

TOSS 
Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents

Legislative Agenda

2024





The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS) is committed to advancing public education in the state by advocating on behalf of Tennessee's students, educators, and administrators.

Our legislative agenda is based on feedback from superintendents across Tennessee and approved by the TOSS Board.

We will work to advance these priorities through our work with the Governor's office, the Tennessee General Assembly, the State Board of Education, and the Tennessee Department of Education.

TOSS Legislative Team



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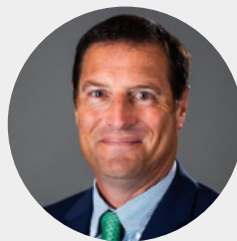
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Bradley County Schools



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Dr. Troy Kilzer
Chester County Schools



SOUTH-CENTRAL
Dr. Vickie Beard
Giles County Schools



UPPER CUMBERLAND
Kurt Dronebarger
White County Schools

2024 TOSS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FUNDING

- Continue to analyze the TN Investment in Student Achievement Act (TISA) to ensure additional, adequate, and equitable funding with local flexibility.
- Supports increased funding in TISA for teacher salaries (\$50K).
- Supports the continuation of securing federal funding support for students and schools.
- Supports recurring funding, outside of TISA, for mental and behavioral supports for students, such as counselors, school psychologists, social workers, behavioral specialists (BCBA), etc. Explore opportunities to Grow Your Own.
- Supports sustainable funding, outside of TISA, for tutoring (TN ALL Corps) and summer school programs, while maintaining local flexibility.
- Supports recurring funding, outside of TISA, for School Resource Officers and safety/security personnel and facility safety improvements at each district building attended by students.
- Supports state supplement of Special Education Pre-K.

ADDRESS TEACHER & SUPPORT STAFF SHORTAGES

- Supports the work of the State Board of Education and the TN Department of Education to increase licensure flexibility for teachers, while maintaining high-quality standards for the teaching profession.
- Supports giving districts latitude to provide pedagogical training to CTE personnel with industry experience to address CTE instructor shortages.
- Supports aligning the parental leave (30 days) legislation with the time a non-certified substitute can serve as a teacher, increasing the time from 20 to 30 days.
- Supports recruitment strategies for additional special education teachers and specialists that provide supports to students with special needs.

2024 TOSS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

CURRICULUM & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Supports removing the single letter grading of schools but keeping letter grades for individual components.
- Supports the utilization of both growth and achievement (AMO-Annual Measurable Objective) for the state's accountability system, with approval of the State Board of Education.
- Require the TDOE to publish a comprehensive list of all required trainings for school districts by June 30th of each year. This list should be reported to the Education Committees of the House and Senate. Student enrollment should be based on local policy as determined by elected school board officials.
- Supports addressing improvements to the TN Learning Loss-Student Acceleration Act by implementing the same process for 3rd and 4th grade remediation and demonstration of adequate growth progress. Districts should be given latitude to promote students who demonstrate proficient reading level on locally adopted nationally normed reading tests.
- Supports earlier interventions for students rather than waiting until third and fourth grade retentions.
- Supports a phase-in approach to the Computer Science requirements at the middle school level one year at a time to avoid the need to hire additional Computer Science teachers for a single year.

2024 TOSS LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENTS /DIRECTORS

- Supports the appointment of superintendents by the elected local board of education and urges the TN General Assembly to reject any proposals that would lead to the election of school superintendents/directors in the state.

ACCOUNTABILITY & ASSESSMENTS

- Supports implementing a working group, consisting of TOSS leadership, superintendents, and other key stakeholders, to convene before changes to the Accountability System can be submitted for approval to the USDOE.
- Supports protecting local flexibility for curriculum and operational decisions.
- Supports a more comprehensive view of school effectiveness rather than the “single letter grading” of schools.
- Supports the continuation of using both growth and achievement in our state approved accountability system.

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

- Supports increased teacher licensure flexibility.
- Supports improvements to current graduation requirements that better address the needs of students.

EDUCATION FUNDING

- Supports improving Tennessee’s teacher salary ranking among neighboring states to address teacher and staff shortages.
- Supports funding for Pre-K education, while maintaining local flexibility and autonomy for all school funding.

SCHOOL SAFETY

- Supports additional and recurring funds for all school safety measures, school resource officers, and safety personnel in all schools.
- The arming of school personnel should be a local decision with policy guidance.

VOUCHERS

- Opposes any legislation that uses public funds to sponsor private school vouchers or education savings accounts. Public funds should remain with public education.

OTHER

- Encourages the TN General Assembly to not approve any unfunded mandates.