



Tennessee Commission on
Education Recovery and Innovation
Continuation of August meeting

September 2, 2021

We have two primary goals for our time together today

There are two primary goals for today:

- 1) Share and discuss feedback on the report outline
- 2) Determine whether there are additional recommendations to add (e.g., from the new topics identified in July)

Agenda	
Start	Activity
11:00	Gaveling, roll call, business items
11:15	Discuss feedback on report outline and new ideas
1:30	Vote
1:50	Recap next steps
2:00	Adjourn

As a reminder, this is our second-to-last meeting

May meeting
(May 14th)

Individual study

July meeting
(July 7th-8th)

Individual study

**August meeting
(Rescheduled for
September 2)**

Individual study

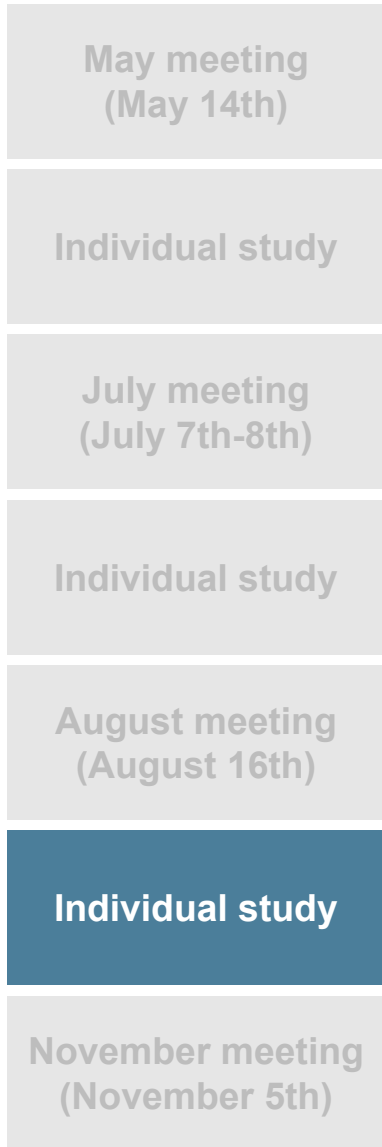
November meeting
(November 5th)

Today's meeting

We have two primary goals for our time together today

- 1) Share and discuss feedback on the report outline
- 2) Determine whether there are additional recommendations to add (e.g., from the new topics identified in July)

But we have a lot left to do between now and November (1/2)



Between now and the November meeting, we'll be working on two documents in parallel and requesting individual review time and feedback from commissioners on both.

Year 2 report:

- Draft the full report, incorporating feedback and new ideas from today's meeting
- Provide the draft to commissioners for review and feedback
- Incorporate feedback and revise report

Year 1 addendum:

- Complete necessary data analysis
- Draft the full addendum
- Provide the draft to commissioners for review and feedback
- Incorporate feedback and revise addendum

But we have a lot left to do between now and November (2/2)

May meeting
(May 14th)

Individual study

July meeting
(July 7th-8th)

Individual study

August meeting
(August 16th)

Individual study

**November meeting
(November 5th)**

We'll have a lot to wrap up at the November meeting:

Year 2 report:

- Address outstanding issues related to content
- Complete any final line-editing
- Vote on final version of report

Year 1 addendum:

- Address outstanding issues related to content
- Complete any final line-editing
- Vote on final version of addendum

**Discuss Year 2 report
outline feedback and new ideas**

Big-picture feedback

We heard four big pieces of overarching feedback that we'll address in drafts of the full report

Feedback

- 1 Elevate the gaps in the data across racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic subgroups of students and more clearly connect each recommendation back to how it will address those gaps.
- 2 Include an executive summary/one-pager at the beginning of the report that includes top takeaways and sets a clear vision for the state
- 3 The eight recommendations aren't in an obvious order; either say that explicitly or order them in a deliberate way (even if not by importance).
- 4 Use stronger and more compelling language/action verbs for the eight recommendations

Planned approach

- Include data from the Year 1 report, recently-released state- and district-level data at the beginning of the report to clearly articulate the current state and impact of the pandemic, disaggregating by student subgroup as possible.
- Draft a compelling executive summary/one-pager that shares the commission's vision statement, summarizes the recommendations, and functions as a "leave-behind" for lawmakers and other stakeholders.
- Leave the order as-is but note explicitly in the report that the recommendations are not in any particular order.
- Revise the verbs in each recommendation and continue to gather input in drafts of the report

Are there any questions or concerns about how we're planning to approach this big-picture feedback?

Feedback on specific recommendations

Note: for line-edits on specific recommendations, please refer to the track-changes version of the draft outline that we sent; we will not be discussing those line edits today unless commissioners have particular concerns they'd like to raise.

Recommendation-specific feedback (1/6)

Feedback: The recommendation to move from 12 to 15 credits as “full time” removes flexibility for students

Current state	Suggested revision(s)	
<p><i>Recommendation 7a: Streamline systems and processes to enable students to move seamlessly between institutions, regardless of type.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expand existing models of on-time completion, in particular moving to full-time enrollment being 15 hours rather than 12	Leave the bullet point as-is.	3
	Remove the bullet point.	6

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Recommendation-specific feedback (2/6)

Feedback: Add bullet points to 7a

Current state

Recommendation 7a: Streamline systems and processes to enable students to move seamlessly between institutions, regardless of type.

- Develop scalable, non-linear credentialing pathways across TCAT, Community Colleges, and University pathways, including on- and off-ramps that are not fixed in a perceived order based on credential type
- Create an automatic dual admissions option for students entering two-year institutions that are partnering with four-year institutions to facilitate seamless transfer and degree alignment
- Conduct a full assessment and redesign of Tennessee Transfer Pathways including clarification of clean pathways from those that are conditionally transferable
- Expand the reach of TN Reconnect to accommodate additional alternative pathways
- Expand reverse articulation to include alternative credential pathways
- Develop a common application for admissions across public higher education including a one-stop module for students to access financial aid/college admissions
- Expand existing models of on-time completion, in particular moving to full-time enrollment being 15 hours rather than 12
- Explore competency-based delivery models in higher education to identify existing models and scalable best practices

Suggested revision(s)

Add a bullet point to Recommendation 7a that reads, "Incentivize four-year institutions to partner with two year and TCATs to advance Transfer Pathways."	6
Add a bullet point to Recommendation 7a that reads, "Create tracks that include liberal arts education and a trade (e.g., English major with HVAC minor)."	1
Leave the existing bullet points as they are; do not add additional bullet points.	1
Revise but significantly different from the suggestions above (insert suggestion in text box below).	0

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Recommendation-specific feedback (3/6)

Feedback: Some of the bullet points in Recommendation 6 are too granular and the full set of bullet points doesn't fully capture the idea of completely rethinking high school.

Current state

Recommendation 6: Strengthen existing and create new opportunities and pathways for students to progress through high school at their own pace.

- Ensure every high school student has access to a TCAT
- Create a senior year capstone option that includes a co-op, WBL, internship, or other industry- or work-based experience
- Expand opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency at their own pace by:
 - Creating a high school equivalent to the CLEP Test to allow students to show proficiency in subjects at the secondary level for the necessary credits while altering the BEP to eliminate disincentives to early graduation
 - Conducting research to identify challenges with the Move on When Ready Act and developing a plan to strengthen it
 - Leveraging best practices from Tennessee GIVE initiative to create scalable work-based learning and apprenticeship models statewide
- Explore competency-based delivery models in high school to identify existing models and scalable best practices
- Incentivize the expansion of existing mentoring programs to support students in exploring and aligning their career goals and postsecondary pathways

Suggested revision(s)

Leave the recommendation and bullet points as-is	3
Revise all or most of the bullet points under Recommendation 6 to call for a full overhaul of the high school experience to focus on creating access to and encouraging students to pick among different pathways and school models to better integrate high school and postsecondary.	3
Add a bullet to the existing set that reads, "Evolve all high schools to offer both a technical track (through a TCAT) and a "professional" track (college), with some integration to allow students to move between tracks if one isn't a good fit."	2
Revise, but significantly different from the suggestions above (insert text suggestion in box below). <i>Commissioner-suggested revision: "Evolve all high schools to offer both a technical track (through TCAT) and a professional track (college) - with some flexibility, and implement a funding source that would not remove funding for students who graduate early (currently districts would lose funding for the last few months of school but teachers would still be employed)."</i>	1

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or the potential approaches to addressing it?

Recommendation-specific feedback (4/6)

Feedback: EPPs partner with local districts which all have required diversity goals, so EPPs don't need their own goals

Feedback: Requiring diversity targets will lead to discrimination

Current state

Recommendation 3b: Expand the educator pipeline by supporting the creation and expansion of programs that recruit and retain diverse, high-quality educators.

- Require teacher preparation programs to set diversity goals around enrollment and completion and report on annual progress

Suggested revision(s)

Remove this bullet point.	5
Leave this bullet point as-is.	2
Revise this bullet point to read, "Require EPPs to match their partnered district(s) goals rather than creating new ones."	1
Revise, but significantly different from the suggestion above. (Add your revision in the box below). <i>Commissioner-suggested revision: "Create incentives for diverse students to enter teacher preparation programs and have programs actively recruit students to enter the program."</i>	1

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or the potential approaches to addressing it?

Recommendation-specific feedback (5/6)

Feedback: There is no evidence to support the recommendation to raise educator preparation program standards (e.g., GPA or ACT scores) to increase the quality of the teacher workforce, and doing so may actually exacerbate existing teacher shortages.

Current state

Recommendation 3a: Strengthen the educator preparation and training/professional development opportunities to ensure more high-quality teachers are in classrooms.

- Increase educator compensation and raise standards for entry to the profession with the intent of elevating the profession and increasing competitiveness in the teacher labor market

Suggested revision(s)

Leave this bullet point as-is.	3
Remove this bullet point.	1
Remove the “raise standards for entry to the profession” portion of the bullet and focus only on increasing salaries.	3
No response	2

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Recommendation-specific feedback (6/6)

Current state

Recommendation 4: Support schools and districts in addressing students' well-being in order to support their executive functioning, academic success, and preparation for career.

- Task the textbook commission with creating a curated, evidence-based list of developmentally appropriate curricula, resources, and programs to aid local decision-making over what resources best meet the needs of their students
- Expand professional development opportunities related to student well-being
- Create additional funding streams to support schools in implementing high-quality, research-based student well-being initiatives
- Incentivize partnerships between education systems and existing mental and behavioral support systems to help communities understand what tools already exist
- Incentivize the expansion of existing, high-quality mentoring programs to support students' well-being

What we heard from commissioners:

- Focus the well-being recommendations only on ACEs (as well-being and social-emotional learning should happen at home, except in instances of abuse).
- Broaden the focus of the well-being recommendations to include the well-being of families (through family engagement strategies), teachers, administrators, and school staff.
- Ensure well-being recommendations support meaningful integration of well-being into the school day, rather than a "circle time" approach.

What we need to discuss and align on:

- What is the ultimate goal commissioners want to see accomplished through their well-being recommendations?
- What is the role of state policy in helping districts and schools meet that goal?
- Given that goal and the commission's belief about the role of state policy in student well-being, what is the best high-level recommendation to make? What are potential supporting recommendations?

Potential new recommendations

Commissioners completed a survey to indicate whether they want to add additional recommendations on new topic areas (1/4)

Student remediation

Question	yes	maybe	no
Support early interventions and high-quality materials and instruction for K-12 students to minimize the need for postsecondary remediation.	7	2	0
Enact relevant recommendations currently under consideration related to literacy, well-being, and mentoring.	5	4	0
Create an early warning data system and corresponding interventions.	4	5	0
Develop senior year “catch up” programming.	2	5	2

Computer science

Question	yes	maybe	no
Elevate and promote one or more of the recommendations made in 2020 by the computer science task force.	3	4	1
Recommend that the state track and analyze computer science course enrollment data to ensure proportionate participation across student demographics (race/ethnicity, gender, geography) and use those data to inform continuous program improvement.	3	4	1

**Are there reasons not to include any of the “green” recommendations?
Does anyone want to make a case for any of the other recommendations?**

Note: Green highlights indicate more than 50% of respondents selected “yes” and none selected “no”

Commissioners completed a survey to indicate whether they want to add additional recommendations on new topic areas (2/4)

Numeracy instruction

Question	yes	maybe	no
Create programs for leaders and teachers to improve math teaching and learning to respond to pandemic-related unmet learning, particularly for underserved populations.	7	1	0
Establish high-quality, evidence-based curriculum recommendations and professional development programs.	8	0	0
Encourage districts not using year-round assessments to establish a comprehensive assessment system.	3	5	0

Minimum instructional time

Question	yes	maybe	no
Move to an hours-per-year minimum to give districts flexibility over their calendars (with some quality guardrails to ensure districts maximize quality instructional time for students, given the dearth of evidence for or against this).	7	2	0

**Are there reasons not to include any of the “green” recommendations?
Does anyone want to make a case for any of the other recommendations?**

Note: Green highlights indicate more than 50% of respondents selected “yes” and none selected “no”

Commissioners completed a survey to indicate whether they want to add additional recommendations on new topic areas (3/4)

Incubating innovation

Question	yes	maybe	no
Create a process for the state to support locally-led innovation, such as a state-level innovation fund.	7	2	0

Financial incentives for educators

Question	yes	maybe	no
Create new state-operated financial incentive programs for teachers.	6	3	0

Financial aid

Question	yes	maybe	no
Call for a full assessment of the state’s financial aid portfolio for alignment with best practices, consistency across programs, and alignment with other state goals and initiatives.	6	3	0

Are there reasons not to include any of the “green” recommendations?

Note: Green highlights indicate more than 50% of respondents selected “yes” and none selected “no”

Commissioners completed a survey to indicate whether they want to add additional recommendations on new topic areas (4/4)

Charter schools

Question	yes	maybe	no
Address funding inequities noted in NACSA's assessment of Tennessee's charter school law (i.e., operational funding and capital/facilities funding).	5	2	2
Address oversight and transparency issues noted in NACSA's assessment of Tennessee's charter school law (i.e., stronger ability for authorizers to intervene, more transparency related to educational service providers).	6	2	1
Incentivize high-quality operators to open charter schools in communities outside the state's major cities.	4	3	2

Open enrollment

Question	yes	maybe	no
Provide transportation or transportation assistance for open enrollment students.	2	2	5

Does anyone want to make a case for including any of these school choice recommendations?

Note: Red highlights indicate more commissioners selected "no" than "yes" and "maybe" combined

A few other ideas came up in our 1:1s with commissioners, and we gathered input from the group via the survey

Other suggested additions

Yes

Provide ongoing funding for ERIC to help institutionalize improvements, produce an annual report, act as the watchdog, and ensure continuous improvement.	4
Revise data policies set up by TBR that make it difficult for anyone outside TBR to use the data to help students or to connect K-12 and postsecondary institutions.	2
Complete the rollout of the A-F school accountability system to enable a quality comparison across all public K-12 schools.	4

These suggestions gathered only moderate support; does anyone want to argue strongly for or against any of them?

Vote

**Recap next steps
and adjourn**

Appendix

Research suggests that ACT scores and GPA do not predict teacher quality and negatively impact certain groups

Teacher effectiveness is **not predicted by** [clinical practice observation ratings, portfolio assessments, scores](#) on standardized exams, or [GPA, ACT, or Praxis II scores](#).

- A growing body of research that suggests that **effective teachers are [best identified](#) by their performance rather than by their background or experience** (e.g., where they went to school, whether they are licensed, or how long they have taught).
- Most of the skills associated with effective teaching **are not directly related to standardized test scores or metrics**.
 - According to [Georgetown University](#), an effective instructor is prepared, sets clear and fair expectations, has a positive attitude, is patient with students, and assesses their teaching on a regular basis. They are able to adjust their teaching strategies to fit both the students and the material (differentiated instruction).
 - An [international study conducted by Pearson](#) found that traits like the ability to develop trusting relationships, patience/caring, and the ability to engage students in learning were most highly valued.

Using measures such as ACT scores or GPA **[disproportionately screen out](#) certain groups of prospective educators – in particular, teachers of color.**

Overarching feedback (1/4)

Feedback: Elevate the gaps in the data across racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic subgroups of students and more clearly connect each recommendation back to how it will address those gaps.

Suggested revision(s)

Include data from the Year 1 report, recently-released state- and district-level data at the beginning of the report to clearly articulate the current state and impact of the pandemic. We'll disaggregate these data by student subgroup (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography, students with disabilities, ELL students) as possible.	6
Begin each recommendation with a discussion of all relevant data on the current state and any data/research we have to demonstrate how that recommendation will address the gaps outlined at the beginning of the report.	0
I do not think we should address this feedback in the report.	2

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Overarching feedback (2/4)

Feedback: Include an executive summary/one-pager at the beginning of the report that includes top takeaways and sets a clear vision for the state

Suggested revision(s)

Align around a clear vision and top takeaways (e.g., Tennessee should be the smartest state in the south by 2030; Tennessee should be the fastest-improving state in the nation, again and consistently; Tennessee should move from just “recovery” to pushing the boundaries around reimagination, renewal, and a true renaissance in education and economic freedom).	6
Highlight the core principles that underlie the recommendations (e.g., The state has a legitimate and compelling interest in the education of young people because 1) a literate society is a free society, and 2) it is in the interest of the Republic to create responsible citizens).	1
Emphasize the common thread of “one student at a time” (i.e., the recommendations all support an individualized approach that ensures the state is meeting every student’s unique needs).	2
I do not think we should address this feedback in the report.	0
Provide a one-pager or executive summary that is substantively different than the approaches outlined above. (summarize in text box below).	0

ERIC’s current vision statement: Every Tennessean will have high-quality education necessary for life and career.

Overarching feedback (3/4)

Feedback: The eight recommendations aren't in an obvious order; either say that explicitly or order them in a deliberate way (even if not by importance).

Current state

Close educational gaps:

1. Continue state-level support for literacy instruction and ensure strong implementation of recently enacted state policies.
2. Continue and expand state-level support for high-quality programs that address learning remediation and acceleration.
3. Strengthen, expand, and diversify the educator workforce, as the most critical component, other than students themselves, in educational recovery and success now and in the future.
4. Support schools and districts in addressing students' well-being in order to support their executive functioning, academic success, and preparation for career.

Modernize the education system:

5. Optimize capacity for flexible, high-quality options for instructional delivery to maximize opportunity for students and ensure an adaptive and resilient education system.
6. Strengthen existing and create new opportunities and pathways for students to progress through high school at their own pace.
7. Streamline existing and create new opportunities for learners of all ages to access and succeed in postsecondary opportunities to support lifelong learning and an adaptive and responsive workforce within the state.
8. Strengthen alignment across K-12 and postsecondary systems through career.

Suggested revision(s)

Leave the order as-is but note explicitly in the report that the recommendations are not in any particular order.	6
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Reorder the recommendations in order of importance (as determined by a clear set of criteria).	3
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What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Overarching feedback (4/4)

Feedback: Use stronger and more compelling language/action verbs for the eight recommendations

Current state

1. **Continue** state-level support for literacy instruction and ensure strong implementation of recently enacted state policies.
2. **Continue** and expand state-level support for high-quality programs that address learning remediation and acceleration.
3. **Strengthen, expand, and diversify** the educator workforce, as the most critical component, other than students themselves, in educational recovery and success now and in the future.
4. **Support** schools and districts in addressing students' well-being in order to support their executive functioning, academic success, and preparation for career.
5. **Optimize** capacity for flexible, high-quality options for instructional delivery to maximize opportunity for students and ensure an adaptive and resilient education system.
6. **Strengthen** existing and create new opportunities and pathways for students to progress through high school at their own pace.
7. **Streamline** existing and create new opportunities for learners of all ages to access and succeed in postsecondary opportunities to support lifelong learning and an adaptive and responsive workforce within the state.
8. **Strengthen** alignment across K-12 and postsecondary systems through to career.

Suggested revision(s)

1. **Ensure** strong implementation of recently enacted state literacy policies, **reinforcing literacy** as a foundational to student success.
2. **Expand** state-level support for existing high-quality programs that address learning remediation and acceleration.
3. **Strengthen, expand, and diversify** the educator workforce as the most critical component, other than students themselves, in educational recovery and success.
4. **Emphasize** the need for schools and districts to address students' well-being in support of their executive functioning, academic success, and preparation for career.
5. **Optimize** flexible, high-quality options for instructional delivery to maximize opportunity for students and ensure an adaptive and resilient education system.
6. **Create** new opportunities and **enhance** existing pathways for students to progress through high school at their own pace.
7. **Streamline** opportunities for learners of all ages to access and succeed in postsecondary settings to support lifelong learning and a resilient, responsive workforce within the state.
8. **Align** K-12 and postsecondary systems across Tennessee's K to career continuum.

What thoughts, questions, or reactions do you have about this piece of feedback or our suggested approach to addressing it?

Post-July new ideas: Remediation and computer science

	Overview	Potential Policy Recs
Remediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student remediation has implications related to equity, economics, and workforce preparation. • Only 41% of Tennessee students meet “Ready Graduate” benchmarks indicating college readiness • Roughly three-quarters of TBR students require remediation as do one quarter of UT system students • TN implemented math remediation for at-risk high school students through its SAILS program • TN eliminated postsecondary remediation and replaced it with corequisite remediation (TBR) and supplemental instruction (UT system) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support early interventions and high-quality materials and instruction for K-12 students to minimize the need for postsecondary remediation. • Enact relevant recommendations currently under consideration related to literacy, well-being, and mentoring. • Create an early warning data system and corresponding interventions. • Develop senior year “catch up” programming.
Computer Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer and information research fields are a fast-growing employment sector, with not enough students in the pipeline. • TN expects significant growth in STEM occupations through 2026. • About 50% of Tennessee high schools offer computer science courses, with disproportionate representation of white students and male students. • TDOE presented a Computer Science State Education plan in April 2020. • TN has implemented five of the nine recommended state-level policies established by Code.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate and promote one or more of the state task force recommendations made in 2020. • Consider recommending that the state track and analyze computer science course enrollment data to ensure proportionate participation across student demographics (race/ethnicity, gender, geography) and use those data to inform continuous program improvement.

Post-July new ideas: Numeracy and minimum school year

	Overview	Potential Policy Recs
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early numeracy is an often overlooked but it is a key foundational building block for later math achievement. • Only 35% of TN eighth-graders are proficient in math with lower rates for Black (20%), Hispanic (29%), and low-income (22%) students. • 68% of TBR and 22% of UT system students require remediation. • TN addressed pandemic era learning loss through summer and mini-camps, and bridge programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create programs for leaders and teachers to improve math teaching and learning to respond to pandemic-related unmet learning, particularly for underserved populations. • Establish high-quality, evidence based curriculum recommendations and professional development programs. • Encourage districts not using year-round assessments to establish a comprehensive assessment system.
Minimum School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally the trend is to mandate hours rather than number of days per year, and to increase the minimum amount of learning time. • High-quality instruction and materials is more important than time spent in determining student gains. • Tennessee requires a minimum of 180 days per year and a minimum number of hours per day of 4 for kindergartner and 6.5 for grades 1-12. • Students attending year-round school performed slightly better than students at traditional calendar schools, particularly low-income students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider an hours-per-year minimum to give districts flexibility over their calendars. However, with little evidence to support this recommendation, consider establishing quality guardrails to ensure districts maximize quality instructional time for students.

Post-July new ideas: Innovation hub, financial incentives, and financial aid

	Overview	Potential Policy Recs
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunities to innovate and test new ideas is critical to modernizing Tennessee’s education system ● One proposal for the state to support locally-led innovation is to create a three-pronged process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ state-level innovation fund ○ rigorous evaluation of ideas ○ implementation funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioners could recommend the state create a similar process
Financial incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tennessee educators are eligible for a variety of federal financial incentive programs (e.g., loan forgiveness, tax deductions) ● The primary state-operated financial incentive for teachers is a 25% fee discount on undergraduate courses for dependents ● The state recently eliminated two teacher loan forgiveness programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioners could recommend creating new state-operated financial incentive programs for teachers
Financial Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tennessee has more than 20 financial aid programs available to students ● There are a number of strengths embedded in the state’s financial aid portfolio, including FAFSA Frenzy, TN Reconnect, and TN Promise ● There are also opportunities to improve it (e.g., shift to credit-bound rather than time-bound; create more flexibility in number of credits, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioners could call for a full assessment of the state’s financial aid portfolio for alignment with best practices, consistency across programs, and alignment with other state goals and initiatives

These topics and corresponding recommendations impact various points on the kindergarten-to-workforce spectrum

