



tn educational equity coalition



## A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN TENNESSEE

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Beginning in December 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to create new measures of school success, and to identify schools that are in need of improvement according to those measures. Learn how Tennessee will identify and support our lowest performing schools in the state.

### SOME PUBLIC SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED ONE OF FOUR LABELS

#### REWARD SCHOOLS

REWARD SCHOOLS ARE THE HIGHEST ACHIEVING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE STATE.

*(Reward schools demonstrate excellence in performance, progress, or both, for all student groups and have an overall accountability score of 3 or higher.)*

#### PRIORITY SCHOOLS

PRIORITY SCHOOLS ARE IN THE BOTTOM 5% OF SCHOOLS IN THE STATE BASED ON 2015-17 TNREADY DATA.

*(Priority schools are identified every three years, beginning in 2018. However, they are NOT be determined by results on the 2018 TNReady assessment. Due to challenges with testing in the spring of 2018, schools may not be placed on the Priority school list based on test results from this year's testing data. Priority schools can exit the list every year, based on their rates of improvement.)*

#### CSI SCHOOLS

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT (CSI) SCHOOLS ARE IN THE BOTTOM 5% OF SCHOOLS IN THE STATE BASED ON 2015-2018 TNREADY DATA.

*(The federal ESSA law requires states to use 2017-18 achievement data to identify the bottom 5 percent of schools that are in need of "comprehensive support and improvement". CSI schools include all Achievement School District Schools.)*

#### ATSI SCHOOLS

ADDITIONAL TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT (ATSI) SCHOOLS HAVE STUDENT GROUPS WHO ARE CONSISTENTLY UNDERPERFORMING.

*(ATSI schools are schools with the lowest performance of one or more student groups (i.e. students who are Black, Hispanic, or Native American; economically disadvantaged; English Learners; or students with disabilities). ATSI schools have an overall school accountability score of 1.0. ESSA federal law requires to use 2017-2018 TNReady data to be identified.)*

# HOW WILL THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPORT THESE SCHOOLS?

Through their Office of School Improvement, the state will provide the following options to school districts:

- **School-level grants:** The State will provide funding to support schools for three years; one year of funding for planning, and two years for implementation of turnaround plans.
- **District-led interventions:** Districts may support multiple schools, with State oversight, with locally developed strategies, and will have access to funding.
- **Shared Governance:** This is an option for districts with at least five Priority schools, and the State and local districts will operate these schools together. District and school leaders will choose staffing, budget, operations, and other district services, but they will be led by a board of State and district stakeholders.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Parents, advocates and community organizations can be important partners in improving schools.

- ✓ **VOLUNTEER** to serve on a needs assessment or school improvement planning team
- ✓ **INVITE** other parents, community leaders and organizations to partner with the school and district
- ✓ **ASK** the district to include family and community engagement as a key component in their improvement plans.
- ✓ **SHARE** your experience with the cultural and historical context of your school to help inform community and family engagement
- ✓ **HELP** schools and districts reach parents with information and improvement plans by advising where and how are the best ways to reach parents at your school
- ✓ **MAKE SURE** plans are available in relevant languages for parents and community members
- ✓ **OFFER** any resources you have or know of that could help schools serve students and particular student sub-groups (i.e. military, EL, migrant, low-income, rural, or specific racial, linguistic or ethnic groups)

**LEARN MORE AT [TNEQUITY.ORG/SCHOOLIMPROVEMENT](https://tnequity.org/schoolimprovement)**