



Tennessee Educator Survey

2022 Overview

A report from the Tennessee Department of Education



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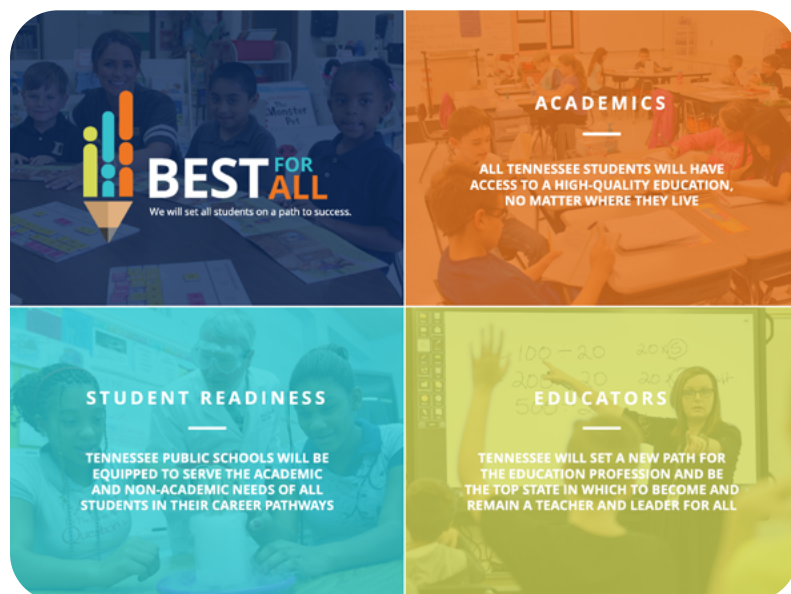
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Introduction

The Tennessee Educator Survey (TES) is the most comprehensive annual survey used to understand the experience of educators across Tennessee. Each year, the Tennessee Department of Education (department) and Tennessee Education Research Alliance (TERA) gather information to **empower stakeholders and decision-makers across the state to better meet the needs of teachers**. The TES intends to give researchers and policymakers **key insights into the lived experiences of Tennessee teachers on a variety of topics** including teacher satisfaction, preparedness, workload, and engagement with key department initiatives.

This report highlights the major takeaways from the 11th annual Tennessee Educator Survey, administered in spring 2022. The TES has collected over a decade's worth of information and it continues to build on years of insights and hone in on key policies, providing an excellent roadmap of where we go now as a state to continue to attract and retain Tennessee educators. Key policies informed by the TES include teacher retention initiatives, school funding, and COVID-19 recovery supports.

Visit the TES website to explore survey results at the state, district, and school levels at educatorsurvey.tnk12.gov.



About the TES

The TES, administered under a partnership between the department and TERA, is **the state's most comprehensive tool for gathering input from Tennessee teachers and administrators**. For over a decade, the TES has provided Tennessee with valuable insight into educator's perceptions of practice, policy, and school climate across the state.

The TES is a key initiative in the partnership between TERA and the department. TERA, a research-practice partnership based out of Vanderbilt University, conducts high-quality, rigorous research to encourage evidence-driven decision making across the department's Best for All strategic plan. **Best for All aims to set all Tennessee students on a path to success through strategic policies, programs, and practices.**

By contributing to research across Best for All's focus on supporting academics, student readiness, and educators, TERA's work has informed key findings around school leadership; educator diversity, development, and compensation; and school turnaround. The department remains laser focused on using evidence-based decisions to close gaps, provide resources for educators, strategically invest in proven initiatives, and accelerate student academic achievement.

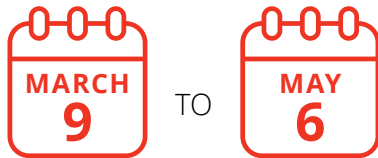
TERA's research highlights the work of the department to recruit, prepare, support, and retain educators. By utilizing the strong connections and data capabilities of an institution such as Vanderbilt, TERA provides the department with valuable support in administering and collecting TES results.

2022 REPORT

Tennessee Educator Survey & Findings

About this Year's Survey

THE 2022 TES WAS CONDUCTED



IN TENNESSEE...



51% OF TEACHERS +



51% of ADMINISTRATORS



completed the TES & provided *reflections of educators across the state*

TES PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED...



32,000+ TEACHERS

UP TO 2,000 ADMINISTRATORS



5,000+ OTHER CERTIFIED STAFF

39,416 TOTAL TES PARTICIPANTS

FINDING 1

Overall, teachers' responses indicate support for key academic initiatives the state has launched to recover learning and accelerate student achievement.

To combat the impacts of learning loss, Tennessee has implemented a plan to utilize a data-centered approach to give students personalized and unique learning experiences that allow them to grow and succeed beyond expectation. Overall, teachers in Tennessee demonstrated support for the key components of this plan including:



High-impact tutoring



Assessments as a support for refining teacher practices



General academic support on subjects such as ELA and math



Additional COVID-19 recovery initiatives



Tutoring

The 2022 TES found that Tennessee educators believe that the tutoring their students receive is associated with improved academic performance. Eighty-two percent of teachers who responded believed that the tutoring their students had received was associated with improved academic performance in their classroom. Regarding Tennessee Accelerating Literacy and Learning Corps (TN ALL Corps), the state's high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring program, **87 percent of teachers who responded reported seeing a noticeable improvement in the academic performance of students who received tutoring through the TN ALL Corps program.**



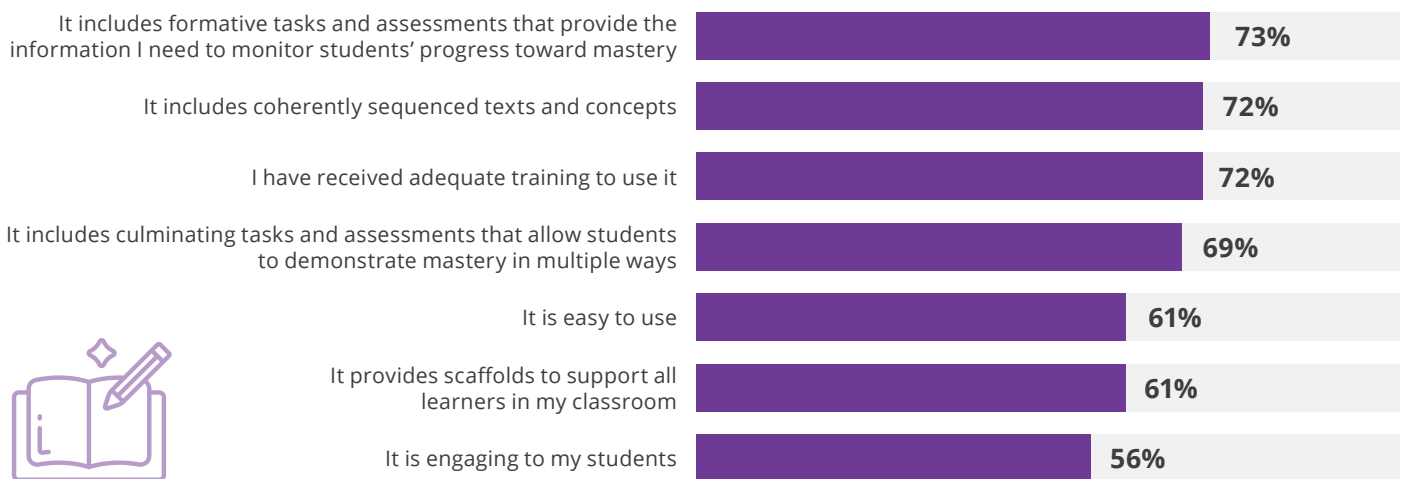
Curriculum

The 2022 TES asked teachers a variety of questions about curriculum and teaching resources to determine where more support was needed at both the district and state levels. In 2022, the TES asked English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics teachers about curricular materials specific to their subject. 70 percent of teachers who responded believe the curriculum provided includes formative tasks and assessments to understand student progression.

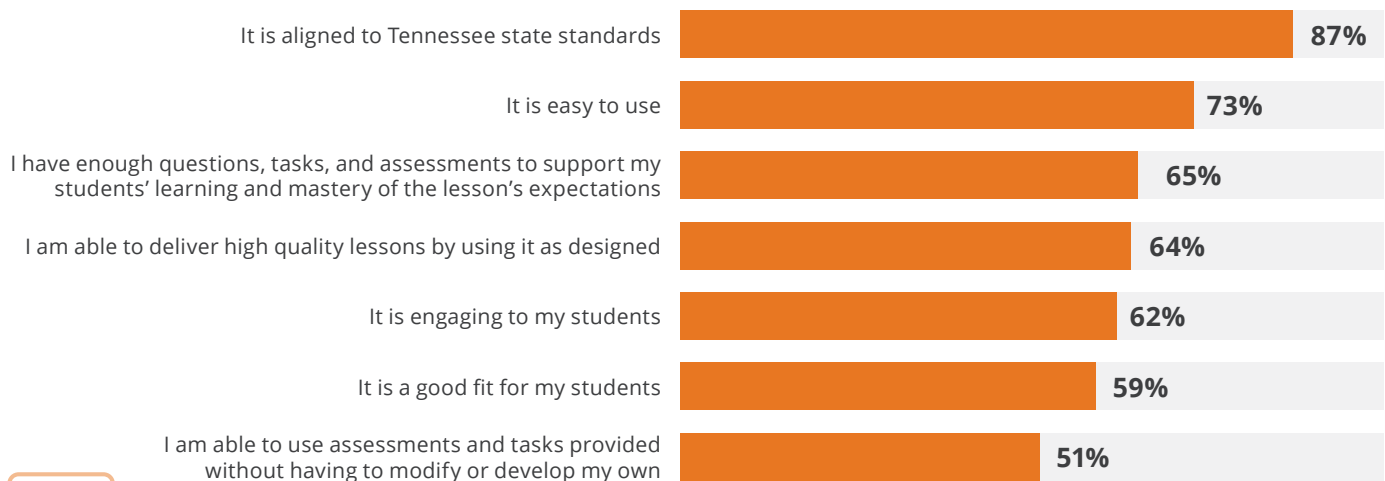
A majority of ELA and mathematics teachers indicated agreement with a variety of statements about the quality and usability of the curriculum provided by their school or district.

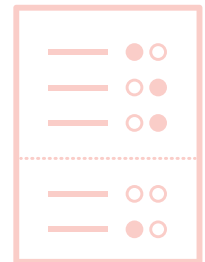


Teacher Beliefs about School/District-Provided ELA Curriculum (% of teachers responding)



Teacher Beliefs about School/District-Provided Math Curriculum (% of teachers responding)

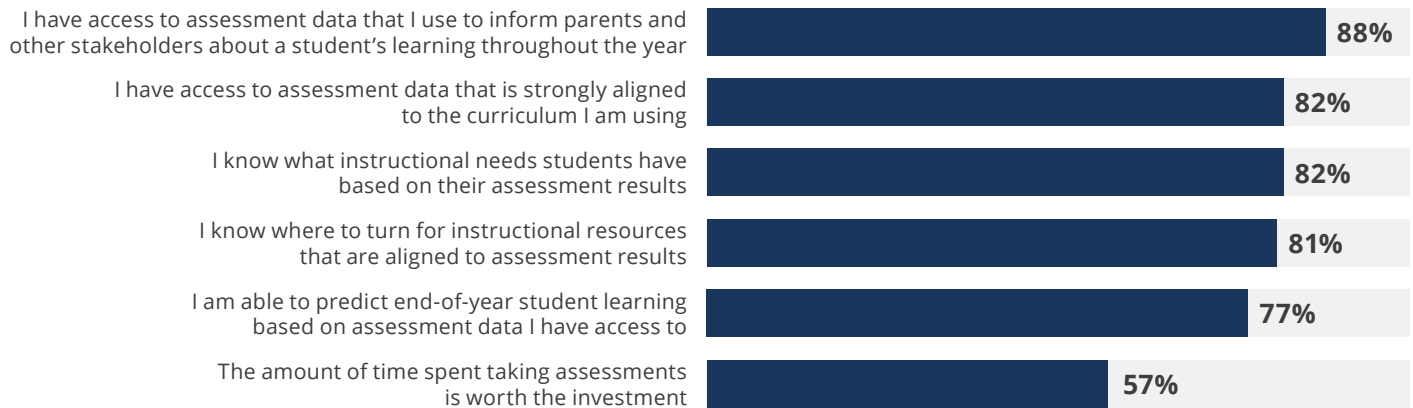


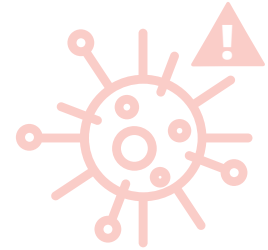


Assessments as a Support for Teaching Practice

Across the state, school districts use a variety of formative and summative assessments to measure student learning, including locally determined benchmark testing, and end-of-year assessments like the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). A rigorous assessment system aligned to high-quality, Tennessee-specific academic standards is one factor that has helped Tennessee continue to make academic progress. The 2022 TES asked teachers to report on their access to and use of assessments, and teachers indicated assessments are effective teaching tools that help monitor and predict student achievement.

Teacher Access to and Use of Assessments (% of teachers responding)





COVID-19 Recovery: Learning Loss and Perceived Experience

In the 2022 TES:



48% of TEACHERS reported they were only able to **cover 75% or less of the curriculum** they would cover in a normal year, down from 60% in 2021.



60% of TEACHERS reported **“students missing instructional time” as their greatest concern** related to the COVID-19 pandemic, comparable to the response in 2021.



Fortunately, in January 2021, Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly convened a special legislative session on education, to address urgent issues facing Tennessee students and schools as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the special legislative session passed legislation on:

ACCOUNTABILITY

LEARNING LOSS

LITERACY

TEACHER PAY

Two key pieces of legislation passed during the special legislative session—the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Acceleration Act and Tennessee Literacy Success Act—are essential to accelerating student academic achievement. The Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Acceleration Act established summer learning camps for elementary students to help them recover learning loss and accelerate academic achievement. The Tennessee Literacy Success Act laid the policy foundation for how our state teaches reading through phonics-based instruction.

FINDING 2

Teachers highlighted key supports that boost student success.

Tennessee has identified key strategies for preparing students for success, and teachers in Tennessee largely support strategies to address the student readiness as well as the non-academic needs of students, as evidenced in the TES results.



Career and technical education (CTE)



Postsecondary achievement measures



Other supports for non-academic needs

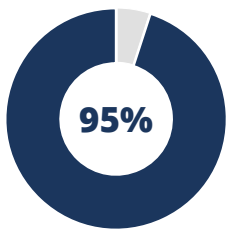


Trauma-informed practices

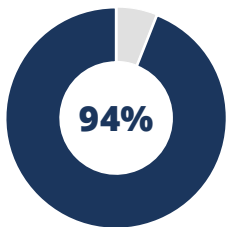


Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Of teachers who responded indicating that they teach CTE:



reported that their programs of study include **course offerings that reflect local labor market needs**



reported that **students are interested in those programs**



Postsecondary Preparedness

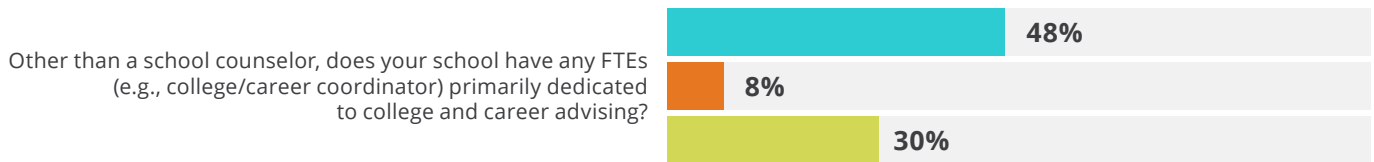
The 2022 TES asked middle and high school teachers to reflect on their ability to help students explore postsecondary plans. Overall, high school teachers reported being well-prepared to support students in postsecondary plans, with 94 percent of high school teachers who responded indicating they explicitly connect course content to college and career opportunities for their students, and 93 percent of high school teachers indicating being familiar with students' postsecondary and career goals.

Additionally, high school administrators were more likely than middle school administrators to indicate having community organizations and specific, building-level staff to help support college and career readiness.

Results from the 2021 TES indicated that more targeted support with postsecondary planning was needed in middle school grades. In 2022, 82 percent of middle school teachers who responded indicated they explicitly connect course content to college and career opportunities for their students, and 84 percent of middle school teachers reported being familiar with students' postsecondary goals. TES results suggest the value of continued focus on college and career education overall. Compared with 2021, about the same proportion of high school teachers and more middle school teachers in 2022 agreed that their course content is related to college and career opportunities and that they are familiar with post-secondary goals and pathways.



College and Career Staff in Middle and High Schools (% of school leaders responding)



■ High school leaders
 ■ Middle school leaders
 ■ All leaders



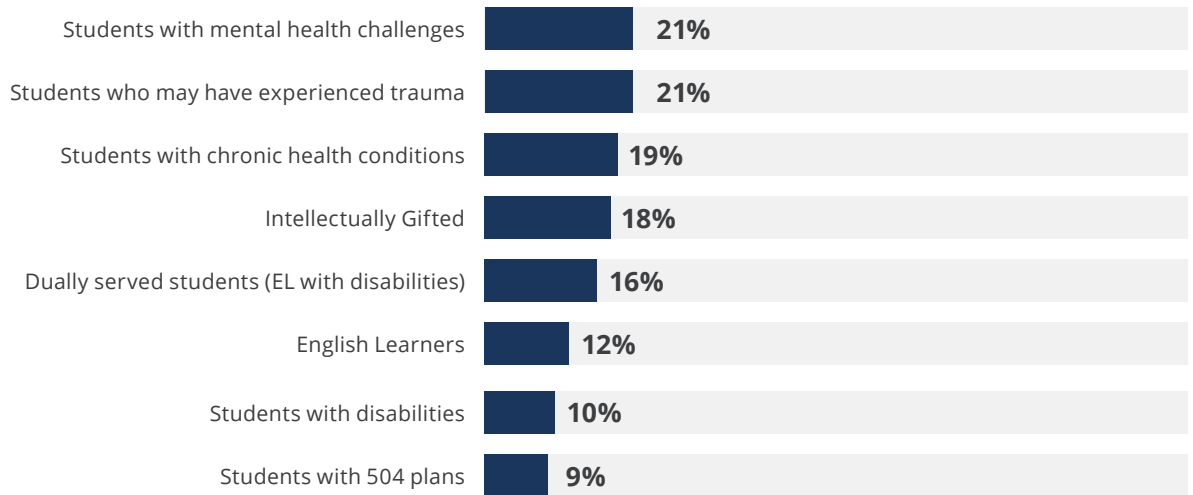
Non-Academic Needs

The 2022 TES asked teachers to report on their ability to serve the non-academic needs of students.

MORE THAN 1 IN 5 TEACHERS reported not having access to training nor resources to support students with mental health challenges or students experiencing trauma.



No access to either resources or training to support this group (% of teachers responding)



Trauma-Informed Practices

It is important for students to have supportive learning environments that are safe and welcoming, particularly by offering trauma-informed practices to support individual needs. On the 2022 TES, 65 percent of teachers who responded reported understanding how to use trauma-informed practices to support their students' needs, and 73 percent of teachers believed that their school's leadership and/or educators have an interest in expanding or adding trauma-informed practices.

The 2022 TES asked teachers to name the **most urgent needs for additional support/resources** at their school. Most frequently mentioned were **counseling and psychological/social services (62 percent of teachers)**, and **social/personal skills and school climate (56 percent)**.





FINDING 3

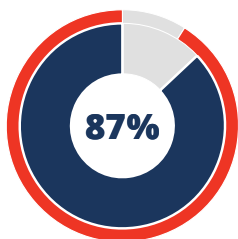
Teachers highlight key opportunities to boost satisfaction and retention.

One of the key uses of the TES is to support state leaders in understanding the teacher experience in Tennessee. Teacher responses on these sections in particular provide helpful information on additional support or initiatives that might be needed to bolster the teacher profession in Tennessee.

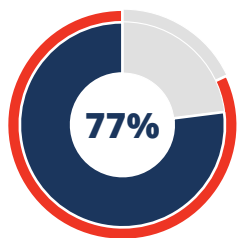


Teacher Satisfaction

In the 2022 TES, of teachers who responded:



reported being **generally satisfied with being a teacher in their school**, down from 91 percent in 2021.



reported planning to **continue teaching in their current school next year**, down from 82 percent in 2021.

■ 2022 ■ 2021

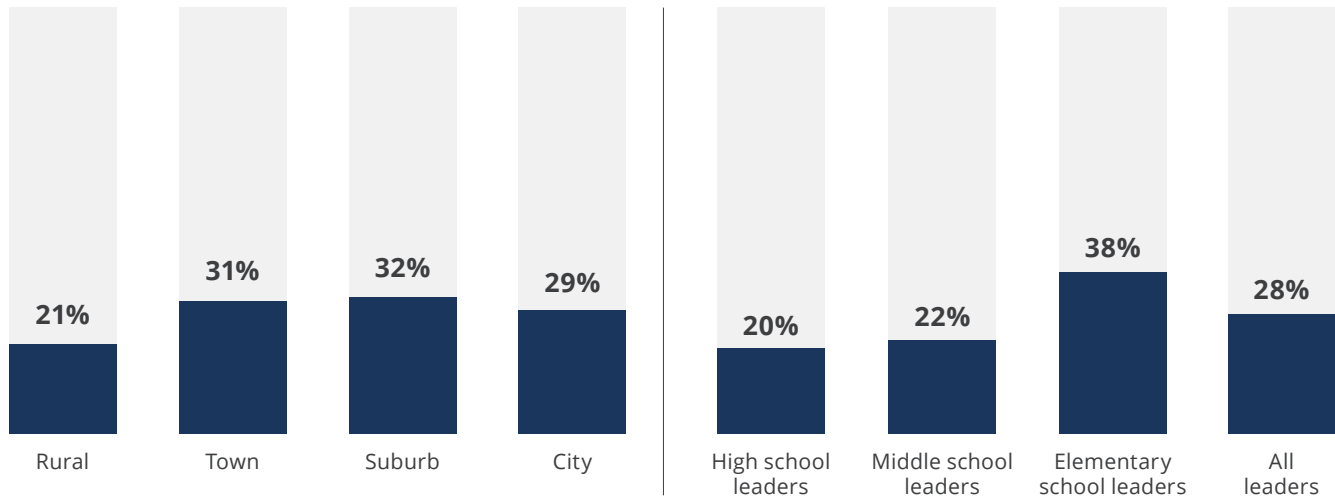


Teacher Retention and Staffing

Research indicates that teachers are the most important in-school influence on student achievement¹. Given the impact of teachers on students' academic outcomes, it is important to monitor the teacher labor market in Tennessee. The 2022 TES asked administrators to reflect on staffing needs within their district and report whether they have a sufficiently large pool of applicants to choose a qualified applicant for open teaching positions. While responses indicate difficulty with hiring qualified applicants in all areas and grade bands, staffing challenges are worse in certain categories. Only 21 percent of rural school leaders who responded, and 20 percent of high school administrators who responded, reported having a sufficiently large pool of applicants to choose a qualified applicant for open teaching positions.



Percent of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed there is sufficient pool of applications to choose a qualified candidate from for open positions at their school:



¹ Hanushek, Eric A., John F. Kain, and Steven G. Rivkin. 1998. "Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement." New York: National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 669

All TN ALL Corps tutoring follows Brown University’s evidence-based tutoring research and requires high-dosage, low-ratio sessions. These research elements include English Language Arts (ELA) and math tutoring, which are provided in small groups with a 1:3 adult to student ratio in grades 1-5, and 1:4 adult to student ratio in grades 6-8. Sessions must occur at least twice a week and be held for a minimum of 30 minutes in each session. In addition to the high-dosage low-ratio tutoring offered within TN ALL Corps, the TISA provides direct allocations for any rising 4th grade student who did not score proficient or above on their ELA TCAP. This direct funding can be used by districts to create their own high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring programs.

TN ALL Corps
Tennessee Accelerating Literacy & Learning Corps

DISTRICTS...
MAY CHOOSE which students/grades to serve

MUST SERVE students in grades **1-5**

1:3 TUTOR RATIO

1:4 MAX RATIO **MAY CHOOSE TO SERVE** students in grades **6-8**

Contributions per tutored student per year...

TDOE	\$700	DISTRICT	\$800
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CONTENT MUST FOCUS ON READING OR MATH for an entire semester*

30-45 MINUTE SESSIONS

2-3 SESSIONS PER WEEK

*Review student data & may choose to change the focus of the content after each semester, but students must be served for a full year.

Data collection + reporting requirements consistent with what is required in ESSER.

BEST FOR ALL #TNBestforALL

TN Department of Education

In 2019, the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission conducted a statewide ELA adoption process. In June 2020, **97 percent of districts indicated they adopted and purchased new materials for classroom use.** During the 2020-22 school years, **over 100 districts participated in literacy implementation networks.** These networks have focused on supporting educators with implementation of their adopted ELA materials. Networks have focused on supporting lesson preparation, student work analysis, and teacher feedback.



The Tennessee Literacy Success Act contains requirements for teacher training in evidence-based literacy as well. Between May 2021 and August 2022, **over 30,000 Tennessee educators have completed the required teacher training in foundational literacy skills.** Of the 30,000 educators, **another 18,000 teachers completed a full 60 hours of literacy training and successfully completed the performance assessment.** Additionally, the Act requires educator preparation programs to provide teacher candidates with training on foundational literacy skills, and new teachers seeking to teach in K-5 grades will be required to pass a reading instruction assessment starting in August 2023.

The department also commissioned the development of supplemental instructional materials that focus on early reading. The TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement is a free resource that provides pre-K through second grade teachers evidenced-based literacy lessons focusing on developing sounds-first instruction. These daily lessons help teachers ensure that students have focused instruction on learning to read. **58 percent of pre-K teachers and 57 percent of K-2 teachers responding reported acquaintance with and at least some use of the supplement in their teaching.**

Tennessee educators have access to the TCAP Educator Portal to provide all educators in tested grades and subjects with results for individual students, the ability to create custom reports and print individual student score reports, and historical data for tested students.

The department also offers a suite of innovative assessment supports for educators including mock assessments, an item bank of released TCAP questions, and a set of optional assessments that are designed to inform educators on student readiness for the upcoming school year.

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

In alignment with the Best for All strategic plan, the department recognized the impending impact the global pandemic has on K-12 education in Tennessee and continues to proactively and strategically commit investments to prioritize meeting the needs of all Tennessee students through the state's ARP ESSER plan, which lays out the state's spending strategy for its portion of federal COVID-19 relief and stimulus funding to benefit K-12 education in Tennessee. Specifically, the state plan highlights combatting existing gaps in student achievement and opportunity, addressing the needs of rural communities, improving early literacy, investing in a statewide tutoring corps, TN ALL Corps, and accelerating student academic achievement across the state.

2021-22 TCAP Participation



59 DISTRICTS
HIGHER THAN 99%



1,950,372
TESTS TAKEN



749,453
BY UNIQUE STUDENTS

TENNESSEE'S FOCUS ON *Setting All Students on a Path to Success*

The TISA aims to allocate funding in alignment with individual student needs to prepare each high school graduate to succeed in the postsecondary program or career of the graduate's choice. This funding model also offers direct funding for students enrolled and progressing in Career and Technical Education Programs. The department will also conduct an annual review of all resources required to support the Career and Technical Education Program.

In July 2022, the department announced **\$2.9 million in Perkins Reserve Grants to 44 school districts for the 2022-23 school year to support career and technical education (CTE) across the state.** This year's Perkins Reserve Grant recipients submitted applications for programs, initiatives, and strategies that help to foster innovation by identifying and promoting CTE programs, practices, and strategies to prepare individuals for nontraditional fields. Some applicants sought funding to provide drone technology and industry credentials for multiple programs, new culinary arts equipment for students, and a STEM makerspace for project-based opportunities. Other applicants focused on creating a school-based enterprise offering wireless internet service to eliminate barriers to student success and modernizing welding with industry standard equipment.

In 2022, the department released the intent to apply for the **\$500 million Tennessee Innovative School Models grant opportunity to boost opportunities for career readiness and student success statewide.** The state will invest \$500 million over the next four years to give all public middle and high schools the opportunity to establish an Innovative School Model.

INNOVATIVE
SCHOOL MODELS





Through a partnership with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the department created the Emotional Support Line for Pandemic Stress and the Educator Emotional Support video series to support educators and district and school staff experiencing significant stress and anxiety due to the pandemic.

Additionally, the Tennessee Department of Children Services has continued to provide funding to the department for trauma-informed instructional approaches. This professional development opportunity was provided to 176 school cohorts. Thus, the percentage of students across Tennessee in trauma-informed school environments grew to approximately 14 percent.

In September 2021, the department received an approximately **\$4.7 million five-year Project AWARE grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide mental and behavioral support for students in three additional Tennessee school districts** (Bledsoe County Schools, Haywood County Schools, and Scott County Schools) in collaboration with the Tennessee Health and Substance Abuse Services.

More specifically, the grant will provide training for school personnel to detect and respond to mental health needs and provide students and their families, as well as other adults within the community who interact with school-aged children with additional services and supports.

In August 2022, the department launched the Resilient School Communities grant for all Tennessee public school districts. This **\$10.2 million dollar investment addresses needs for school-based support, expand school-based initiatives, and increase staff capacity to best serve students, particularly through trauma-informed approaches.** The grant funding will cover the cost of resources to train participating districts in trauma-informed practices while receiving regional and state-level support for full implementation. Additionally, the grant funding will increase staff capacity for school-based support, including mental health support staff, such as counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and behavioral specialists.



In spring 2023, the department will launch social and personal competencies training across the state. School staff will learn what social and personal competencies consist of, how skills have a structure of support much like academic skills and how explicitly integrating social personal competencies across settings can create positive outcomes for students, teachers, schools, and communities.



TENNESSEE'S PROACTIVE RESPONSE to Improving Tennessee Educator Experience

In 2022, the department and the University of Tennessee System announced the *launch of the Tennessee Grow Your Own Center, a \$20 million investment to support statewide scale for innovative educator pipeline work through Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship model.*

Tennessee is the *first state in the country* to sponsor Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship programs between school districts and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs). Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship model aligns leading practices in teacher preparation and development with the rigors of the nationally registered apprenticeship processes.

With a presence in every county statewide and multiple campus locations—UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin, and UT Southern—the University of Tennessee System will leverage the System's reach to attract more aspiring educators to the profession. The Tennessee Grow Your Own Center will develop further innovative educator credentialing, additional endorsements, and professional development that reimagines coursework and content across entry points. The center's work will support an increase in the statewide EPP enrollment, developing future educators and leaders to better support the students and state of Tennessee.



Strengthening the educator pipeline





Closing

In conclusion, the 11th annual Tennessee Educator Survey (TES) responses highlighted the experience of Tennessee educators and overall school climate of K-12 education across the state as we emerged from a pandemic and focused on strong implementation of key policies. The TES continues to serve as a primary resource for the department, elected officials, and other education stakeholders to gain an understanding of Tennessee educators needs and where additional supports and resources are needed.

As we continue to focus on being the best state in which to become and remain a teacher, Tennessee is focused on teacher retention initiatives, school funding, and accelerating academic achievement while continuing to provide the best for all students.

Visit the TES website to explore survey results at the state, district, and school levels at educatorsurvey.tnk12.gov.

A message from the Tennessee Educator Survey Team

To the more than 32,000 teachers, 2,000 administrators, and 5,000 other certified staff who participated in the Tennessee Educator Survey this year, we sincerely thank you.

Please continue to make your voice heard and hold us accountable to listen. To all readers, we thank you for your interest in learning from the perspectives of Tennessee’s phenomenal educators.

For any questions on this brief, reach out to tdoe.research@tn.gov.



About TN Education Research Alliance

TERA brings together Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College and the Tennessee Department of Education to create an expanding body of knowledge that directly impacts Tennessee’s school improvement strategies. Through TERA, scholars at Vanderbilt and other leading universities carry out high-quality, practical research that informs state-level policy, impacts the practice in schools and districts across Tennessee, and contributes to national conversations on K-12 education. For more information visit, peabody.vanderbilt.edu/TERA.



About Tennessee Department of Education

The Tennessee Department of Education serves the state’s nearly one million PK-12 students in 1,800 schools across 147 diverse districts—with both distinct urban and rural populations. As a department, we are dedicated to the goal of dramatically improving student achievement and committed to the belief that children from all backgrounds can succeed when given the opportunities they deserve. For more information, visit tn.gov/education.



About the Best for All Strategic Plan

Tennessee’s Best for All strategic plan sets a vision and intention that, together as a state, we will set all students on a path to success. The plan focuses the department’s work on three strategic priorities: Academics, Whole Child, and Educators. By taking a comprehensive and coherent approach to providing quality academic programs, serving the whole child, and developing and supporting teachers and leaders, we can ensure Tennessee is the best for all students. For more information, visit bestforallplan.tnedu.gov.



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#TNBestforAll

We will set all students on a path to success.

 @TennesseeEducation

 @TNedu

 @tndeptofedu

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