



## Tennessee Education Glossary of Terms

### **ASD: The Achievement School District**

The Achievement School District (ASD) is an intervention method created by Tennessee to turn around the state's lowest performing schools. The ASD functions as an organizational unit of TDOE and provides oversight for the operations of schools assigned to it or schools which the ASD itself authorizes.

### **Academic Standards**

A set of benchmarks for what all students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level in order to advance to (and be ready for) the next grade level. States are required to have standards in reading/language arts, math and science. Tennessee also has social science standards.

### **Accountability**

The policies and procedures states use to set goals for how well all students (and groups of students) should be doing academically, measure and identify how well schools do in meeting those goals, and support and improve schools and districts that are failing to meet the state goals.

### **Assessment**

Another word for "test." In the federal education policy context, the term "assessment" refers to the one standardized annual test required under federal law in every grade between 3-8 and at least once in high school (grades 9-12). These measure student achievement, what a student knows and can do, and do not measure intelligence, a student's underlying ability and potential.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

This is when a student misses a significant number of school days—in Tennessee it is 10 percent—for any reason, excused or unexcused. This is different from average daily attendance which is the percent of students in attendance throughout the year.

### **BEP: Basic Education Program**

The Basic Education Program (BEP) is a formula that determines the funding level required for each school system to provide a common, basic level of service to all students. The BEP consists of 45 components in three categories: instructional, classroom, and non-classroom. The BEP functions as a funding formula rather than as a spending plan.



tn educational equity coalition

### **CTE: Career and Technical Education**

Career and Technical Education (CTE), or vocational education, is made up of programs of sequenced courses aligned with industry needs that provide students with skills and knowledge in specific career areas.

### **EOC Exams: End of Course Exams**

End of Course (EOC) Exams are associated with a specific academic course and are typically given at the high school level.

### **EPSOs: Early Post-Secondary Opportunities**

Early Post-Secondary Opportunities (EPSOs) in Tennessee include: Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Local Dual Credit (LDC), and Statewide Dual Credit (SDC).

### **Focus Schools**

Under ESSA, Focus schools will be those that are identified for targeted support and improvement. This designation includes schools in which one or more subgroup(s) are determined to be underperforming based on the school accountability indicators. These schools will also be those that receive a letter grade of "D."

### **English Language Proficiency**

The ability to speak, listen to, read and write English accurately and quickly. Students who are learning English as a second language are typically called "English learners" until they master the English language. This is different from proficiency in English/ language arts, which is mastering the state's academic content standards for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and using language.

### **English Learner**

A student between the ages of 3-21 in elementary or secondary school whose native language is a language other than English. Identified English learners are entitled to civil rights protections and accommodations. Title III of ESSA provides funding to support English learners.

### **Indicators**

Indicators are measures of different aspects of the education system that—taken together—create a picture of a school's effectiveness at educating all students. ESSA requires certain indicators in state accountability system and allows for others. In Tennessee's accountability framework, the indicators are achievement, growth, high school graduation rate, college, career and military readiness, and chronic absenteeism.



tn educational equity coalition

### **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

A plan or program developed by a team, including teachers, specialists and a student's parent, that is designed to meet the educational needs of a student with a disability who qualifies for specialized instruction. Schools are required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to create IEPs for students with disabilities who qualify for specialized instruction.

### **I-Zones: Innovation-Zones**

Innovation Zones (I-Zones) are a method of intervention a school district pay pursue to monitor, oversee, and improve the performance of schools designated as priority schools. TDOE must approve a districts plan to create an I-Zone.

### **LEA: Local Educational Agency**

The formal name for the government bodies that are legally sanctioned by the state to administer elementary or secondary schools in a community (school district).

### **N-Size**

The minimum number of students in a subgroup (such as [Black, Hispanic Native American (BHN), English Learners (ELs), Economically Disadvantaged (ED), Students with Disabilities (SWD)]) that must be present in a school to trigger special reporting and accountability requirements under federal law. N-size is necessary to ensure data are not reported on so few students as to make identifiable personal information. In Tennessee, the n-size is set at 30 for accountability and 10 for reporting.

### **NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress**

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national system of testing in K-12 schools to measure what U.S. students know and can do in core subjects. NAEP collects and reports academic achievement results at the national level, and for certain assessments, at the school or individual student level. Assessment results are referred to as "The Nation's Report Card."

### **Priority Schools**

Under ESSA, Tennessee will continue to define Priority schools as the lowest performing five percent of all schools. Priority schools are also those with graduation rates of less than 67 percent.



tn educational equity coalition

### **Reward Schools**

Schools in Tennessee with the highest performance and progress are recognized as Reward schools. Under ESSA, Reward schools will be those that earn an overall letter grade of "A." Reward schools will include those schools with high absolute achievement, as well as lower achieving schools with extraordinary progress in achievement that equates to changing the life trajectory of students.

### **SEA: State Educational Agency**

The formal name for governmental bodies that are legally sanctioned by the state to provide information, resources, and technical assistance to schools, districts, and people in the community served by schools (state department of education).

### **TDOE: Tennessee Department of Education**

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) is the state department charged with implementing elementary and secondary education laws and policies.

### **TN Ready**

TN Ready is Tennessee's new assessment for math and English/language arts which students in grades 3 through 11 take. It is part of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) testing. TN Ready will be aligned with the state's updated academic standards and will include essay and short answer questions, as well as multi-step math problems.

### **TVAAS: Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System**

The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) is a statistical method based on standardized test data that is used to measure the influence of a district, school, or teacher on the academic progress (growth rates) of individual students or groups of students from year to year. The concept behind TVAAS is that school schools "add value" every school year for each student, regardless of whether the student begins the year above, at, or below grade level.

#### Sources:

Leadership Conference Education Fund, ESSA Guide for Advocates. <http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/education/ESSA/ESSA-Guide.pdf>

Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury (2016) Defining Tennessee Education: Glossary of Education Terms. <https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/orea/PDF/Glossary.pdf>

Tennessee Department of Education (2017) Tennessee ESSA State Plan. [https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/TN\\_ESSA\\_State\\_Plan\\_Approved.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/TN_ESSA_State_Plan_Approved.pdf)