

Notable Achievements under Commissioner McQueen

Since Commissioner McQueen joined the department of education in January 2015, Tennessee's students and teachers have shown remarkable progress, and the state has routinely been pointed to as an example for the country about how to improve. Here are a few highlights:

- The year she started, she launched a new, bold strategic plan and vision for schools called *Tennessee Succeeds* that focused on increasing postsecondary and career readiness for all of Tennessee's 1 million students. *Tennessee Succeeds* eventually folded into the state's highly acclaimed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan that was supported by extensive statewide stakeholder engagement.
- While commissioner, Dr. McQueen continued the state's trajectory as one of the fastest improving states in the country in K-12 education, while adding historic gains in science as measured by the National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- In 2017 and 2018, Tennessee students posted the state's highest high school graduation rate in its history at 89.1%.
- In 2018, students again earned the best overall statewide ACT average and best overall student participation rate at 20.2 and 97%, respectively.
- A record high number of students are taking and attaining credit for early college coursework, and a record high number of students are earning college credit through AP tests.
- The department has elevated career and technical education, with more than 40% additional students in industry-aligned career and technical education pathways than in 2015, and dozens of additional options in high school to prepare for the work place. More than 80% of high school students are now taking career and technical education classes.
- This year, Tennessee earned its first ever "A" rating for its standards and the rigor of its test after receiving an "F" rating a decade earlier.
- And, tens of thousands of educators continue to tell us through the annual Tennessee educator survey that our teacher evaluation system is helping them improve, with 72% of teachers in 2018 saying evaluation helps them improve their teaching – up from 38% in 2012.

She has also led a number of initiatives that are leading to student success:

- Implementation of new, rigorous standards in all four primary content areas (math, English language arts, science, and social studies) and the state's new aligned assessment
- Tennessee's free ACT senior retake opportunity – the only one of its kind in the country
- A number of programs designed to help cultivate and grow school principals, including the Governor's Aspiring School Leaders Program and Transforming School Leadership initiative
- The launch of a new school improvement framework that builds on what we have learned about school turnaround over the past several years and incorporates new evidence-based options that can support district success
- Tennessee Pathways, which is creating opportunities for students to seamlessly transition into the workforce after high school and maximize their career opportunities in their community

Additionally, Commissioner McQueen, alongside Governor Haslam, prioritized investing in teacher salaries. Since 2011, Tennessee has invested an additional \$500 million in teacher salaries as part of a \$1.5 billion increase in education funding – record investments for our state.

One of Commissioner McQueen's most important initiatives has focused on Tennessee's literacy challenges. In 2016, she launched *Read to be Ready* with a vision to ensure at least 75% of students are proficient in reading by 2025. Read to be Ready includes a statewide coaching network for elementary reading teachers, new training and investments in better resources for students, new standards and expectations in educator preparation, and summer reading camps annually impacting almost 8,000 students who are furthest behind in reading. These efforts are already showing promise. In 2018, grades 3-5 student achievement in literacy showed improvements after years of stagnation, and the reading camps have shown statistically significant outcomes for the past two years.

During her four years as commissioner, Commissioner McQueen visited virtually every school district in the state as part of her *Classroom Chronicles* tour and blog series and led a statewide campaign called *Teach Today, Change Tomorrow* that actively promoted the teaching profession among exceptional high school students. She also initiated a series of grant opportunities to elevate and innovate around recruitment of aspiring teachers into preparation programs and diversifying the teaching profession in Tennessee.

Commissioner McQueen has also sought to model opportunities for teacher leadership and expanded teacher leadership opportunities in the state. She supported the start-up of the Hope Street Group fellowship in Tennessee, elevated the Teacher Advisory Council and added an alumni council, doubled the number of teacher-leader networks across the state, started the Tennessee Teacher Advisory Network, and created a permanent Director of Educator Engagement position at the department, which is currently being held by a former Tennessee Teacher of the Year.

Dr. McQueen's entire career has been focused on teacher effectiveness – first as an award-winning teacher and then as a faculty member, department chair, and dean of Lipscomb University's College of Education. Under Dr. McQueen's leadership as dean, Lipscomb became one of the highest rated teacher preparation programs in Tennessee and nationally, as measured by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). During her years as dean from 2008-2015, Dr. McQueen doubled the size and reach of the college's graduate programs with new master's degrees and certificates, the university's first doctoral program, and online and off-campus offerings.

She brought a Teach for America partnership to Lipscomb, founded the Ayers Institute for Teacher Learning and Innovation, and started the IDEAL program as a postsecondary program for students with intellectual difficulties. Dr. McQueen's influence also led to the college's unique, multi-year engagement supporting teachers in the state's first charter school conversion, as well as the Pionero Scholars program that supports Latino youth in becoming teachers. Beginning in 2013, McQueen was named senior vice president at Lipscomb where she served on the university's executive leadership team and had responsibility for both the college of education and three schools serving Pre-K through 12th grade students at Lipscomb Academy.

Dr. McQueen has served on the Tennessee Board of Regents, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, the board of the Council of the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and the executive board for the Council of Chief State School Officers. She is also an invited member of Chiefs for Change. Dr. McQueen was awarded the Innovator in Education award from Lipscomb University in 2017. Dr. McQueen holds a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, a master's degree from Vanderbilt University, and a bachelor's degree from Lipscomb University.