

# Tennessee's ESSA State Plan

## Proposed Revisions Summary



*The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires every state education agency (SEA) to develop a comprehensive plan that generates federal education funding.*

For the Tennessee Department of Education (department), this funding totals more than \$500 million annually. Even though the department submits only the required information in its consolidated ESSA state plan, the SEA must still meet all ESSA requirements for each included program. The department is proposing revisions

to most grant programs and components. These revisions will support students and educators while assisting the department in identifying areas for both improvement and celebration. This document will summarize our proposed changes, set you up to provide your feedback, and share the department's next steps as an agency.

### ESSA Plan Amendment Rationale

- The ESSA Plan should continue to evolve as our needs across the state continue to develop.**
  - Tennessee's ESSA State Plan was written over five years ago prior to the pandemic.
  - Now is an opportunity to align more clearly with our current strategic plan, priorities, and needs.
- The U.S. Department of Education (ED) consolidated monitoring in the spring of 2021 yielded several findings related to our state plan.**
  - To meet requirements, part of our mitigation and follow-up to ED is to submit an amendment to our current state plan.
- To support the timing with other Tennessee Department of Education (department) key initiatives.**
  - A new funding formula is now in place, updating the way Tennessee funds K-12 education for the first time in three decades.

### ESSA Plan Amendment Timeline

**June-July:**  
Seven working groups convened to draft new responses following the ED template

**July-August:**  
Engagement opportunities will be held to collect feedback

**September-October:**  
Additional revisions will be made to prepare for plan submission to ED

### How to Get Involved

Students, families, educators, district and school leaders, higher education partners, elected officials, business leaders, education stakeholders, and members of the public will be engaged throughout these conversations in the coming months through the convening of seven working groups, advisory groups, an open comment period, and more.

Visit [tn.gov/education/districts/tennessees-essa-plan-amendment](https://tn.gov/education/districts/tennessees-essa-plan-amendment) to learn more and for ways to get involved.  
Email [ESSA.Plan@tn.gov](mailto:ESSA.Plan@tn.gov) with questions.

## Highlights of Major Proposed Revisions from Each Working Group



### Academics

Led by Christy Wall, Assistant Commissioner of Instructional Strategy

The Academics working group revised 'State Academic Standards and Assessments' in the ESSA State Plan to align with the department's current implementation strategy and approved state standards.



### Student Supports

Led by Lori Paisley, Senior Director of Coordinated School Health

This working group made minor revisions to "School Conditions" (Title I, Part A); "Use of Funds" and "Awarding Subgrants" (Title IV, Part B); and "Support for School Personnel," "Strategies to Address Other Problems," and Assistance from Counselors" (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to update available resources and supports to local education agencies (LEAs).



### Turnaround

Led by Robin Copp, Interim Achievement School District Director of Schools and Assistant Commissioner of School Turnaround

The School Turnaround questions ("More Rigorous Interventions," "Resource Allocation Review," and "Technical Assistance") under Title I, Part A were revised to reflect implementation processes in the School Turnaround Framework and align with current department strategies to support technical assistance to schools.



### Educators

Led by Brooke Amos, Assistant Commissioner of Human Capital

Title II, Part A includes requirements to support effective instruction by improving teacher and principal quality. Responses in this section of the ESSA Plan were revised to include shifts and updates in systems in place for licensing, TN Compass; the Tennessee Literacy Success Act; the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL); Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs); and Tennessee's Grow Your Own (GYO) program.



### Career Readiness

Led by Deb Knoll, Assistant Commissioner of College, Career and Technical Education

"School Transitions" (Title I, Part A) response revisions identify additions to supports for work-based learning, career exploration, and streamlined data-tracking systems. "Program Objectives and Outcomes" (Title I, Part D) explains student-individualized learning plans and multiple career exploration options.



### Unique Subgroups of Students

Led by Jennifer Jordan, Assistant Commissioner of Special Education and Intervention Programs

This working group drafted proposed responses for the questions under Title I, Part C, and Title III, Part A. The response for "Supporting Needs of Migratory Children" reflect the changes in the Migrant contractor, the structure of the program, services provided to migratory children and youth, and the updated schedule for the federally required Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) & State Service Delivery Plan (SSDP).

The response for "Promote Coordination of Services" was revised to reflect changes in the processing of the federally required Certificate of Eligibility (COE) and changes in how the Migrant contractor conducts required re-interviews.

"Entrance and Exit Procedures" and "SEA Support for English Learner Progress" were revised to reflect the change from state policy to TN State Board Rule 0520-01-19 and included additional explanations of entrance and exit procedures; supports for LEAs and educators; and monitoring procedures.



### Assessment & Accountability

Led by David Laird, Assistant Commissioner of Assessment and Accountability

No revisions have been made since the July 28, 2023, submission to ED. Highlights from that submission are as follows:

- Only ELA and math assessments will be used for the evaluation of the Achievement indicator;
- The department has restricted high school assessments to one math and one ELA per ED guidelines.
- The graduation rate methodology is updated to be aligned with federal requirements.