

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

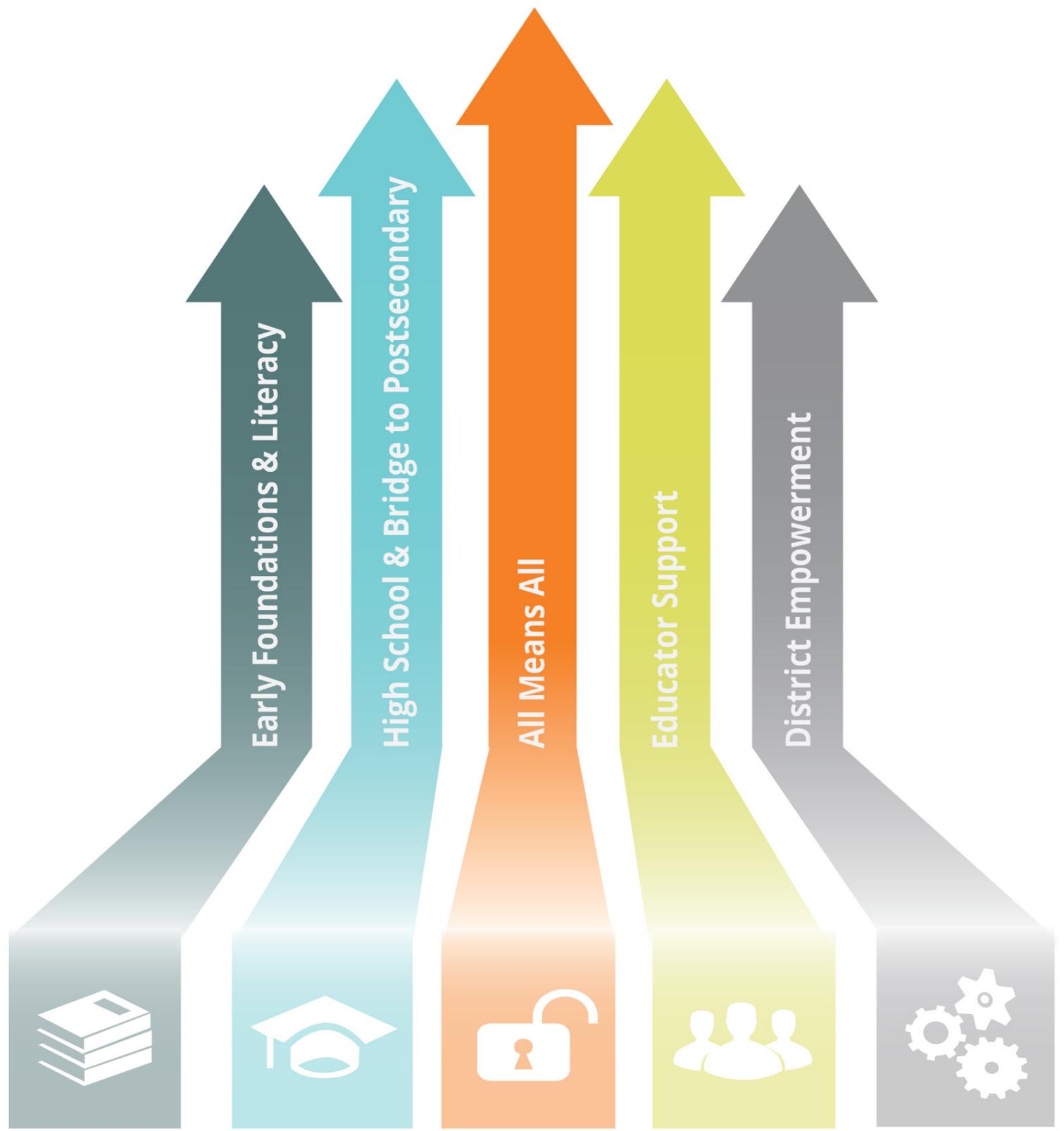


TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

1 Tennessee will rank in the top half of states on NAEP by 2019.

2 The average ACT composite score in Tennessee will be a 21 by 2020.

3 The majority of high school graduates from the class of 2020 will earn a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.



STANDARDS | ASSESSMENT | ACCOUNTABILITY

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Education in Tennessee is on the rise. With the close of the Race to the Top era, we celebrate a period of groundbreaking change. During this period, Tennessee saw striking successes in student achievement that also called attention to the continued need to ensure students' long-term success. We now launch a new chapter where we will build on the strong foundation in each of our schools and districts to realize our goals for Tennessee students. If we are successful:

Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark upon their chosen path in life.

This is our unifying vision: success for all students upon graduation from high school. This is how Tennessee Succeeds.

To this end, we have set three ambitious goals to guide our work through the next five years:

1 **Tennessee will rank in the top half of states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2019.**

In 2013, our state posted the largest improvements ever recorded on the NAEP test, also known as the Nation's Report Card. These gains brought the state's ranking from the mid-40s (rankings vary by subject) into the mid-30s. We hope to see the state's ranking continue to increase so that our students' achievement places Tennessee in the top half of states by 2019.

2 **The average ACT composite score in Tennessee will be a 21 by 2020.**

The ACT serves as a gateway to college and career in Tennessee, determining students' eligibility for the HOPE scholarship, requirements for postsecondary remedial or developmental coursework, and sometimes entry-level salary. Between 2011 and 2015, we have seen the average Tennessee ACT score for public students increase from 19.0 to 19.4. By 2020, we will raise this number to 21, signaling that the average student in Tennessee is prepared for postsecondary coursework.

3 **The majority of high school graduates from the class of 2020 will earn a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.**

Governor Haslam's Tennessee Promise initiative, which makes community and technical college free to all Tennessee high school graduates, signals the commitment across the state to prepare students for a future where most Tennessee jobs require postsecondary success. Yet, we are far from this goal. While almost 60 percent of high school graduates enroll in postsecondary, only 24 percent complete. For the graduating class of 2020, we aim to shift the balance so that the majority of students earn a certificate, diploma, or degree within six years of graduation.



GOAL 1

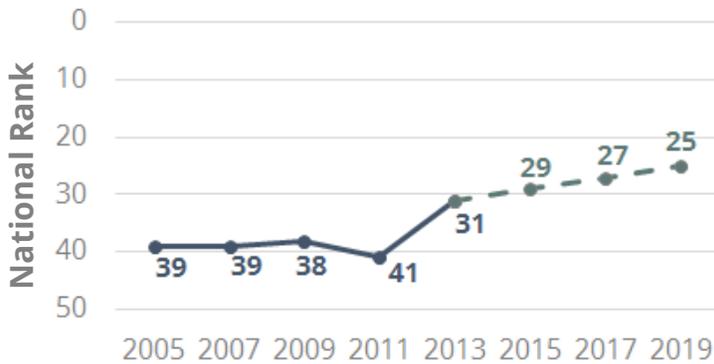
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Reading

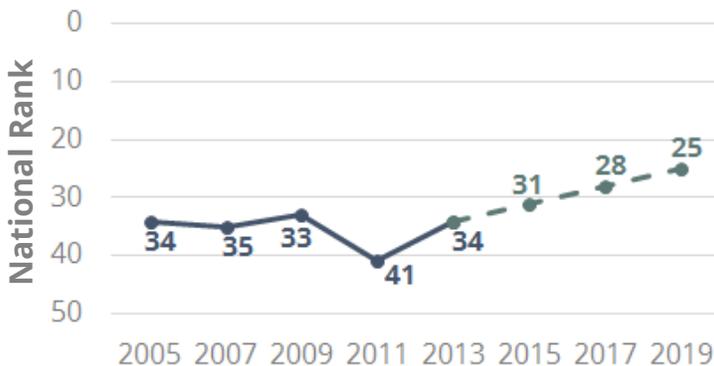
Grade 4

Past Performance & Path to Ranking in the Top Half of States by 2019



Grade 8

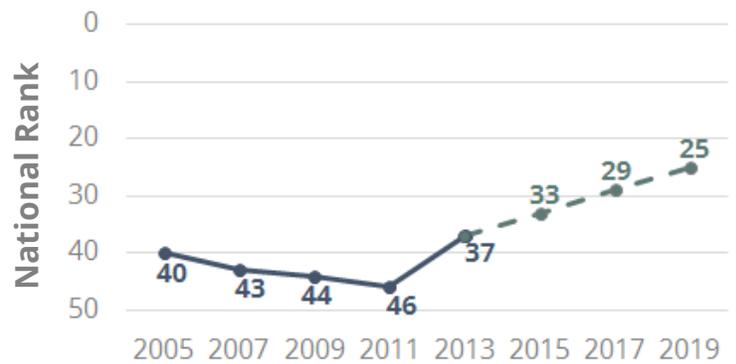
Past Performance & Path to Ranking in the Top Half of States by 2019



Mathematics

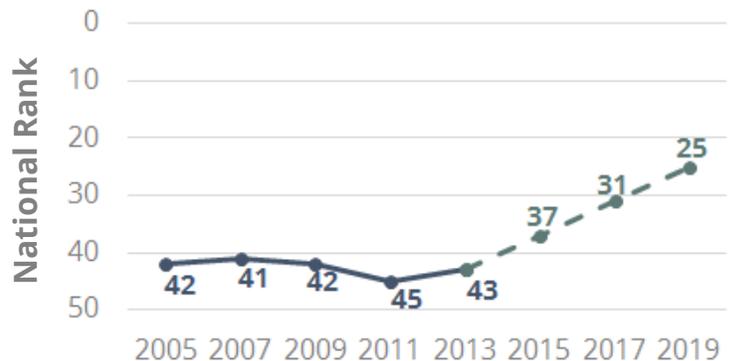
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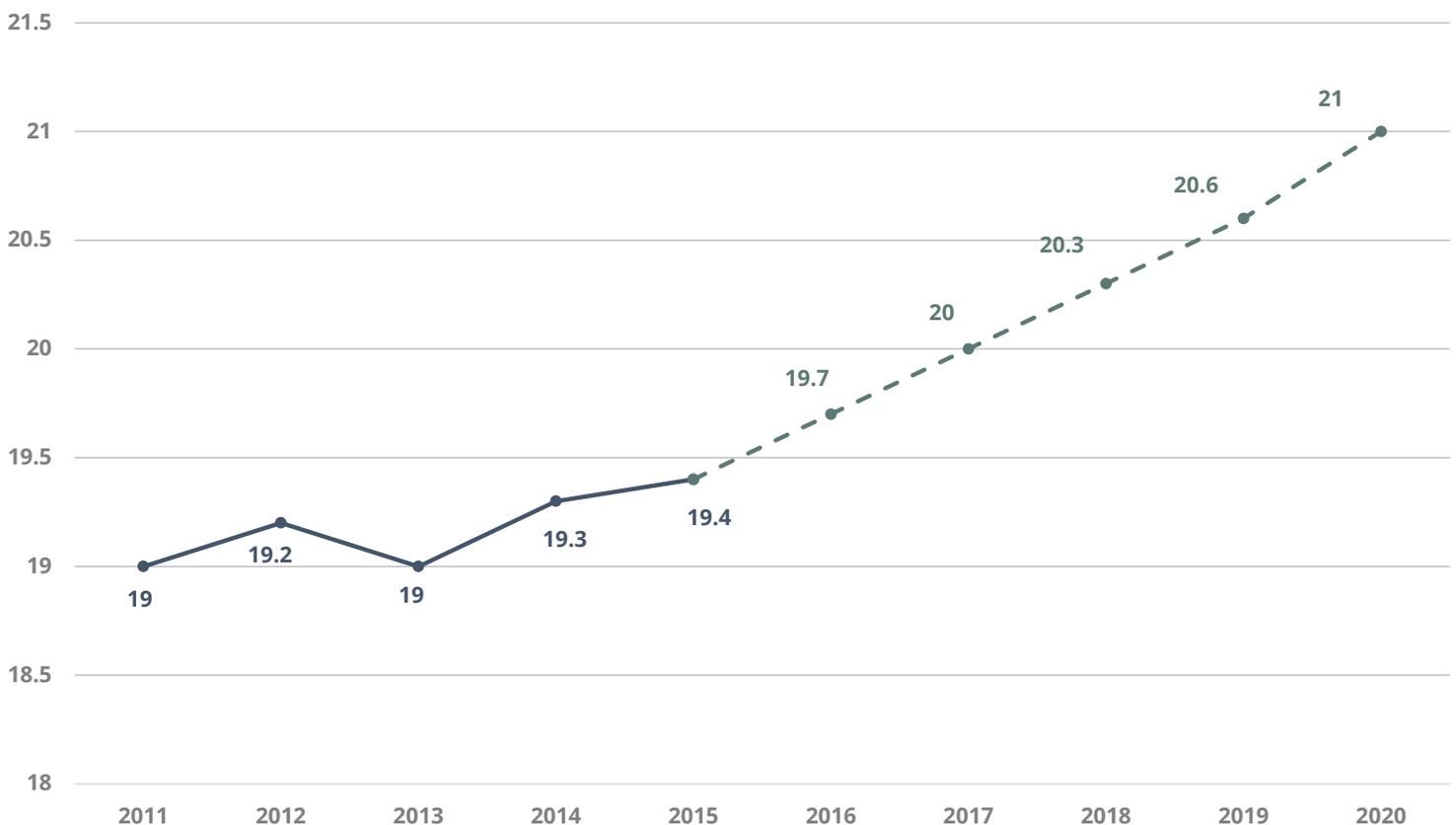
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ACT Composite Scores Over Time

Past Performance & Path to Achieving a Statewide Average of 21 on the ACT by 2020



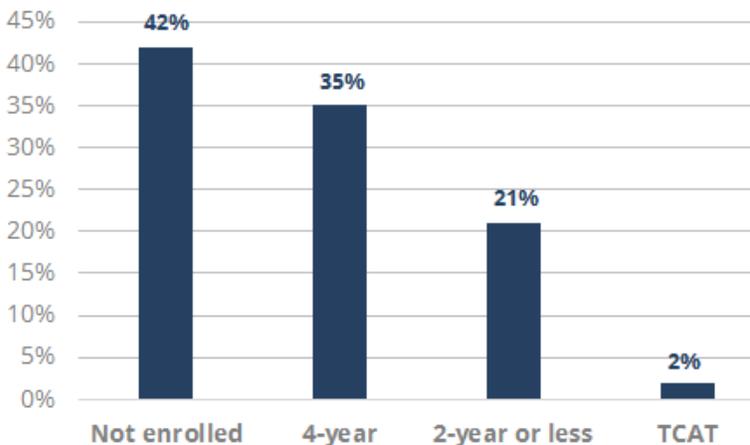


GOAL 3

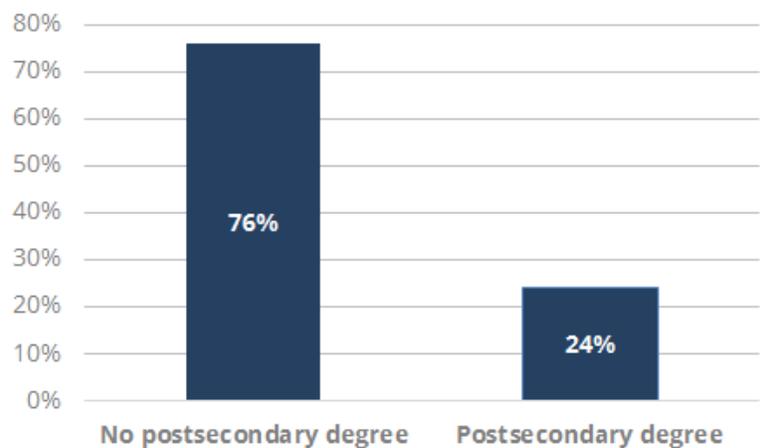
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Postsecondary Enrollment
Next Steps After High School Graduation
Based on the Graduates from Class of 2014



Postsecondary Attainment
Six Years After High School Graduation
Based on the Graduates from Class of 2008





HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

We will accomplish these goals by maintaining the department's current emphasis on rigorous standards, aligned assessment, and strong accountability, and by focusing on five priority areas: **early foundations and literacy, high school and bridge to postsecondary, all means all, educator support, and district empowerment.** As part of this work, the department will continue to support the governor's goal of becoming the fastest improving state in the nation in raising teacher pay.

STANDARDS

We will maintain high standards in Tennessee to ensure students are ready for postsecondary and the workforce.

- Review current math and English language arts standards
- Review new science standards and current social studies standards
- Continue reviews of all standards on a six-year cycle

ASSESSMENT

We will align statewide assessments to Tennessee's standards with a keen focus on improving assessments to give better information about critical thinking, problem solving, and authentic skills necessary for postsecondary and the workforce.

- Administer a new and improved TCAP in math and English language arts, TNReady, in 2016
- Continue to improve online testing and TNReady during transition years
- Enhance TNReady student reports and the feedback to educators, parents, and students

ACCOUNTABILITY

We will maintain strong accountability and continue to improve processes and feedback associated with accountability systems.

- Continue to improve the teacher evaluation process
- Assist and support districts in evaluation training, implementation, and flexibility
- Pilot first grade and career and technical education portfolio models in 2016, and continue to develop additional portfolio options for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects
- Develop additional valid and reliable student growth measures for those areas that do not currently have them



PRIORITY AREAS

Early Foundations & Literacy

Building skills in early grades to contribute to future success

High School & Bridge to Postsecondary

Preparing significantly more students for postsecondary completion

All Means All

Providing individualized support and opportunities for all students with a focus on those who are furthest behind

Educator Support

Supporting the preparation and development of an exceptional educator workforce

District Empowerment

Providing districts with the tools and autonomy they need to make the best decisions for students



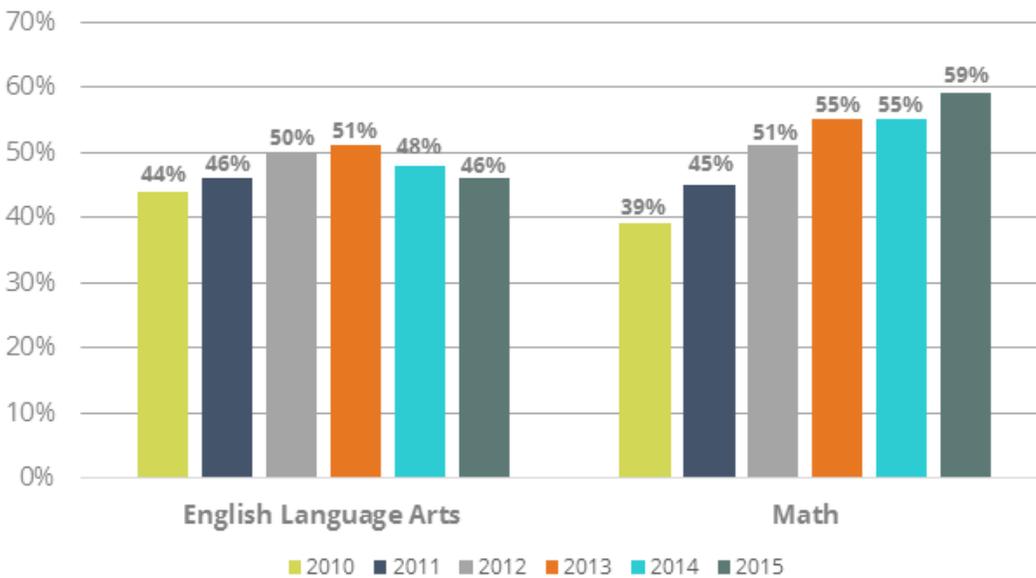
PRIORITY AREA: EARLY FOUNDATIONS & LITERACY

WHY THIS MATTERS.

Patterns of student performance in elementary school demonstrate clear areas for improvement and underscore the need to prioritize early intervention to ensure all 600,000 students enrolled in grades K-5 are on a path to success.

Over the past several years, we have seen steady gains in math performance in grades 3-5; however, English language arts performance has remained stagnant or declined.

Grades 3-5 TCAP Performance Over Time



KEY FACTS:

Of the almost 6,000 Tennessee students rated *below basic* in third grade English language arts, **less than three percent** reach *proficiency* by fifth grade.

National data show that children who are not reading proficiently by third grade are **four times less likely** than their peers to graduate from high school by age 19.

For many students, early intervention is a key element of later success.

Research has demonstrated that reading and vocabulary skills in kindergarten are predictive of reading outcomes in the primary grades and reading comprehension in middle and high school.

Statewide assessments to measure student learning do not begin until third grade.

While we know students enter kindergarten with a wide range of skills and knowledge, we do not have a statewide gauge of student needs in the early grades.

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

Building skills in early grades to contribute to future success

Strategy A. Increase department support and monitoring of programs that serve children from birth to age four to ensure a solid foundation for learning.

This strategy focuses department attention on the vast gaps in student readiness that exist before students enter kindergarten. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Creation of a Tennessee-specific definition of kindergarten readiness with associated metrics
- Greater monitoring, training, and support for family-centered early intervention providers
- An enhanced measurement process to increase pre-K programs understanding and accountability for student readiness
- High-impact professional development for early grade educators and school leaders

Strategy B. Measure and ensure a shared definition and usable data for kindergarten readiness and third-grade proficiency.

This strategy aims to create statewide consensus around the knowledge and skills that provide the foundation for learning in later grades. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- A Tennessee-specific kindergarten readiness screener used statewide by 2017-18 with explicit readiness benchmarks and metrics in literacy, language, and math
- An Early Literacy Council that defines third-grade reading proficiency and offers examples of best practices from Tennessee districts and schools

Strategy C. Provide high-quality assessments and usable data in early grades.

This strategy acknowledges the lack of actionable data to monitor progress in the early grades. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- New trainings and guidance related to Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) universal screeners
- An optional Tennessee-specific second grade assessment available to districts by 2016-17

Strategy D. Strengthen reading instruction through quality training options and the expansion of a statewide literacy coach initiative.

This strategy will provide high-quality support for early grades teachers around teaching foundational skills to every student and for intermediate and middle grades teachers to build literacy skills across content areas. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Continued improvements to the reading courses taught in each CORE region
- Reading instruction training modules for district redelivery offered by summer 2016
- Support and training for a statewide literacy coach initiative starting in fall 2016

Strategy E. Deepen literacy instruction requirements within licensure and educator preparation.

This strategy will ensure that the state's need for high-quality literacy instruction is met by our educator preparation programs. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- New reading standards for all educator preparation programs
- Clarified expectations around literacy content to be included in preparation program curriculum



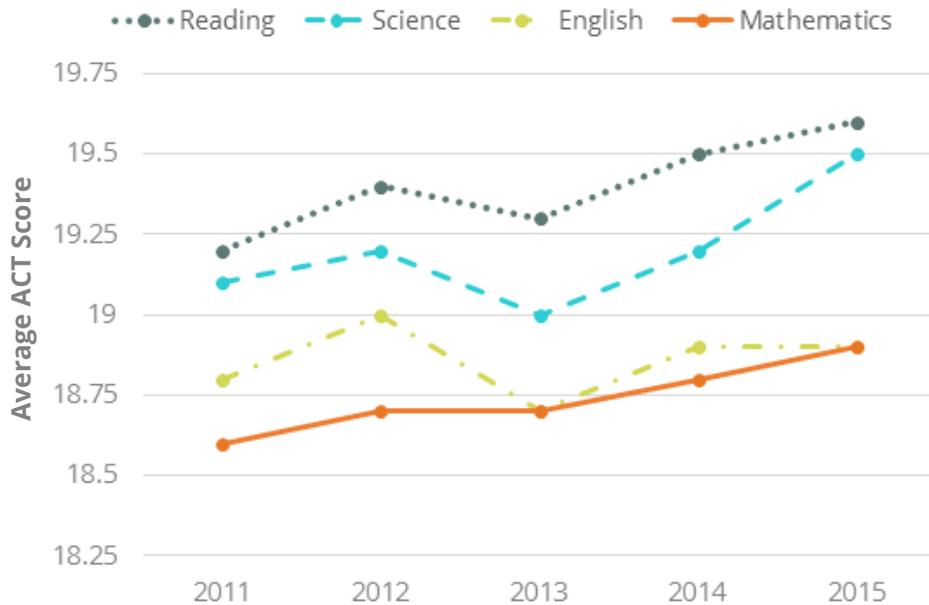
PRIORITY AREA: HIGH SCHOOL & BRIDGE TO POSTSECONDARY

WHY THIS MATTERS.

Recent data demonstrate the challenges that students face when they leave high school. If we allow current trends to continue, only 24 percent of high school graduates will earn a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree within six years of their high school graduation.

Tennessee students are performing far below our goal of a 21 composite score on the ACT.

Average Student Performance on the ACT
By Subject Subtest Over Time



A student's ACT score is a key determinant for placement in remedial or developmental coursework.

For most postsecondary institutions in Tennessee, students must score a 19 or higher on the math and reading portions of the ACT and an 18 or higher on the English portion of the ACT – scored on a scale from 1 to 36. Currently, 60 percent of seniors do not reach this bar in math, and 48 and 46 percent of seniors do not reach this bar in reading and English, respectively.

KEY FACTS:

Among students from the graduating class of 2012...

Students who only earned a high school diploma averaged an annual salary of just over \$9,000, placing them well below the poverty line.

Over 25 percent of students who enrolled in a postsecondary program dropped out before the second year.

Among students from the graduating class of 2015...

Of the 12 percent of students who took Advanced Placement tests for early postsecondary credit, only half earned a passing score.

Less than half of students who completed a Tennessee Promise application for free attendance at any Tennessee community or technical college fulfilled all requirements to qualify for the scholarship.

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

Preparing significantly more students for postsecondary completion

Strategy A. Expand the number of high school students earning early postsecondary credits and industry certifications and broaden the reach of these programs to include students who lacked these opportunities in the past.

This strategy will ensure all students have access to high-quality opportunities in high school that bridge the gap between K-12 and postsecondary. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Public reporting at the district and school level about students' early postsecondary credits and industry certifications
- More opportunities for schools to take part in statewide dual credit courses
- Increased access to fee waivers for early postsecondary exams
- More academic partnerships between high schools and Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs)

Strategy B. Measure and ensure a common definition of postsecondary and workforce readiness.

This strategy aims to create statewide consensus around the knowledge, skills, and actions necessary to demonstrate readiness for success following high school graduation.

As part of this strategy, you will see:

- A cross-agency taskforce that will define postsecondary and workforce readiness for Tennessee students
- Vertical and horizontal alignment across all Tennessee standards and assessments

Strategy C. Expand access to and use of personalized information for students, parents, and counselors about progress along the postsecondary trajectory.

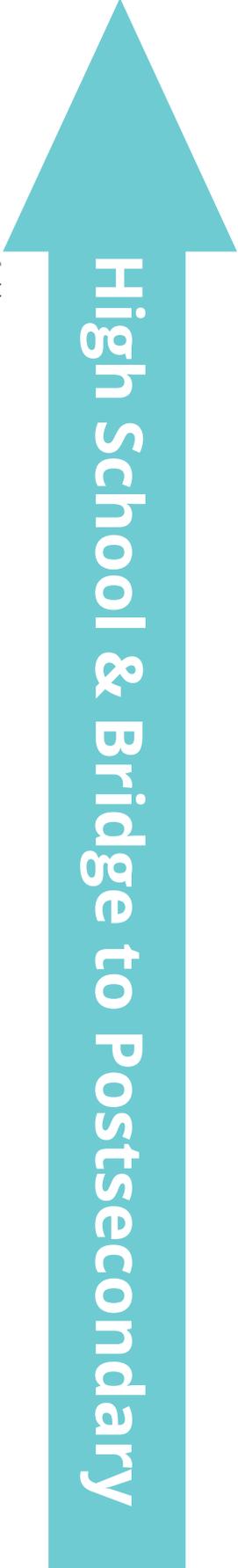
This strategy will provide multiple stakeholders with necessary data about whether individual students are successfully moving along the path to postsecondary and information about the academic and career opportunities that are available. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- A robust, interactive CollegeforTN.org portal and support pathway that allows students, parents, and counselors to determine how students are progressing in comparison to key college-readiness benchmarks
- Postsecondary and career planning requirements for middle and high school students
- Greater support, training, and networking opportunities for school counselors

Strategy D. Expand opportunities and supports for student ACT preparation and test-taking.

This strategy ensures that districts and schools recognize the central role that the ACT can play in determining students' paths during and after high school. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- The ACT added as a measure within the state's district accountability framework
- Funding to give every student an opportunity to retake the ACT
- Guidance to districts and schools on best practices for ACT preparation



High School & Bridge to Postsecondary



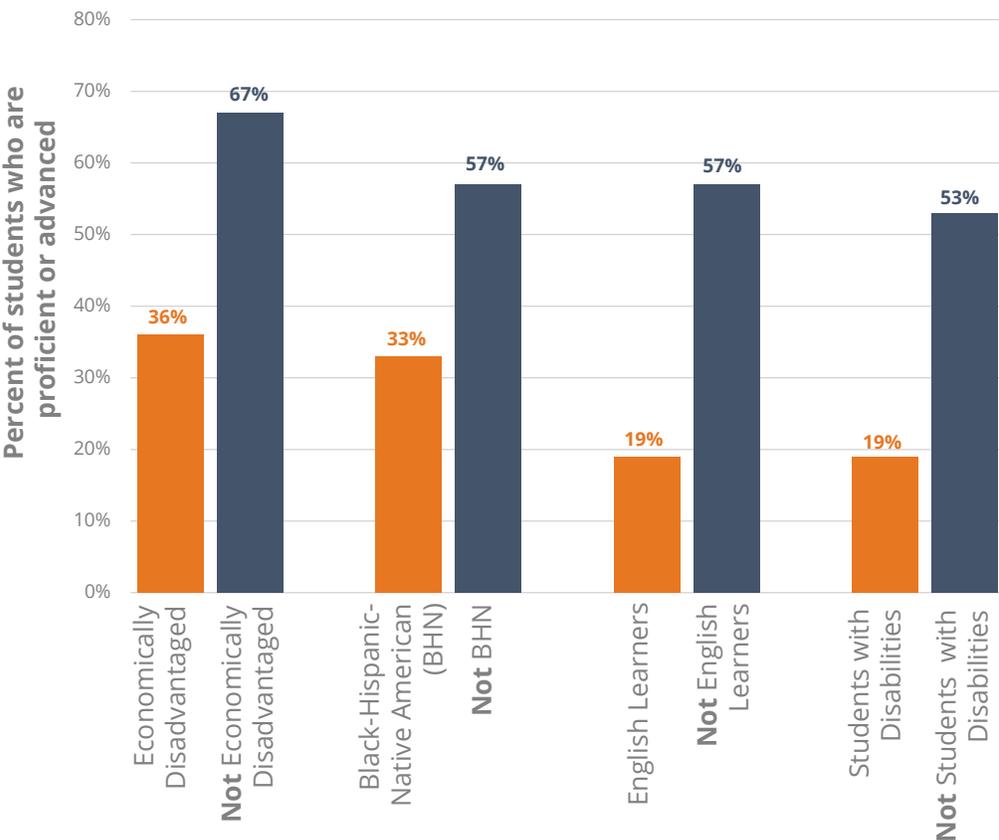
PRIORITY AREA: ALL MEANS ALL

WHY THIS MATTERS.

We see troubling clusters of underperformance across the state. The patterns point to an urgent need to address systemic inequities among groups of students that prevent all students from reaching their full potential.

While average student performance has risen in past years, we continue to see substantial achievement gaps between students in historically underserved subgroups and their comparison groups.

Achievement Gaps in Grades 3-8 English Language Arts



KEY FACTS:

In grades 3-8, **nearly 35,000 of the 450,000** total students tested *below basic* in both math and English language arts. **All but 2,000** of these students fall into one of our four historically underserved subgroups.

In ninth grade, where disciplinary rates are the highest, black students make up one-quarter of the student population but **over 80 percent** of expulsions.

In one-third of districts, students who score *below basic* in 3-8 math are more than **10 percentage points less likely** to be placed with a highly effective teacher than students who score at the advanced level.

We cannot improve overall outcomes without improving outcomes for our historically underserved subgroups.

Over two-thirds of the state's nearly 1 million students identify with one or more of the following subgroup classifications: economically disadvantaged, Black-Hispanic-Native American, English Learners, or students with disabilities.

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

Providing individualized support and opportunities for all students with a focus on those who are furthest behind

Strategy A. Improve the quality of interventions and implementation of RTI² beginning at the elementary-school level.

This strategy improves upon the guidance and support offered by the department around district RTI² programs. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Best-practice sharing around RTI² in specific grade levels
- Training for RTI² B that includes climate, attendance, anti-bullying, and behavioral supports

Strategy B. Increase access to high-quality core instruction and aligned, intensive intervention for students with disabilities and English Learners (ELs).

This strategy extends the department's work to ensure students with disabilities and ELs receive appropriate access to rigorous programs of study. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Training opportunities around instructionally appropriate IEPs, differentiation, appropriate accommodations, intense reading and math intervention, and behavioral interventions
- Teacher training to increase access to core instruction for ELs

Strategy C. Expand access to and understanding of personalized learning to support the needs of all students.

This strategy enhances department support for differentiated learning plans that support all students. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Pilot personalized learning programs to support student remediation and acceleration
- Increased state support for blended learning options, starting with Algebra I coursework

Strategy D. Increase access to highly effective teachers across student subgroups.

This strategy calls attention to systemic gaps in different student groups' access to highly effective teachers. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Data sharing and best practice networking aimed at closing districts' teaching equity gaps

Strategy E. Increase teacher, school, and district access to resources that meet students' non-academic needs.

This strategy ensures that stakeholders have access to resources they need to support students' non-academic needs. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- A state-facilitated student advisory group to advise the department on student needs
- Further development of educator data dashboards and early warning data systems

Strategy F. Target improvement in all Priority and Focus Schools through a mix of interventions, including the Achievement School District and district iZones.

This strategy continues efforts to support high-need schools. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Continued expansion of the Achievement School District and support for district iZones
- Funding, intervention, and networking support for all Priority and Focus Schools



All Means All

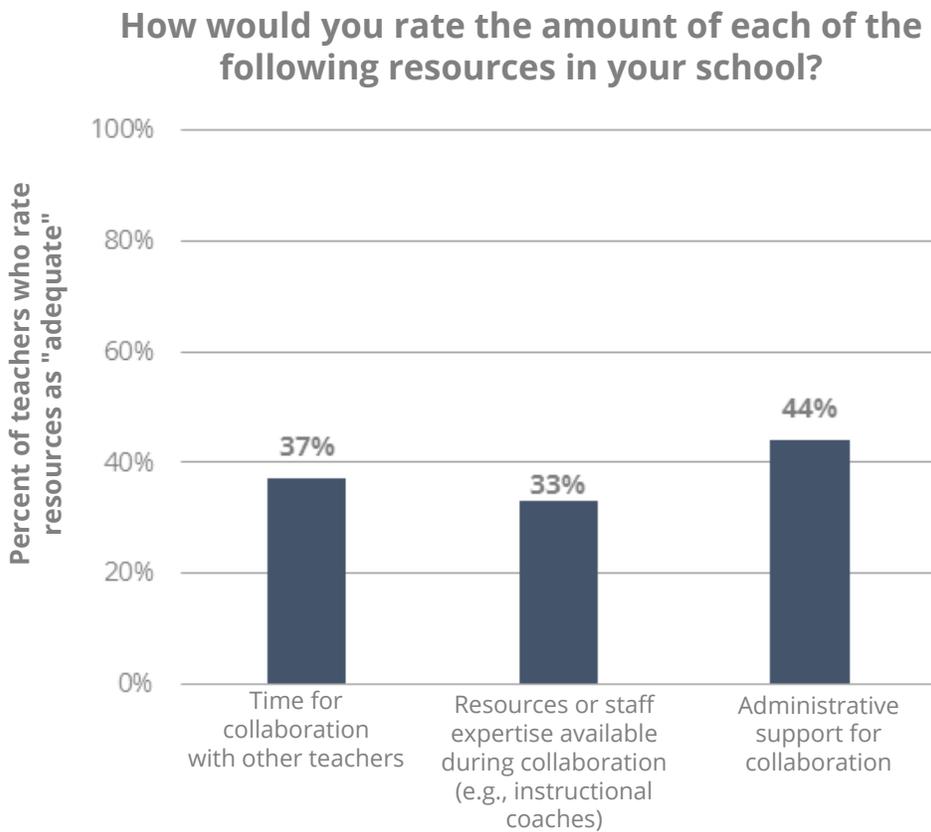


PRIORITY AREA: EDUCATOR SUPPORT

WHY THIS MATTERS.

Ensuring student success means ensuring that the more than 65,000 teachers and almost 5,000 administrators across the state receive the support they need to continuously improve their practice.

Most teachers across the state report that they are provided with inadequate resources for collaboration and professional improvement.



KEY FACTS:

Nearly one-third of Tennessee teachers have **less than five years** of teaching experience, and 7 percent are in their first year on the job.

While 90 percent of teachers say they changed the way they plan and teach after meeting with other teachers, **fewer than 40 percent** say they are provided with adequate time to collaborate or adequate access to instructional resources and expertise.

The percentage of teachers who say the process of teacher evaluation improves their teaching has **risen steadily to 68 percent** of educators since the introduction of a new statewide evaluation system in 2012.

Since 2010, 15,000 educators have entered Tennessee public schools through 40 state-approved preparation programs. Improving teaching across the state will require improving teacher preparation.

The State Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs reports substantial variation across preparation programs, with several programs consistently graduating candidates who underperform when they reach the classroom.

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

Supporting the preparation and development of an exceptional educator workforce

Strategy A. Focus educator preparation providers on outcome measures via program accreditation and the educator preparation program report card.

This strategy will raise the number of classroom-ready teaching candidates graduating from Tennessee educator preparation programs. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- An improved public report card evaluating the performance of educator preparation programs
- A more rigorous process of program accreditation based on rigorous, outcome-based reviews
- Emphasis on teacher recruitment and selection and on providers' partnerships with school districts

Strategy B. Improve the accuracy of educator evaluation and the quality of the feedback educators receive.

This strategy will continue the process of continuous improvement around the state's teacher evaluation system. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Additional TEAM coach support
- New portfolio evaluation options and enhanced training around pre-K/kindergarten portfolios
- Promotion of student surveys as a component of teacher evaluation

Strategy C. Support district development of more effective, personalized professional learning components through tools that allow for better tracking and evaluation of results.

This strategy promotes best practices around embedded teacher professional learning opportunities. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- A rubric designed to support districts and schools in evaluating professional learning options
- Differentiated mentoring and learning opportunities for beginning teachers
- Opportunities to use state-developed, research-based models for rigorous and differentiated professional learning

Strategy D. Support districts in creating greater differentiation of teacher roles, responsibilities, and salaries.

This strategy continues to develop a cadre of teacher-leaders across the state. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Technical assistance to districts to support the creation of teacher-leader models
- Support for differentiated pay plans aligned to instructional priorities

Strategy E. Create statewide and regional leadership pipelines that produce transformational school leaders.

This strategy aims to increase the supply of high-quality school leaders across the state. As part of this strategy, you will see:

- Development of a transformational leadership advisory council
- Support and development of regional transformational school leadership hubs
- Development of a Governor's Academy for School Leadership to train aspiring school principals



Educator Support



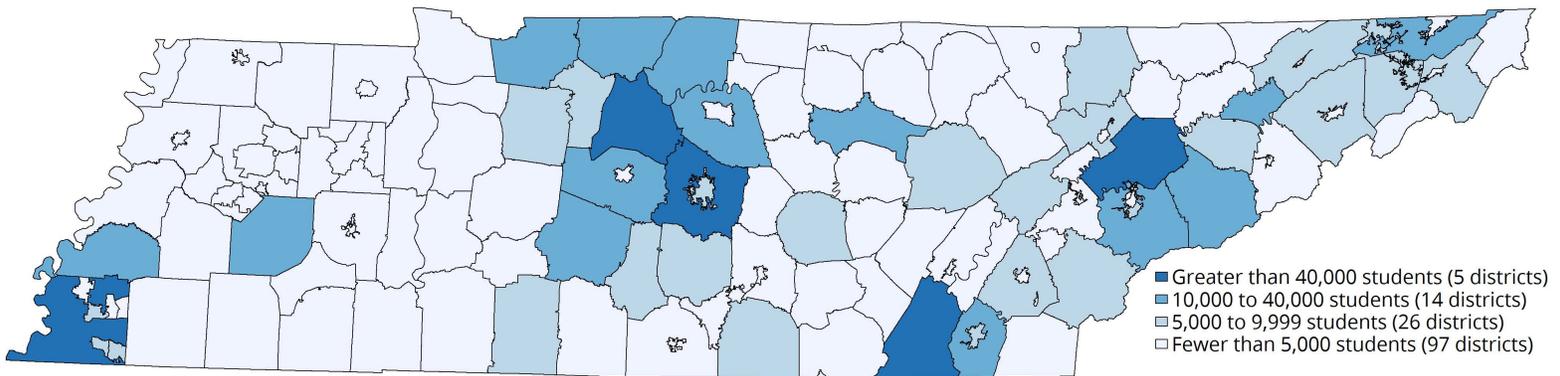
PRIORITY AREA: DISTRICT EMPOWERMENT

WHY THIS MATTERS.

Serving the state means serving a diverse group of 142 districts. We cannot achieve our collective goals without building flexibility and district ownership into all that we do. There is no one-size-fits-all model.

The vast majority of Tennessee districts serve fewer than 5,000 students; however, we see considerable variation in the size of district enrollments and geographical area across all Tennessee regions.

Tennessee School Districts
By Student Enrollment Numbers



The department actively measures ongoing progress to ensure a department orientation toward empowerment rather than compliance.

Currently, 25 districts are using an alternative, district-selected model for teacher evaluation, and 114 districts are making use of state-provided evaluation support tools.

Over a hundred districts have integrated with the state data system to allow real-time educator dashboards and fully-automated state reporting.

KEY FACTS:

The department serves the **eight varied regions** of Tennessee through Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE offices) established in 2012.

Our biggest district is Shelby County with almost 200 schools serving 115,000 students. Our smallest is Richard City with 300 students housed in one school.

Driving across the state takes **more than eight hours** – from the edge of the Mississippi Delta, through several major metropolitan areas, and into the Great Smoky Mountains.

TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

Providing districts with the tools and autonomy they need to make the best decisions for students

Strategy A. Increase district- and school-level data transparency and usability.

This strategy increases the department's ability to deliver actionable data to stakeholders.

As a part of this strategy, you will see:

- A collaborative process to build out a new, online state report card
- Communication toolkits to assist districts in sharing their own data
- Targeted data sharing in areas such as human capital and postsecondary progressions

Strategy B. Provide districts with opportunities to strategically plan for effective and efficient use of resources.

This strategy offers department support to help districts make the best use of federal and state funding options. As a part of this strategy, you will see:

- Increased opportunities for district-earned autonomy and flexibility
- Tools and guidance documents detailing acceptable uses of different funding streams
- Technical assistance on creating comprehensive multi-year plans using the coordinated spending guide
- Support for school-wide consolidation to provide optimal flexibility in using all resources

Strategy C. Simplify access to and usability of state-provided technology platforms and tools that support and automate district work.

This strategy increases both the instructional value and the operational simplicity of state-provided systems available to districts. As a part of this strategy, you will see:

- Real-time educator dashboards providing 360-degree views of student data
- Single sign-on access and increased automation for state applications and reporting systems
- Platforms for secure information sharing and collaboration statewide

Strategy D. Promote innovation and idea-sharing via district "networked improvement communities."

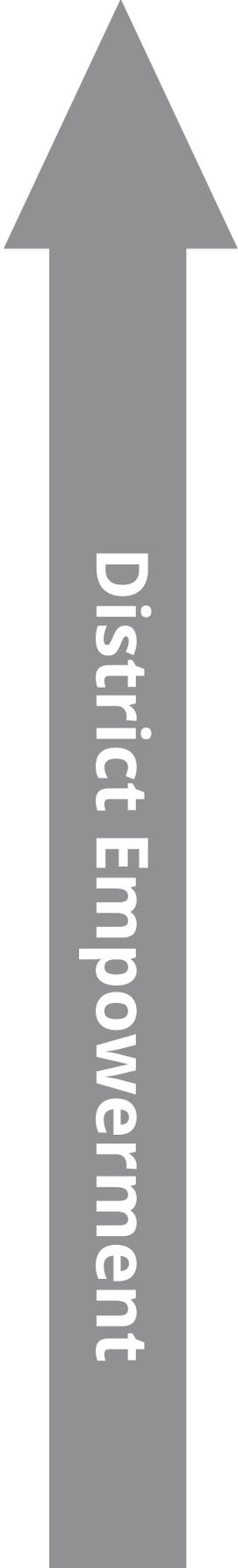
This strategy draws on developing research in improvement science to develop a statewide knowledge base around top priority problems of practice. As a part of this strategy, you will see:

- Opportunities to take part in district networks aimed at making change in high-need areas
- Pilot programs organized around innovative practices

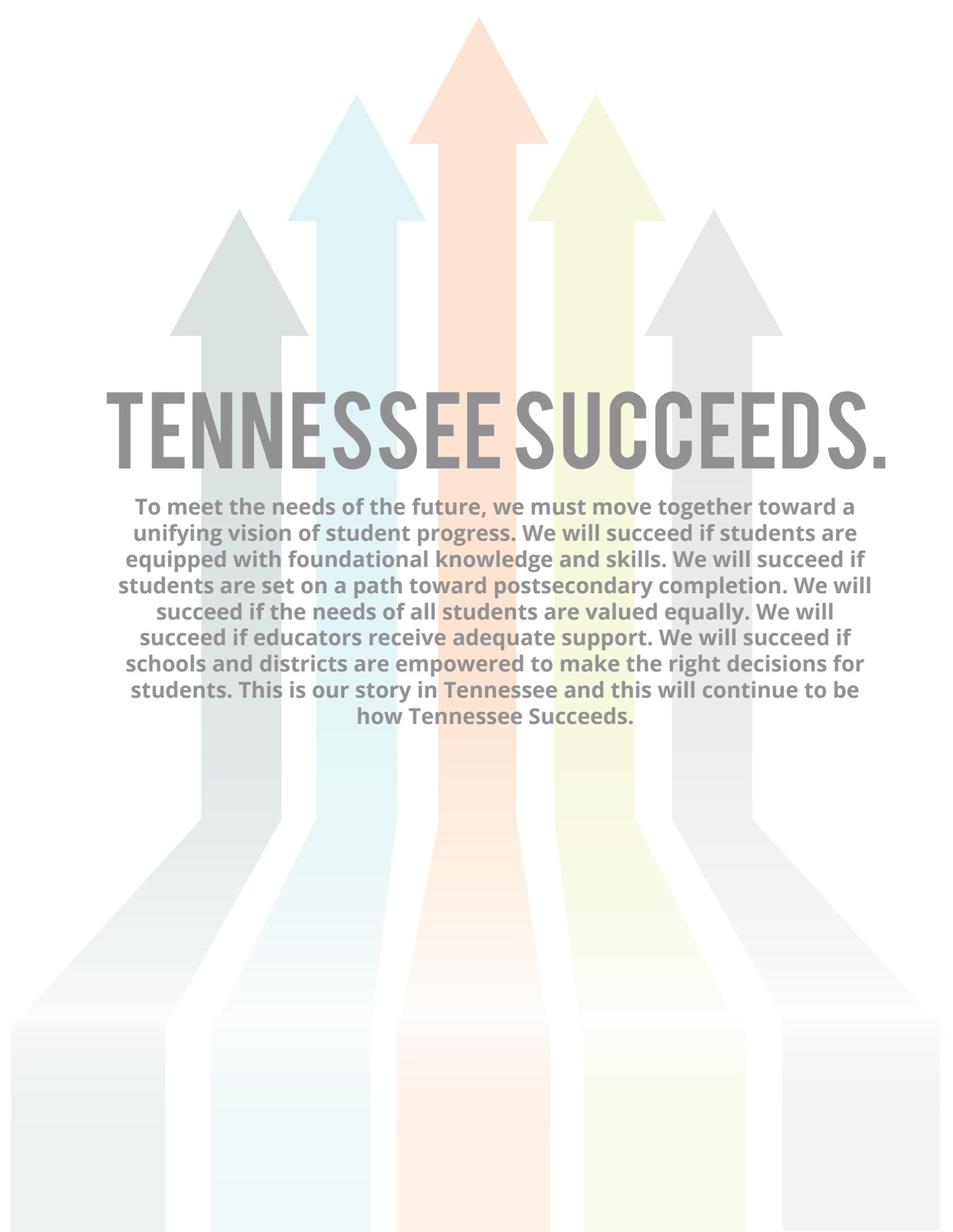
Strategy E. Explore innovative options for the delivery of holistic, industry-leading initiatives designed to help Tennessee educators deliver compelling adaptive instruction.

This strategy acknowledges the increasing role that technology can play as an aid to high-quality instruction. As a part of this strategy, you will see:

- Development of a Learning Management Platform to support adaptive instruction pilots
- Experimentation with new forms of digital content development that includes initial authoring by subject-matter experts and "crowd-sourced" content evolution
- A large-scale blended learning pilot program in Algebra I



District Empowerment



TENNESSEE SUCCEEDS.

To meet the needs of the future, we must move together toward a unifying vision of student progress. We will succeed if students are equipped with foundational knowledge and skills. We will succeed if students are set on a path toward postsecondary completion. We will succeed if the needs of all students are valued equally. We will succeed if educators receive adequate support. We will succeed if schools and districts are empowered to make the right decisions for students. This is our story in Tennessee and this will continue to be how Tennessee Succeeds.