was most recently collected in 2015, and included students in grades 4, 8, and 12.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsors the administration of TIMSS in the U.S.

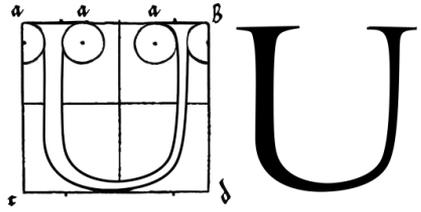
Because TIMSS assesses only a sample of students throughout the U.S., results are provided in the aggregate and by sub-group for the nation and not by state, although a state can choose at its own expense to participate. In 2011, two states (Florida and North Carolina) administered TIMSS to samples of their 4th grade students and nine states (Alabama, California,

Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and North Carolina) administered TIMSS at the 8th grade level. This allowed the states to benchmark their students' performance internationally.

NCES conducted a study in 2012 to link results from the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to results from the 2011 TIMSS assessment. The goal of the NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study was to predict 2011 TIMSS mathematics and science scores at grade 8 for all states based on their NAEP performance, without incurring the costs associated with every state participating in TIMSS. The results of the study were released in 2013. The linking study results placed Tennessee among the states with average scores lower than the TIMSS average for grade 8 mathematics and among the states with average scores higher than the TIMSS average for grade 8 science. Tennessee placed just over the TIMSS international benchmark at the intermediate level for mathematics and just under the benchmark at the high level for science.

See also

- international assessments
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)



uniform grading

Uniform grading refers to the Tennessee policy to standardize the grading scale and course weighting used by school districts to calculate high school grade point averages, which are used to determine eligibility for Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships.

See also

- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

University of Tennessee (UT)

The University of Tennessee (UT) system was created in 1968, uniting the Knoxville, Chattanooga, Martin, and Memphis campuses in the system's overall mission of teaching, research, and public service. UT is presently made up of four campuses and three institutes (the Institute of Agriculture, the Institute for Public Service, and the Space Institute).

UT is governed by a Board of Trustees, which consists of 26 members: the Governor, the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Education, the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and the President of the University of Tennessee, each ex-officio; the remaining 21 members are appointed by the Governor.

See also

- Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR)
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) is the agency of the federal

government that establishes policy for, administers, and coordinates most federal assistance to elementary and secondary schools. The department is also responsible for federal financial aid to postsecondary students. In 2015, the USDOE had 4,400 employees and a \$68 billion budget. Primary activities and programs include establishing policies for and distributing federal financial aid for education, collecting data and disseminating research on schools, focusing national attention on specific educational issues, and prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal access to education.

See also

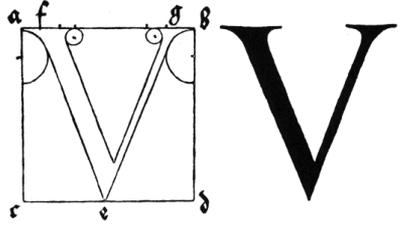
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)
- Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights enforces federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in education programs and activities that receive federal funds. These laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age. The mission of the office is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through enforcement of civil rights. The office investigates complaints, provides technical assistance, and conducts civil rights-related compliance reviews of educational institutions. The Tennessee Department of Education also has an Office for Civil Rights to enforce students' civil rights in Tennessee public school districts and programs that receive federal education funds.

See also

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Tennessee Department of Education
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972



virtual school

In general, virtual school refers to a school that is not housed primarily in a “brick and mortar” building, and which conducts student services and courses mainly through Internet technology.

In 2011, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Virtual Public Schools Act. The act describes virtual schools as public schools that use technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to students via the Internet in a virtual or remote setting. Under the law, 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.

In certain cases, state law permits an individual virtual school to increase the enrollment in virtual classes by up to 25 percent over the class size limits in state law. To exceed the class size limits, the virtual school must have achieved a school effect score (TVAAS) of 3 or higher as reported by the Tennessee Department of Education in the prior year.

Any student who is eligible for enrollment in a Tennessee public school may enroll in a virtual school, although districts have the option of charging tuition to a student who does not currently live within district borders. Students have the option of enrolling full-time or part-time. Full-time students take all of their courses online through the virtual school; part-time students take one or more courses online while enrolled in another public school. Students with special needs, including disabilities and limited English proficiency, may enroll and participate in a virtual school. Virtual schools are required to provide the services included in each special education student’s Individualized Education Program. Virtual schools are required to ensure their students have access to

instructional materials and technology, such as a computer, printer, and Internet connection that may be necessary to participate in the program.

Virtual schools in Tennessee are funded the same way as traditional public schools. School districts can use Basic Education Program (BEP) funds from both local and state sources to implement and operate their virtual education programs. Districts are also encouraged to apply for grants and accept donations to help fund virtual education schools.

Virtual schools are included in the annual State Report Card published by the Tennessee Department of Education. The department also produces an annual report on all virtual schools established by school districts.

The 2011 Virtual Public Schools Act was originally scheduled for repeal on June 30, 2015. In 2015, the General Assembly extended the repeal date to June 30, 2019.

See also

- Basic Education Program (BEP)
- distance education
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

vouchers

Vouchers, sometimes known as opportunity scholarships, generally refer to programs that allow parents to remove their eligible child from public schools and receive a voucher to pay for private school costs or other education services. A voucher may cover partial or full tuition at a private school. States' voucher programs vary by student eligibility criteria, responsibilities of participating private schools, and other program specifics. As of 2015, 13 states plus the District of Columbia have voucher programs.

Three other types of programs that provide public funding support for parents that choose to move their children from public to non-public schools are:

- Individual Tax Credits and Deductions, authorized in nine states,
- Tax-Credit Scholarships, authorized in 16 states, and
- Education Savings Accounts, authorized in five states, including Tennessee.

Individual tax credits and deductions allow parents to receive state income tax relief for approved educational expenses (such as private school tuition, books, supplies, computers, tutors, and transportation.) Tax credits

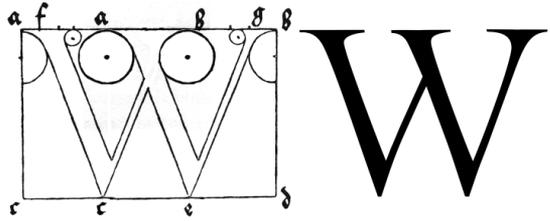
lower the total taxes a person owes and deductions reduce a person's total taxable income.

Tax-credit scholarships allow individuals and businesses to receive full or partial tax credits when they donate to nonprofits that provide private school scholarships. The amount of tax credits distributed is determined by state legislatures and affects the availability and size of the scholarships.

Education savings accounts allow parents to remove their child from a public school and receive public funds deposited into a government-authorized savings account for educational expenses (such as private school tuition and fees, online learning programs, private tutoring, educational therapies, and certain higher education expenses).

See also

- education savings account (ESA)
- Individualized Education Account (IEA)



What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) was established in 2002 as an initiative of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). The goal of the WWC is to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central source of scientific evidence about “what works” in education. The work of the WWC is done under contract with the USDOE (via the National Center of Education Evaluation at IES) by several firms with expertise in education, research methodology, and dissemination.

See also

- Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship

The Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship was approved by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2014, as part of the Tennessee Promise legislation. This lottery-funded grant provides financially independent students (determined by tax-filing status) the opportunity to attend one of the 27 Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT) at no cost through a last-dollar scholarship.

One of the state’s Drive to 55 initiatives, the Reconnect Scholarship covers the cost of tuition and mandatory fees, less all other gift aid, meaning that a student would first use any other financial assistance, such as Pell Grants or Tennessee Student Assistance Awards, before applying the Reconnect Scholarship to remaining tuition and fees. An eligible student must meet the following stipulations: be admitted to the program of study, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), be a financially

independent student, and be eligible under Tennessee state law (e.g., a Tennessee resident, not in default on a federal student loan, among others). A student must maintain continuous enrollment and is eligible to receive the Reconnect Scholarship for all coursework required for the program of study.

The Reconnect Scholarship differs from the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant in that it is limited to financially independent students and is a last-dollar scholarship award, which varies by student, rather than a flat grant amount per student.

See also

- Community College Reconnect Grant
- Drive to 55
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)
- Tennessee Promise

Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant

The Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant is a lottery-funded grant program for students seeking a diploma or certificate from a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT).

Eligible students must have been a Tennessee resident for one year immediately preceding the date of their grant application, file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and be eligible under Tennessee state law (e.g., a Tennessee resident, not in default on a federal student loan, among others).

The 2015-16 award amount is \$2,000. No student shall be eligible for more than one Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant. As of July 2015, students who were previously awarded a HOPE Scholarship may qualify for a Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant.

See also

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)
- Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS)

work-based learning

Work-based learning (WBL) is one method for students to develop skills

necessary for postsecondary education and future careers. WBL combines academic, technical, and social skills through collaborative activities with industry to allow students to explore possible career options. Introductory WBL activities in the elementary and middle school years may include school-directed experiences that expose students to a broad range of industries and career opportunities such as field trips and tours, career fairs, and guest speakers from various career and industry fields. More advanced activities in high school may include a more comprehensive experience both inside and outside of the classroom through job shadowing, service learning projects, and practicum experiences for credit. Juniors and seniors who are 16 years or older may earn high school credit for capstone WBL experiences such as internships, apprenticeships, and paid work experience.

Teachers must have an active WBL certificate from the Tennessee Department of Education to teach most WBL courses and oversee credit-bearing experiences. Students may also participate in WBL experiences through various other career and technical education practicum courses when the teacher of record holds an active WBL certificate. Students may apply credit-bearing capstone WBL experiences to fulfill the three elective credits required for graduation.

Industry and Career Awareness Activities	Career Exploration Activities	Career Preparation and Training Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career speakers • Field trips and tours • Career fairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career mentoring • Informational interviewing • Job shadowing 	Embedded Activities (Non-Credit Bearing Work in the Classroom)	Credit-Bearing Experiences
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career-related student competitions • Industry-driven project-based learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered apprenticeship programs • Cooperative education • Health science clinicals • Internships

See also

- service learning

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

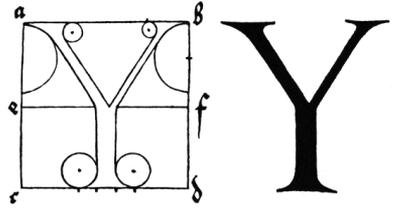
The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 created a partnership of the federal government with state and local governments to provide educational opportunities for adults not enrolled in school and who lack a high school diploma or the basic skills needed to function effectively in the workplace and in their daily lives. The WIA was intended to consolidate, coordinate, and improve a variety of employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs under the oversight of local workforce investment boards.

In 1999, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Workforce Development Act, creating a new department - the Department of Labor and Workforce Development - that would integrate all components of the Departments of Labor and Employment Security, along with a few workforce-related components from the Departments of Education and Human Services. The legislation called for closer collaboration among the three departments, along with the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Tennessee Board of Regents.

In 2014, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which supersedes the WIA.

See also

- adult education
- American Council on Education (ACE)
- General Education Development (GED) test
- high school equivalency exam
- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)
- Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Scholarship



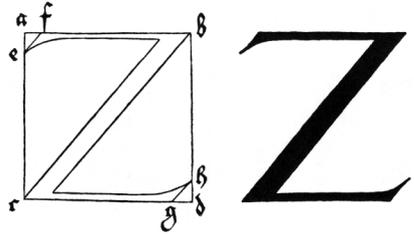
Youth Development Center (YDC)

The Youth Development Centers (YDCs) in Tennessee house juvenile offenders who have committed multiple serious offenses. YDC facilities are hardware-secured, long-term confinement facilities for juvenile prisoners.

The Division of Juvenile Justice in the Department of Children's Services (DCS) operates the state's three Youth Development Centers: Wilder (Somerville), Woodland Hills (Nashville), and Mountain View (Dandridge). Each facility operates with year-round schools and intensive services for its students.

See also

- Department of Children's Services education services



zero tolerance

The phrase “zero tolerance” is frequently used to refer to efforts, such as the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, to toughen school disciplinary actions for infractions that are considered severe. The federal act required all states to pass laws that would expel for one calendar year any student who brought a firearm to school. The federal law allows the director of schools or superintendent to modify the year-long expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. Any state failing to enact such legislation would forfeit federal education aid. Tennessee passed its corresponding statute in 1995.

The Tennessee General Assembly has defined offenses other than possession of a firearm that should be treated in the same manner, i.e., student expulsion for one calendar year unless modified by the director of schools. In Tennessee, the state-mandated zero tolerance offenses are:

- Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs
- Possession of handgun
- Possession of rifle or shotgun
- Possession of explosive, incendiary device
- Aggravated assault of teacher or staff

See also

- expulsion
- suspension



List of acronyms and terms

*Items in italics do not have their own entry in the glossary,
but are part of other glossary entries.*

Federal and State Laws

CCTA	Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010
EIA.....	Tennessee Education Improvement Act
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ESSA.....	Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015
FERPA.....	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
IDEA.....	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
RTTT	Race to the Top Act
<i>SAVE</i>	<i>Schools Against Violence in Education Act</i>
WIA.....	Workforce Investment Act

Key Terms

ADA	average daily attendance
ADM	average daily membership
AP	Advanced Placement
ASD	Achievement School District
AYP.....	adequate yearly progress
BEP.....	Basic Education Program
CDF	cost differential factor
COE.....	chairs of excellence
CTE	Career and Technical Education
ED.....	economically disadvantaged





EIA.....	Tennessee Education Improvement Act
EL	English Learner
ELT.....	extended learning time
EOC.....	End of Course
ESA.....	education savings account
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAPE.....	Free Appropriate Public Education
FRPM.....	Free and Reduced Price Meals
GAMS.....	General Assembly Merit Scholarship
GED.....	General Education Development
HiSET	High School Equivalency Test
HSE.....	high school equivalency
IB	International Baccalaureate
IEA.....	Individualized Education Account
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IHP	Individual Health Plan
I-Zone	Innovation Zone
LEA.....	local education agency (school district)
<i>LEP</i>	<i>Limited English Proficient</i>
<i>LEAP</i>	<i>Lottery for Education After-school Programs</i>
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
PIAAC	Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA.....	Program for International Student Assessment
RTI.....	Response to Intervention





<i>RTI</i> ²	<i>Response to Instruction and Intervention</i>
SAILS	Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support
SIC	Student Industry Certification
SIG.....	School Improvement Grant
SLC	small learning community
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
TCAP.....	Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program
TEAM.....	Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model
TEIS.....	Tennessee Early Intervention System
TELL.....	Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning Survey
TELS.....	Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TSAA.....	Tennessee Student Assistance Award
TTP.....	Tennessee Transfer Pathways
TVAAS	Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System
WBL.....	work-based learning

Organizations and Agencies

ACE	American Council on Education
AFT	American Federation of Teachers
CBER	Center for Business and Economic Research
<i>DCS</i>	<i>Tennessee Department of Children’s Services</i>
ECS	Education Commission of the States
ETS	Educational Testing Service
IES	Institute of Education Sciences
ISTE.....	International Society for Technology in Education





NBPTS	National Board of Professional Teaching Standards
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NEA.....	National Education Association
<i>OCR</i>	<i>Office for Civil Rights</i>
OECD.....	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PET	Professional Educators of Tennessee
SBOE.....	State Board of Education
SCORE	State Collaborative on Reforming Education
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board
TACIR....	Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
TBR	Tennessee Board of Regents
TCAT	Tennessee College of Applied Technology
TDOE.....	Tennessee Department of Education
TEA	Tennessee Education Association
THEC	Tennessee Higher Education Commission
TICUA.....	Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association
TOSS	Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents
TSAC	Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation
TSBA.....	Tennessee School Boards Association
USDOE	U.S. Department of Education
UT.....	University of Tennessee
WWC	What Works Clearinghouse
YDC.....	Youth Development Center





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