

TENNESSEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PUBLIC SCHOOL ADVOCATE

2017 TEA LEGISLATIVE
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TEA LEGISLATIVE REPORT | DECEMBER 6, 2016 | VOL. 2, ISSUE 9

With years of tax surpluses, governor has chance at record school investment

Putting the finishing touches on the budget he'll present to lawmakers early next year, Gov. Bill Haslam said he has a "good problem" on his hands: extra revenue two years in a row that he can spend on priorities such as K-12 and higher education.

With a growing surplus filling state coffers, TEA has called on Gov. Haslam to pass a 7 percent raise for Tennessee's teachers and to make sure it goes into teacher paychecks.

In October 2013, the governor first said that his goal was for Tennessee to be the fastest improving state in the nation for teacher pay. Just a few months later, a plan to

provide raise dollars fell through and teachers saw no pay raise in the 2014-15 academic year. The following year, with the state experiencing a revenue surplus, TEA called on Haslam to keep his promise and significantly increase teacher pay. His response was a commendable 4 percent increase in the state's teacher salary allocation through the BEP.

In the last legislative session, TEA raised the bar and called for using the state's growing surplus to fund pay raises for teachers. Haslam offered another 4 percent increase. The General Assembly signed off on these proposals and the

allocation was increased again.

With two consecutive years of 4 percent salary allocation increases, is Tennessee the fastest-improving state in teacher pay?

Not yet.

The main problem is that state law currently grants school systems broad flexibility with how that raise money is spent. It can be used to hire new teachers, pay for benefits, one-time bonuses, or pay-for-test-score plans. Teachers in several systems have seen no raises at all.

**TEA TO PUSH FOR ANOTHER TEACHER
RAISE, IMPROVE BEP FORMULA**
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Record revenue surplus means historic investment in Tennessee education is a must! TEA will push for:

-  **7% increase in teacher salary funds**
-  **Funding for RTI specialists in reading/math**
-  **\$250 per teacher classroom supply funds**



With TEA, school boards push back on TVAAS

Knoxville and Nashville school boards are the first in a movement against the use of statistical estimates in teacher evaluations.

The Nashville school board voted unanimously last week to seek a one-year waiver for using TVAAS for any percentage of student grades and teacher evaluations during the ongoing school year.

Earlier in November, Knox County School Board

members voted 6-3 to ask for a similar waiver from the state.

"TEA has been saying for years that TVAAS is not a valid measure to evaluate individual teachers," said TEA Executive Director Carolyn Crowder. "After the failure of the TNReady test last year, the data chain is broken and cannot be reestablished. The bombing

BOARDS AGAINST TVAAS
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Voucher zealot tapped for education secretary

Let's face it, education was not a prime topic in the presidential election. It was not brought up in debates or featured on commercials, and polls showed it was near or at the bottom of voters' minds when they went into the voting booth. But it comes to the forefront with President-Elect Trump's pick of Betsy DeVos for Education Secretary. DeVos is the head

and chief financial backer of the controversial American Federation for Children, one of the nation's largest suppliers of dark money to push school privatization through vouchers and charters.

Tennessee voters will be familiar with the group's work,

VOUCHER ZEALOT
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Chattanooga tragedy puts spotlight on privatization and seatbelts on buses

The worst day imaginable for any teacher or support professional is to hear about tragedy striking one of their students.

Six students at Woodmore Elementary in Hamilton County were killed when one of its buses rolled over and struck a tree, a heartbreaking disaster.

"We appreciate the outpouring of sympathy and prayers from across Tennessee," said Hamilton County Education Association President Dan Liner. "Our community has had more than its share of tragedy, and we will do what it takes to help our children through it."

Now questions are being raised about private bus contractors and the ability of school systems to monitor and control vendors after students leave the school. The safety record of these companies compared to school systems that run buses themselves are also being questioned.

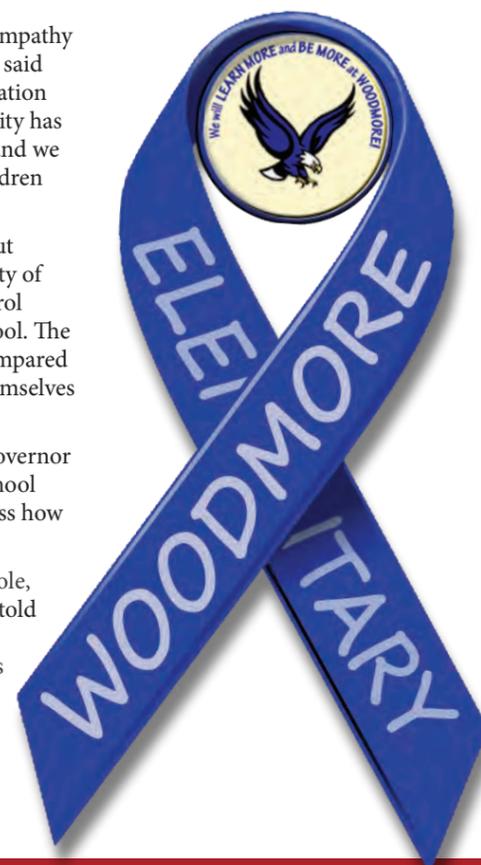
Following the tragic bus accident Governor Bill Haslam suggested Tennessee school districts and the state need to reassess how they handle pupil transportation.

"I really think we need to take a whole, fresh look at school buses," Haslam told Nashville Public Radio. "From the beginning. From how school boards select contractors to how they hire drivers to whether seat belts are appropriate. There are a lot of questions out there."

Haslam also raised the issue of

privatization, but stopped short of saying districts should be prohibited from contracting-out transportation services.

BUS TRAGEDY RAISES QUESTIONS
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THE STRONGEST VOICE FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS

Community schools are a powerful improvement model

By TEA President Barbara Gray



We hear a lot about “the whole child.” We attend the trainings, read the articles and imagine what it would be like to provide all of the services our students truly need to succeed. We wonder if there are public schools out there

that are actually able to do these things on a public school budget.

The good news is that these public schools do exist, a couple are even right here in Tennessee. The concept of a “community school” is not a new one, but the movement has been picking up steam thanks to the flexibility and possibilities afforded under the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

So what exactly is a community school?

A community school recognizes that students cannot be ready to learn if their basic needs are not being met outside the classroom. Students who are hungry, sick, anxious, or troubled may be too overwhelmed to learn. At the more than 5,000 community schools across the nation, these outside factors are acknowledged and addressed with the help of community partners.

The community schools that have been the most successful were not the result of a directive from the state or even the local school

district.

The best schools began as community efforts led by the teachers, parents, administrators and neighbors of the school. These community coalitions focus on the needs of the students and families; identify the services already being provided at the school; seek out community partner agencies to participate; and assess the willingness of the school’s faculty and staff to change the fundamental way they operate.

When it is done right, community schools lead to lower rates of absenteeism; better work habits, grades, test scores, and behavior; higher enrollment in college preparatory classes; and higher graduation rates.

Community schools that show the most dramatic results generally employ a five-point strategy (*right*) that recognizes children at the margins bring many barriers to learning that must be addressed for those students to achieve their potential.

There is no one-size-fits-all community school template. We must take these aspects mentioned above and determine how to best apply to them to our local communities. Students at a school in Henry County will not have the same needs as the students at a school in Knoxville.

Community schools can help ensure that all students, regardless of ZIP code, receive an education that inspires their natural curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn.

Working to increase the number of community schools in Tennessee will certainly not be an easy process, but I firmly believe it will be well worth the effort.



HALLMARKS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

They provide a strong and proven curriculum, engaging students with culturally relevant and challenging material, and offering a robust selection of classes, AP and honors courses, as well as after-school programs in the arts, languages, and ethnic studies, ELL, Special Ed, GED preparation, and job training.

They emphasize high-quality teaching instead of high-stakes testing, enabling teachers to identify and meet students’ needs.

They offer community support services such as health care, mental-health counseling, and other support, before, during, and after school and on the weekends.

They focus on positive discipline practices as well as social and emotional learning supports, resulting in fewer suspensions and harsh punishments.

They feature extensive family and community engagement, involving the full community in planning and decision-making.

After tragedy, teachers make a difference

By TEA Executive Director Carolyn Crowder



Dealing with unimaginable tragedy while in my role as an educator was not something I learned about in school.

I had to learn it on the job. I am hopeful that has changed for those preparing to enter the field of education today – however, nothing can fully prepare you for the tragic events Tennessee educators have faced during the past few weeks.

First, there was the heartbreaking bus accident in Hamilton County that took the lives of six precious children. And now we are assessing the aftermath of the fires in East Tennessee. As I am writing this commentary, we know the fires have severely damaged at least two schools and have wiped out countless homes belonging to both educators and their students. It is still not clear how many lives have been lost because of those missing who have not been accounted for.

My first brush with a massive tragedy happened on April

19, 1995. I was teaching fifth grade in Mustang, Oklahoma. Mustang is a suburb, 20 miles from downtown Oklahoma City, but we still heard a loud boom when a bomb went off destroying the Murrah Federal Building and damaging several blocks in the downtown area. I could tell you countless stories about April 19, 1995:

- I had a student named Jake whose father worked as an undercover agent for the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) division of the Department of Justice. Jake’s dad’s office was in the Murrah building. Jake knew that his father was on an undercover assignment the day of the bombing and would not be coming home that night – but he did not know whether the assignment was in town or out of town. Jake finally got word several days after the event that his father was out of the country and okay.
- 168 people were killed that day. The last person found was the grandmother of one of our students – weeks after the bombing.
- My husband, Terry, taught at a school two blocks from the bomb site. In the midst of all the trauma my students and colleagues were facing, I remember feeling guilty being so relieved that Terry was out of town on a field trip that day.

I could go on and on about April 19, but I’d rather share

with you what happened on April 20. The faculty at my school was told the most important thing we needed to do for our students was carry on their normal routine. They were facing grief, fear and uncertainty and needed to know that they could continue counting on their school to teach and take care of them. As I entered my classroom that morning, I saw smiles of relief on their faces. I was supposed to be gone that day but had changed my plans. I thought they might want to talk about the bombing, but instead, they wanted to know if we were going to have math, reading, science and recess at the same time we always did. I learned that one of the most important things we can do for our students, no matter what has happened outside of our classrooms, is to be there for them and continue our quest to provide the best education we can while they are in our care.

TEA is reaching out to those affected by the recent disasters here in Tennessee. In addition to doing what we can to provide resources to help them deal with what happened on those tragic days, we are asking our members to get involved in the days after these horrific events. This Advocate describes what we can do during the upcoming legislative session to make sure there will always be a strong public school for our students to count on no matter what kind of event disrupts their lives.

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UniServ Staff contact information can be found on page 6.

BOARDS AGAINST TVAAS from page 1

of the test is the trigger for the state to rethink TVAAS. We commend the school boards for putting student and teacher interests first and support other school boards in seeking similar measures in the near future.”

School board members in both cities pointed out that problems with online and paper tests in the spring of 2016 were too big to ignore and relying on TVAAS for another year would be a costly mistake.

“This is the least we can do for teachers,” said Nashville school board member Amy Frogge. “We cannot ask teachers to be held accountable until the state can ensure there aren’t more testing errors.”

While the Tennessee General Assembly and the Department of Education may have a final say in granting the waiver, voices from the two urban school

boards are setting an example for others to follow.

“Regardless of how we go about it, our first responsibility is to our kids - it’s not to the Legislature, or to any elected officials, or anybody that gives us funding,” said Jennifer Owen, a Knoxville school board member. “So thinking about our funding body, or our leg, or anyone else besides our students is not our purpose.”

Voices against the use of TVAAS in teacher evaluations have been growing stronger

in communities across the state since the TNReady fiasco last spring.

“The Knox County Board of Education is right to request that scores this year not be used in teacher evaluations,” wrote former *Knoxville News Sentinel* managing editor Frank Cagle in an editorial. “Knox County has done everything right in testing and in identifying schools that need improvement. The failure of the testing program lies with the state of Tennessee and former Education Commissioner

Kevin Huffman. The rush to implement Common Core, the big-money lobbying by testing services and the inept administration of testing has left the program in a shambles.”

As other school boards consider seeking TVAAS waivers, they can rely on countless testimonials from Tennessee classrooms to back them up.

“We support every measure that will help teachers focus on what they do best - teaching our students,” Crowder said. “Last year, so much precious instructional time was wasted on preparing for and then mitigating the fallout from the failed test. Our students and teachers accomplish amazing results with limited resources, and we encourage school boards and legislators to support measures that would help them focus on great teaching and learning.”

VOUCHER ZEALOT from page 1

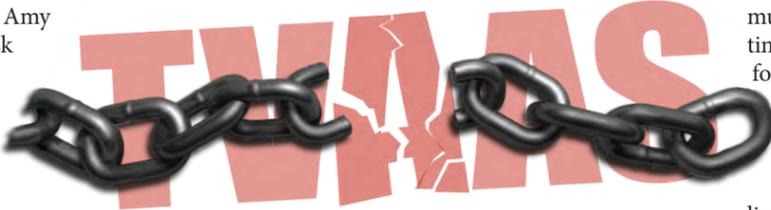
though they may not know it. The group’s state arm, the Tennessee Federation for Children, spent up to \$1 million in this year’s elections, much of it attacking legislators who stood with TEA to defeat vouchers. One example is Rep. Gary Hicks, tech coordinator of Rogersville City Schools, who handily won his Republican primary challenge this summer with TEA members and funding pushing back on a massive negative campaign by the Federation. TEA made that campaign about vouchers and Republicans voted with their schools.

“The Federation for Children has a track record of targeting Republicans who vote with their districts and refuse to sell their schools,” says Jim Wrye, TEA chief lobbyist. “That heavy handed approach turns a lot of people off. And everyone knows we whipped them good last August.”

DeVos’ married into the Amway fortune, and in her home state of Michigan she has attacked public schools. Despite massive personal spending she failed to pass a Michigan voucher initiative in 2000, and the charter expansion she pushed has not seen promised results. Michigan has also the dubious distinction of having an Achievement School District doing worse than our own.

Some Tennessee pro-voucher legislators hope Trump’s choice will translate into more local support for vouchers. Wrye isn’t buying it.

“The Federation now will try and push their ideology and theories from another angle. But it’s still trying to come into our state and tell us what to do,” said Wrye. “If I know one thing it’s this: Tennesseans don’t back down.”



Over the past several years as TEA has chipped away at the validity and use of TVAAS for individual teachers, the state defended the statistical estimate by saying the model used “three years of data.” With the TNReady disaster last spring, there no longer is three years of data for most Tennessee students, and there won’t for years to come.

BUS TRAGEDY RAISES QUESTIONS from page 1

The issue of outsourcing is especially relevant in the Chattanooga case as the school system uses a private provider, Durham School Services. Emails indicate that Hamilton County administrators were warned about the driver in the crash, but had little recourse since the driver was the employee of a private company and not the school system.

While the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) gives Durham an overall safety rating of “Satisfactory,” the company’s buses have been involved in accidents resulting in nine Tennessee fatalities over the last two years. Additionally, Durham has been cited seven times over the last two years for allowing drivers to operate buses without a valid Commercial Driver’s License (CDL).

To compare, buses run by school systems in Tennessee recorded one fatality in the same period, while transporting many more students over many more miles statewide.

“There are some fundamental questions of student safety we need to address when it comes to vendors,” said TEA President Barbara Gray. “Privatizing student transportation gives me pause. We don’t relinquish responsibility of our students except where private vendors control buses, and there are clearly grave issues that situation raises.”

In addition to supervision, outsourcing raises questions around public records, screening, driver discipline, and overall safety.

“Gov. Haslam is right to raise concerns over outsourcing transportation services,” said Gray. “TEA opposes outsourcing of essential school services and will work with the administration and the General Assembly to seek positive solutions going forward.”

Another issue raised by the Chattanooga accident is the use of seat belts on school buses. Legislation was brought forward in 2015 to require seat belts on all buses. That legislation was sent to a summer study committee. Rep. Gerald McCormick of Chattanooga has said he plans to offer legislation in 2017 that would require seat belts on buses. While the Haslam administration has not been supportive of seat belts in the past, the governor’s most

recent statements indicate he’s willing to review all options, including seat belts.

As the legislature considers options for seat belts on buses, TEA will always advocate for what keeps students safe. The first thing TEA will do is talk to the hundreds of members who drive buses to get their input on what they think is best for their students.

TEA will be contacting driver-members to ask them about seat belts. Past reaction from drivers showed that seat belts are not

the state - fighting to prevent outsourcing and promote high standards for safety as well as fair treatment of drivers.

“We know our bus drivers know their students and work hard to get them to and from school safely every day,” Gray said.

“I know every single student on my bus not only by name, but get to know who they are,” said Christa Williams, a bus driver employed by the Williamson County Board of Education. She notes a bus driver has a

lot more on their plate than obeying traffic laws and driving safe. They also deal with discipline and the emotional well-being of each student that rides with them.

“Driving a bus is a big responsibility,” Williams said. “I consider my job a service to the community. We all want to know our children are safe - bottom line my job is safety.”

While some claim that privatizing transportation services saves districts money, research in other states indicates that in the long-term, outsourcing bus services actually increases costs. While districts may gain money on the front end by selling their fleet, that one-time financial gain is short-lived. Additionally, any initial savings in labor cost comes at the expense of the men and women who drive the buses. One study indicated that outsourcing buses actually carries an increased cost to the district after the second year of the contract. That study, which was conducted in Pennsylvania, recommended in-sourcing transportation services to save taxpayer dollars.

“Our bus drivers are an important part of the school system and community,” Gray said. “We owe them our support and respect. We know they work hard to keep our children safe.”

As school bus safety gets more attention in the 2017 General Assembly, TEA will be there - fighting for the safety of our students and the respect and fair treatment our bus drivers deserve.

TEA will be conducting a phone survey for driver members during the week of December 12-15, asking about seat belts.

“Ask the people who know,” said Gray.



the help they are in automobiles.

“There are concerns about making sure four to seven year olds can buckle themselves up, or that the belts themselves won’t pose a discipline or physical threat to other students,” said TEA lobbyist Jim Wrye. “We design buses to protect students, and understand on most buses there is only one adult—the driver. And let’s face it, no safety measure is more important than a responsible, well trained, and decently compensated professional driving our children to and from school.”

TEA stands with the many bus drivers across

DRIVER MEMBERS: DO YOU WANT BUS SEAT BELTS?

Take the TEA phone survey Dec. 12-15.

TEA will be conducting an automated home-phone poll to member-drivers, asking their opinion on seat belts on buses. Calls will come between 6 - 7:30 p.m. When you see TEA call, please take a few moments to give us your opinion.

TENNESSEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION 2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



The 2016 break in the testing chain removes the last excuse for using TVAAS in all high stakes decisions. Time to stop.



Create an evaluation standing committee composed of Pre-K–16 educators



**Make su
align wit**



Special interests still want to attack our schools and steal funding. TEA is the only organization that defeats them.



Defeat all voucher schemes and radical charter expansion



Stop and roll back the ASD and SBE charter expansion



Restore local control on school decisions



TENNESSEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

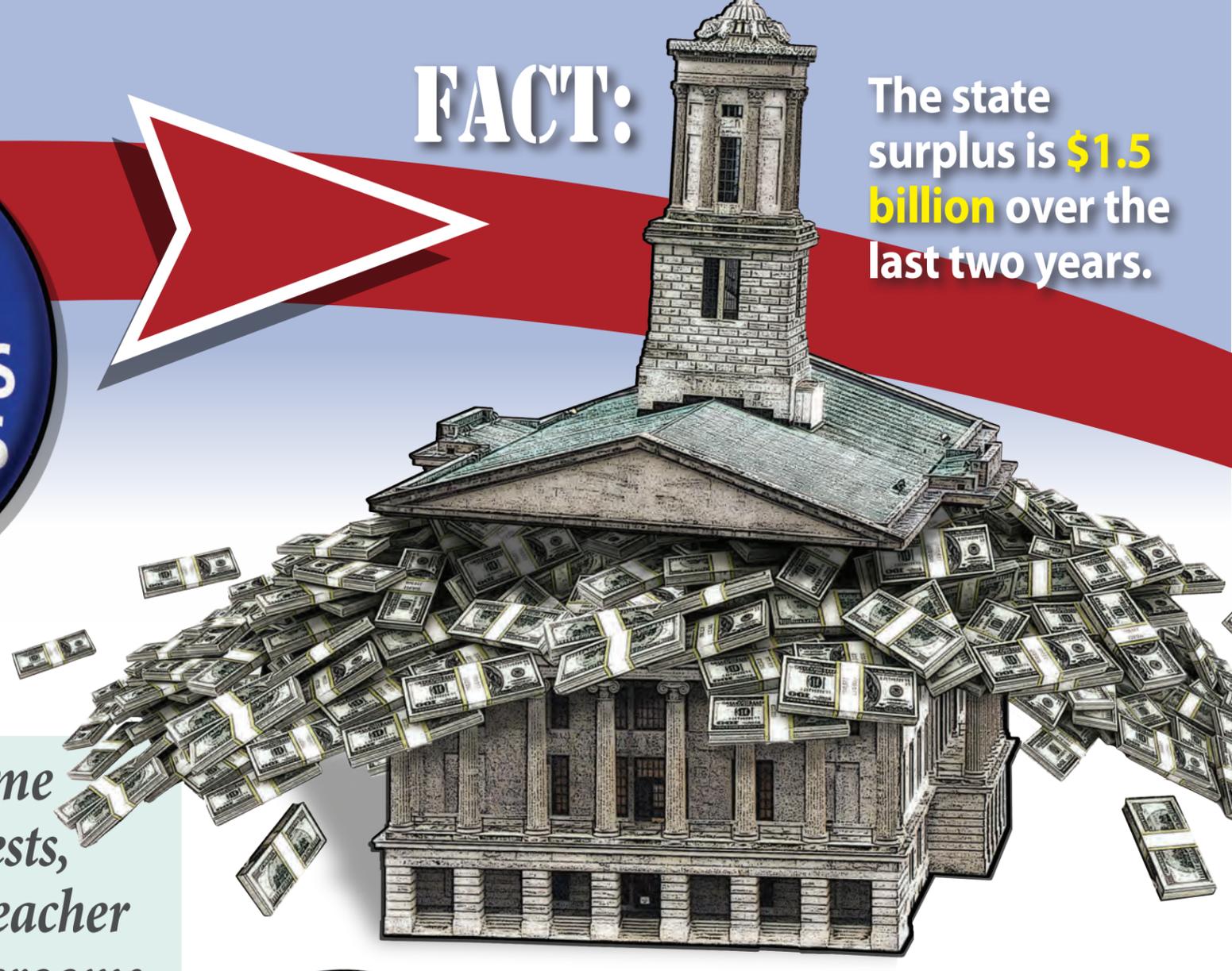
TENNESSEE'S STRONGEST

Time for every educator to **join**. To add your voice

READY TO FIGHT FOR STUDENTS & EDUCATORS
TEA

FACT:

The state surplus is **\$1.5 billion** over the last two years.



Let's reduce time and stakes of tests, and increase teacher control of classrooms.

Secure standards with tests

INVEST IN OUR SCHOOLS
TEA

Record revenue means historic investment in Tennessee education is a must! TEA will push for:

Gov. Haslam set a record last year with the largest increase in education funding without a tax increase ever. He has indicated another large increase is possible. Let's help him make history again.



7% increase in teacher salary funds \$182 million



Making sure those funds get into teacher paychecks



Funding for RTI specialists in reading/math \$50 million



\$250 per teacher classroom supply funds \$20 million



Keep retirement strong by fully funding TCRS \$343 million

ST VOICE FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS

voice and help strengthen students, schools, and our profession go to teateachers.org

With testing transparency now law, new assessment vendor meets with TEA

TEA fought and won the battle to make state tests as transparent as possible. In order to get a handle on the role of testing in education we had to take the mystery out of assessments. Publishing questions and answers gives us a chance to grade the test makers and ensure what standards we follow are correctly reflected in the state assessments. Knowledge is power when it comes to standardized tests.

TEA's testing transparency is now law, passed last legislative session. This spring after students complete the tests, questions and answers will be published where teachers and parents can review and critique them. The association will not rest on tests, we will continue to work for educator control of the system.

The new state testing vendor, Minnesota-based Questar, met with TEA in early November to go over their goals in producing TNReady assessments. Company officials answered key TEA questions and pledged to work with the association as TNReady comes on line.

A key TEA concern is test-graders on non-multiple choice questions. The previous failed state test contractor notoriously looked for poorly-paid and non-accredited graders on Craigslist. Questar told TEA the company uses a large contingent of trained retired teachers based at their headquarters as graders with control measures for consistency in grading.

The company also assured TEA that Tennessee teachers will be writing the questions used in TNReady, and their support for testing transparency. TEA agrees with Questar's approach to keep pencil and paper testing for the foreseeable future.

"Questar has been professional and met goals in other states, and seems to have the right perspective in making sure Tennessee has a functioning and helpful assessment system," said TEA President Barbara Gray. "We certainly need some successful work after the problems of the past several years."

Oak Ridge passes resolution against use of public school funds for private schools

The Oak Ridge School Board unanimously passed a resolution opposing the use of public funds for private schools on Monday, Nov. 28.

The resolution states that the Oak Ridge Board of Education "strongly opposes" taking funds from public education in any community in the state without agreement from a local school board, without a legal guarantee that the schools receiving the funds will comply with the same curriculum and testing standards required of public schools, and until the state's Basic Education Program, or BEP, is adequately funded by the Tennessee General Assembly.

"It is critical to the vitality of Oak Ridge that we protect and sustain a system of public education that for decades has proved to be among our city's most valuable assets," the resolution says.

The Tennessee General Assembly is expected to once again consider legislation in 2017 that would use public funds to pay tuition costs for students to attend private, religious, and non-religious schools through the use of private school vouchers. Previous versions of the proposal have been defeated by TEA and other public school advocates for four straight years.

In addition to the unfair use of public schools' already limited resources, the Oak Ridge board also objects to the lack of accountability and high standards for private schools. In addition, the proposal to take resources from public schools "comes at a time when the state's Basic Education Program is not adequately funded." The resolution will now be forwarded to legislators who represent Oak Ridge and to the Oak Ridge superintendent.

It's time to consider nominating a colleague or throwing your own hat in the ring for the 2017 National Education Association Representative Assembly in Boston, Mass., June 30-July 5, 2017. Nominees may submit pictures and biographical material for publication in the February issue of teach. (See Biographical Information in the third column.)

TEA urges minority educators to apply for delegate positions. TEA seeks at least 17 percent minority representation in its delegation, a goal we regularly exceed.

Nomination/election procedures Category 1

Two delegates are elected from each of the 15 TEA Board districts. The delegates in each district must be classroom teachers, education support professionals or persons who serve in other non-supervisory positions.

The state nominating committee has submitted the following names: **District 1:** Karen Anderson, Joe Crabtree; **District 2:** Michele Bowman; **District 3:** Michael Carvella; **District 4:** Tanya Coats, Connie Mitchell; **District 5:** Jeanette Omarkhail, Pam Thompson; **District 6:** Beth Brown, Jennifer Eilender, Josephine McQuail; **District 7:** Jim Gifford; **District 8:** Kawanda Braxton, Kevin King; **District 9:** Stephen Henry, Debi Ponder, Earl Wiman; **District 10:** Carrie Allison, Randall Woodard; **District 11:** Brandi Adams; **District 12:** Janis Carroll; **District 13:** Trish Stephenson, Sandra McDurmon; **District 14/15:** Kenyon Cook, Neshelda Johnson, Tiffany Reed. Additional nominations shall be submitted by an affiliated local association or upon petition of 50 NEA members from the respective board district. Voting for delegates from each board district shall be restricted to the NEA members employed in that district.

Category 2

Three supervisor/administrator/retired NEA life member delegates are elected in a statewide vote. The state nominating committee has submitted the names of **Barbara Gray, Jessica Holman, Dennis Kimbrough, Margaret Thompson.** Additional nominations shall be by an affiliated local association or upon petition of 50 NEA members.

Definitions

An **NEA member** is one who on Jan. 15 is an active, education support professional or retired NEA life member. An **active member** is any person who is engaged in, or on a limited leave of absence from, professional education work or who is serving as an executive officer of the association. Active members shall hold or shall be eligible to hold a baccalaureate or higher degree or the regular teaching, vocational or technical certificates required by their employment. Active membership is limited to persons who support the principles and goals of the association and maintain membership in the local and state affiliates where eligible.

An **education support professional** member is any employee of a school

district, college or university or other institution devoted primarily to educational work who is not eligible for active membership.

A **classroom teacher** is any person who is certified, where required, and a major part of whose time is spent in direct contact with students or who performs allied work which results in placement of the person on a local salary schedule for teachers.

A **supervisor and administrator** is any person who has continuing authority to hire, evaluate, transfer, discipline, dismiss or otherwise direct employees or to officially recommend any of these actions.

A **retired NEA life member** is a retired NEA life member who holds membership in the Tennessee Retired Teachers Association (TRTA).

General Information Nominations

Nominations shall be made by a letter signed by a local association president and secretary reflecting the name of their association's nominee or by a separate petition for each nominee containing 50 legible signatures of NEA members and the local association to which they belong.

It is suggested that each petition include a few extra signatures in the event a signature is challenged or is illegible.

Each petition shall carry the name, address, Social Security number and phone numbers (school and home) of the nominee, along with the name of the local association of which he/she is a member and the category for which he/she is being nominated. Nominees shall be added to the proper category in the order in which nominations are received at the TEA headquarters.

For retired NEA life members to be eligible to be a state delegate, they must be a member of the Tennessee Retired Teachers Association. In lieu of submitting nominations, the Board of Directors may function as a nominating committee for the purpose of nominating board members.

Elections

The appropriate number of nominees receiving the largest number of votes in their respective categories shall be declared delegates. If the number of nominees for delegate positions is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections shall be waived, and the nominees declared elected to the delegate positions.

Successor delegates

Successor delegates shall be chosen in the order of the number of votes received by those nominees within the appropriate category and district who were not elected delegates. Successor delegates outside districts in which fewer district delegates are elected than called for in this plan shall be assigned as delegates in those districts in the order of the number of votes received.

Deadline for nominations

All nominations must be received at TEA Headquarters, 801 Second Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37201-1099 by Dec. 15, 2016.

Biographical information

All nominees are eligible to have condensed biographical data printed in the Feb. teach. **The deadline for receiving biographical materials is Dec. 15, 2016. Biographical information should contain no more than 75 words.** A photograph may also be submitted. Information should be typed double-spaced with verbs, articles, prepositions, and conjunctions omitted. No abbreviations are acceptable except TEA, NEA and the abbreviation of the nominee's local association. (Upon request, TEA will provide a form for listing biographical information.)

Total number of delegates

This plan is based on a state allocation of 46 delegates; three non-teacher (supervisor/administrator/retired NEA life member) and 43 non-supervisory (classroom teacher/education support professionals or persons who serve in other non-supervisory positions). If membership reports indicate that the number of non-teacher delegates must be revised, the number will be adjusted up or down, as appropriate.

If either membership figures or non-teacher delegate allocation requires that the number of non-supervisory delegates be revised, an adjustment will be made by adding or deleting a delegate position for as many board districts as necessary to achieve the proper allocation of delegates. Such adjustments will be made first in any board district not having its full allocation of delegates nominated. Any additional adjustments will be made in the board districts whose turn it is according to the following rotation plan.

Order	Board District number
1.....	District 10
2.....	District 9
3.....	District 8
4.....	District 7
5.....	District 6
6.....	District 5
7.....	District 4
8.....	District 3
9.....	District 2
10.....	District 1
11.....	District 15
12.....	District 14
13.....	District 13
14.....	District 12
15.....	District 11

The TEA Executive Director is responsible for maintaining the rotation records for use in determining which board district is in line for delegate adjustment when necessary.

Expenses

TEA provides expenses for delegates according to policies adopted by the TEA Board of Directors and TEA Representative Assembly.

Ballots

Ballots are mailed to each local association president prior to March 1. Each association distributes the ballots to the NEA members of that association. Marked ballots are collected and either counted by the local association or sent to TEA for tabulation. The local association's tabulation of the votes cast by its NEA

NEA Representative Assembly Boston, Massachusetts June 30 — July 5, 2017



members or the untabulated ballots must be received at TEA headquarters no later than April 10.

Modification of procedure

The TEA President and Executive Director are authorized to temporarily modify this procedure in order to comply with NEA requirements if time does not permit the suggested changes to be considered at the next regular board meeting.

Clustering of delegates

The TEA Board of Directors has established the following cluster procedures for the election of non-teacher delegates, NEA-Retired delegates and delegates from small associations (fewer than 75 members) to the NEA Representative Assembly.

Non-teacher delegates

A non-teacher is any person who has continuing authority to hire, transfer, discipline, dismiss or otherwise direct employees or to officially recommend any of these actions. A statewide cluster of non-teacher members shall be established. The cluster shall be achieved by combining the number of non-teacher members of each eligible local association (those with fewer than 10 local delegates), according to the following guidelines:

The number of non-teacher members shall be subtracted from the total local association membership for purposes of local delegate allocation determination. The number of non-teacher members will not be subtracted from local association membership totals if it is determined, based on membership as of Jan. 15, that the subtraction would cause the allocation of local delegates to decrease. This provision may be waived if said local association does not send its full allocation of delegates.

Non-teacher members included in the cluster will not be allowed to vote in the election of their local association delegates; however, they will be eligible to vote in the election for state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly.

A letter shall be sent to local association presidents informing them of the statewide cluster. A form will be included with the letter which is to be returned if a local association does not desire to participate. **The deadline for returning the form is December 15.**

The TEA Board of Directors serves as a nominating committee for the statewide cluster of non-teacher NEA delegates in the same manner that it does for NEA state delegates. Subsequent to the completion of the above process, nomination shall be by an affiliated local association or upon petition of 50 NEA members.

Nominations shall be received at the TEA office after Dec. 1, but no later than Dec. 15.

Nominees are placed on the ballot in the order in which nominations are received at the TEA headquarters. The number of non-teacher delegates to be elected shall be based upon one delegate for each 150 non-teachers in the cluster.

Ballots are mailed to each non-teacher member in the cluster prior to March 1. Marked ballots must be received at TEA headquarters no later than April 10.

If the number of nominees for delegate positions is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections shall be waived and the nominees declared elected as delegates.

The appropriate number of nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared delegates. The TEA Executive Director is responsible for compiling election results and notifying non-teacher delegates of their election.

Successor non-teacher delegates are chosen in the order of the number of votes received by those nominees who were not elected delegates. The TEA is not responsible for any expenses of the clustered non-teacher NEA delegates, unless the person is a member of the TEA Board of Directors when elected.

NEA-Retired delegates

Allocation of NEA-Retired delegates is based on NEA-R membership as of January 15. Only NEA-R members are eligible to nominate or serve as delegates. A letter shall be mailed to all NEA-R members no later than December 15 inviting them to submit a nomination for the allocated position(s). The nomination shall contain the name, address, phone number, and Social Security number of the nominee as well as the name and address of the NEA-R member making the nomination.

Nominations must be postmarked no later than December 15.

Nominees are placed on the ballot in the order in which nominations are received at the Tennessee Retired Teachers Association office, 801 2nd Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37201-1099.

Ballots are mailed to each NEA-R member prior to March 1. **Marked ballots must be received by the TRTA no later than April 10.** If the number of nominees for delegate positions is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections shall be waived and the nominees declared elected to the delegate positions.

The appropriate number of nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared delegates.

Successor delegates are chosen in the order of the number of votes received by those nominees who were not elected delegates.

The TRTA is responsible for compiling election results and notifying NEA-R delegates of their election.

The TRTA and TEA are not responsible for any expenses of NEA-R delegates.

Small association delegates

A letter will be sent to each local education association whose membership on January 15 (according to NEA membership records) contains fewer than 76 members. This letter will list the names, addresses and phone numbers of the presidents of these local associations as well as the number of members in each association.

A local education association desiring to send a delegate initiates the cluster process by contacting the president of one or more

local associations listed whose membership, when added to that of the local association initiating the cluster, totals at least 76.

Local associations desiring to cluster will be responsible for making their own arrangements regarding nominations, elections and finances. NEA's requirements for election of delegates, which is mailed to local association presidents in October of each year, applies to clustered delegates.

TEA shall be provided the names of the delegates and the local associations involved in the cluster when the selection is made and will in turn file the appropriate form with NEA. **Such form must be submitted to TEA no later than April 10.**

Expenses of delegates elected through this cluster procedure are borne by the local associations involved in the cluster or by the clustered delegate.

The timeline for the allocation and election of delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly in Boston, Mass., June 30-July 5, 2017:

December 15 — Deadline for receiving state delegate nominations (except student members), candidates' photographs and biographical information for publication in *teach*.

January 15 — Date on which the number of NEA delegates is established based on the number of members on file with NEA.

February 15 — NEA sends report forms containing delegate allocations based on membership figures as of January 15 (March 15 for student members) to all affiliates.

March 1 — Date by which state ballots are mailed to presidents for distribution to members. (Ballots will be mailed earlier if possible.) Instructions for voting procedures are also mailed.

April 10 — Local affiliates send local delegate and successor delegate report forms to TEA office.

May 15 — Deadline for TEA to certify state election results to NEA and deadline for forwarding to NEA the delegate report forms for all elected local and state delegates and successor delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly.

May 15 — Deadline for TEA to file with NEA report forms for delegates and successor delegates representing student, higher education, retired, and educational support members.

June 1 — Based on review of delegate report forms submitted by May 15, NEA Credentials Committee issues credentials or notifies affiliates of reason for withholding credentials.

June 5 — NEA sends credentials and registration packets to delegates.

Need information, services?

Tennessee Education Association
801 Second Avenue N., Nashville, TN 37201-1099
(615) 242-8392, (800) 342-8367, FAX (615) 259-4581

UniServ Coordinators

District 1 — Harry Farthing, P.O. Box 298, Elizabethton, TN 37644; phone: (423)262-8035, fax: (866)379-0949; Assns: Bristol, Carter Co., Elizabethton, Johnson Co., Hancock Co., Hawkins Co., Kingsport, Northeast State Community College, Rogersville, Sullivan Co. **District 2 — Jennifer Gaby**, P.O. Box 70, Afton, TN 37616; (423)234-0700, fax: (855)299-0723; Assns: Cocke Co., Greene Co., East Tennessee State University, Greeneville, Hamblen Co., Johnson City, Newport, Unicoi Co., Washington Co. **District 3 — Tina Parlier**, P.O. Box 70288, Knoxville, TN 37938-0288, (865)688-1175, fax: (866)518-3104; Assns: Campbell Co., Claiborne Co., Grainger Co., Jefferson Co., Sevier Co., Union Co., Walters State

Community College. **District 4 — Duran Williams**, KCEA, 2411 Magnolia Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917; (865)522-9793, fax: (865)522-9866; Assns: Knox, Pellissippi State Comm. College, UT-Knoxville, TSD. **District 5 — Jason White**, P.O. Box 5502, Oak Ridge, TN 37831; (615)521-1333, fax: (855)301-8366; Assns: Athens, Alcoa, Anderson Co., Blount Co., Clinton, Etowah, Lenoir City, Loudon Co., Maryville, McMinn Co. (except Athens City - see District 7), Monroe Co., Oak Ridge, Polk Co., Sweetwater. **District 6 — Shannon Bain**, P.O. Box 3452, Lebanon, TN 37088, phone: (615)547-7769, fax: (844)274-0765; Assns: Cannon Co., Cumberland Co., Cumberland University, DeKalb Co., Lebanon, Putnam Co., Van Buren Co., Warren Co., Wilson Co., White Co., TTU. **District 7 — Theresa Turner**, HCEA 4655 Shallowford Road, Chattanooga, TN 37411; (423)485-9535, fax: (423)485-9512; Assns: Athens City, Bradley Co., Chattanooga State Community College, Cleveland, Hamilton Co., UT-Chattanooga. **District 8 — Josh Trent**, P.O. Box 451, Livingston, TN 38570,

(931)279-9530, fax: (855)299-5674; Assns: Fentress Co., Lenoir City, Loudon Co., Meigs Co., Morgan Co., Oneida, Overton Co., Rhea-Dayton Co., Roane Co., Scott Co., York Institute. **District 9 — Jackie Pope**, 2326 Valley Grove Dr., Murfreesboro, TN 37128; phone: (615)898-1060, fax: (855) 301-8214, Assns: Bedford Co., Bledsoe Co., Coffee Co., Franklin Co., Grundy Co., Manchester, Marion Co., Moore Co., Motlow State Community College, Sequatchie Co., Tullahoma. **District 10 — Jeff Garrett**, P.O. Box 1326, Lebanon, TN 37088-1326; (615)630-2605, fax (855)320-8755; Assns: Clay Co., Jackson Co., Macon Co., Pickett Co., Robertson Co., Smith Co., Sumner Co., Trousdale Co. **District 11 — Antoinette Lee**, P.O. Box 1412, Antioch, TN 37013; (615)308-5293, fax: (888)519-7331; Assns: FSSD, Williamson, TN Dept. of Ed. **District 12 — Sue Ogg**; P.O. Box 210486, Nashville, TN 37211-0486; (615)856-0503, fax: (855)427-6660 — Assns: Fayetteville City, Giles Co., Lawrence Co., Lincoln Co., Marshall Co., Maury Co., Wayne Co. **District 13 — Mary Campbell, Susan Dalton**,

Metro Nashville, 531 Fairground Court, Nashville, TN 37211; (615)347-6578 (Campbell), (615)476-3161 (Dalton), fax: (855)299-4968 (Campbell), (855)299-5837 (Dalton); Assns: Dept. of Higher Ed., Metropolitan Nashville, TN School For The Blind, MTSU, Murfreesboro City, NSCC, Rutherford, TSU. **District 14 — Maria Uffelmann**, P.O. Box 99, Cumberland City, TN 37050; phone: (931)827-3333, fax: (855)299-4925; Assns: Austin Peay State University, Clarksville-Montgomery Co., Henry Co., Houston Co., Paris, Stewart Co., Weakley Co., UT-Martin. **District 15 — Cheryl Richardson**, P.O. Box 354, Goodlettsville, TN 37070; phone: (615)630-2601, fax: (888)519-4879; Assns: Benton Co., Central, Cheatham Co., Clarksburg, Decatur Co., Dickson Co., Hickman Co., Humphreys Co., Huntingdon, Lewis Co., McKenzie, Perry Co., West Carroll. **District 16 — Lorrie Butler**, P.O. Box 387, Henderson, TN 38340; (731)989-4860, fax: (855)299-4591; Assns: Chester Co., Jackson-Madison Co., Jackson State Community College, Hardin Co., Henderson Co., Lexington, McNairy Co., West

Tennessee School for the Deaf. **District 17 — Terri Jones**, P.O. Box 2140, Cordova, TN 38088; (901)258-3902, fax: (844)270-8083; Assns: Bradford, Crockett Co., Dyer Co., Dyersburg, Dyersburg State Community College, Gibson Co., Hardeman Co., Haywood Co., Humboldt, Lake Co., Lauderdale Co., Milan, Obion Co., Tipton Co., Trenton, Union City. **District 18 — Zandra Foster**, 3897 Homewood Cove, Memphis, TN 38128; (901)377-9472, fax: (855)320-8737;—Assns: Bartlett, Collierville, Fayette Co., Germantown-Arlington-Lakeland, Millington, Southwest State Community College, University of Memphis. **District 19 — Karla Carpenter, UniServ Field Manager; UniServ Director: Tom Marchand**, 6520 Stage Road, Bartlett, TN 38134; phone/fax (901)379-6939; United Education Association of Shelby County, www.unitedshelby.org.

www.teateachers.org
www.nea.org

ESSA town hall meetings to shape way forward on testing, teacher participation critical for progress

Before you deck the halls for Christmas, let's plan to pack the town halls in December to ensure we put an end to excessive testing, school takeovers, unfair evaluation, and test-based accountability.

The opportunity to share our voices and shape public education policy that directly affects our work is offered to Tennessee educators through the new law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaced the extremely flawed and much-criticized No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

A result of several years of meetings between U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander and TEA members, the new law shifts the power from Washington, D.C., back to the states, allowing us to re-examine every aspect of what goes on in Tennessee public schools, from standardized testing to improvement projects.

"Senator Alexander's bill has returned decision-making back where it belongs—into the hands of local educators, parents and communities," said TEA President Barbara Gray. "The ESSA town hall meetings organized by the Tennessee Department of Education are exactly what teachers have been asking for during the 14-year reign of NCLB. Now is the time to let our voices shape public education going forward."

To eliminate excessive testing that is taking precious instructional time from our classrooms, TEA is calling for an audit of all state and district assessments to determine the purpose and cost of all Tennessee tests.

"Our goal is to reduce the total number of state tests and testing time, and to align new standards and assessments," Gray said. "We cannot afford another year like 2015-16, when the failure of the TNReady test caused so much anguish among students, teachers and parents. We must share those stories with the state education officials during the town hall meetings."

The goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act is to ensure that all students, regardless of their zip code, have the support, tools, and time to learn that they need to succeed. The fact that educators' voices are part of

the decision making process at all levels is a direct result of TEA members' work with Sen. Alexander and his staff.

A lot of hard work lies ahead, but the foundation will be laid during the December town hall meetings held by the State Department of Education.

"We are hopeful that ESSA will help us put an end to school takeovers in Tennessee," said TEA Executive Director Carolyn Crowder. "The so-called Achievement School District has proven itself ineffective time and again, inciting protests from parents and community stakeholders across the state. Educators must be involved in strategic school improvement plans, which should be based on best practices for authentic and inclusive participation by education stakeholders."

Another critical area is ending unfair evaluation and ineffective preparation.

"Teachers and administrators have spoken that the current system doesn't work," Gray said. "Under the new law, the state can implement a fair and equitable evaluation system, improve teacher training programs to support all educators, and make sure that work is done through an evaluation standing committee comprised of Pre-K-16 educators."

In order for ESSA to lead to true student success, TEA has also called for establishing an opportunity index in the state accountability plan that measures several non-academic factors beyond test scores.

"We encourage our members and community members to call for an equity audit which would determine state and local resources," Gray said. "We are now at a critical juncture where we must seize the opportunity to build our education system in Tennessee the way we want it to be, without unwieldy mandates from Washington. We have the knowledge and the experience to make it happen."

Town hall meetings have been scheduled as of press time (*right*). Please check for updates and the dates for the Chattanooga town hall meeting at: www.teateachers.org/ESSA.

No Child Left Behind is gone. **ESSA** gives power to states to end:

Excessive Testing

- Audit state and district assessments to determine the purpose and cost of all Tennessee tests
- Reduce the total number of state tests and testing time
- Align new standards and assessments

Unfair Evaluation and Ineffective Preparation

- Implement a fair and equitable evaluation system
- Create an evaluation standing committee composed of Pre-K-16 educators
- Improve teacher training programs to prepare educators for success

School Takeovers

- Involve educators in strategic school improvement plans
- Create district-driven plans for turning around schools and addressing student achievement and access gaps
- Design state models of transformational leadership based on best practices for including authentic and inclusive stakeholder involvement

Test-based Accountability

- Establish an opportunity index in the state accountability plan that measures non-academic factors beyond test scores
- Utilize an equity audit to determine state and local resources
- Develop alternatives to test-based accountability

But positive change only happens if we work and push for it.

UPCOMING STATE ESSA MEETINGS

KNOXVILLE

Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 5:30 p.m. ET
West High School
3300 Sutherland Ave.

JACKSON

Thursday, Dec. 8 at 5 p.m. CT
South Side High School
84 Harts Bridge Road

MEMPHIS

Wednesday, Dec. 14 at 5 p.m. CT
Douglas High School
3200 Mt. Olive Road

NASHVILLE

Thursday, Dec. 15 at 5 p.m. CT
Pearl Cohn High School
904 26th Ave. North

TEA TO PUSH FOR ANOTHER TEACHER RAISE, IMPROVE BEP FORMULA from page 1

In reality, average teacher salary only increased by about 2 percent following the 4 percent increase in 2015.

TEA worked to address this issue last year by adding an amendment to a bill that changed the BEP to require raise money to be used for teacher pay in systems that pay below the statewide average in teacher pay.

However, even with this new language, there is an expectation that teacher salary may only increase by roughly 2 percent again this year.

So why are legislators only seeing 50 cents on the dollar when they provide money for teacher salary improvements?

A major reason has to do with the school funding formula itself, and the number of teachers for which funding is provided to school systems. Every system in the state hires teachers out of local funds, which automatically pulls down the total share of a raise each educator will get, as the raise money must be spread to the locally funded positions as well.

In theory, local dollars will increase when state funding increases to make whole the raise provided by the legislature, but this

is not guaranteed, and many rural areas are unable to provide the additional local dollars.

The state estimates about 12-18 percent of the teacher workforce is paid solely with local funds, which amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars in local money that could be spent funding other priorities. Adding to the problem, the state funding formula assumes locals will pick up 30 percent of the cost of teacher salaries for each state-funded position.

This issue of local cost burden and the reality that some rural areas simply do not have the tax base to support their end of the formula helps explain why there is a growing disparity in teacher pay in the state. In fact, the difference between the highest and lowest paid teachers in the state is rapidly approaching a level found unconstitutional by the state supreme court. And if support for health insurance is added in, it likely exceeds it.

"TEA has been relentless in its efforts to lobby the state and educate the stakeholders about the importance of providing fair compensation to all Tennessee teachers," said TEA President Barbara Gray. "The State Board of Education also recognizes the importance of the salary issue, releasing a letter this year asking Haslam and the General

Assembly to make raising teacher pay their top education priority. We agree with the State Board that raising pay for teachers is critical to attract and retain the best educators for our children."

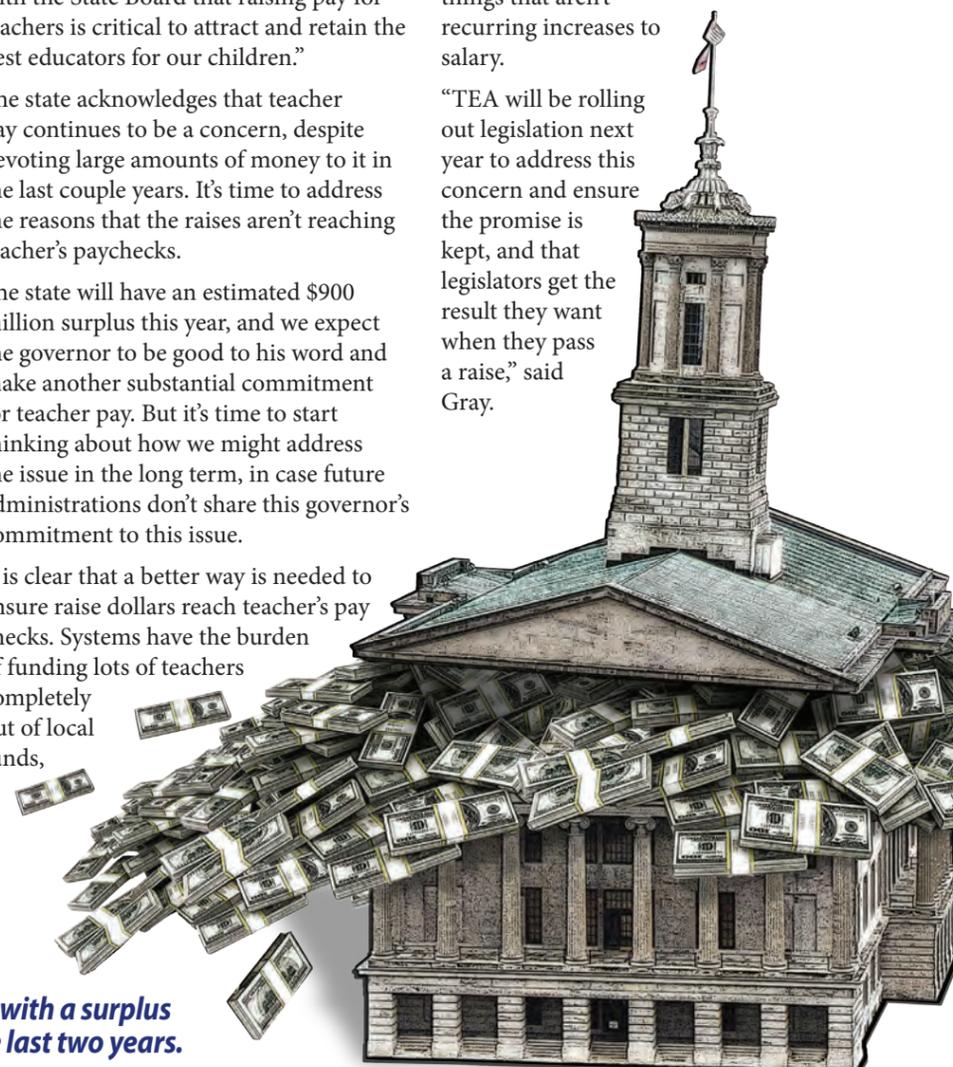
The state acknowledges that teacher pay continues to be a concern, despite devoting large amounts of money to it in the last couple years. It's time to address the reasons that the raises aren't reaching teacher's paychecks.

The state will have an estimated \$900 million surplus this year, and we expect the governor to be good to his word and make another substantial commitment for teacher pay. But it's time to start thinking about how we might address the issue in the long term, in case future administrations don't share this governor's commitment to this issue.

It is clear that a better way is needed to ensure raise dollars reach teacher's pay checks. Systems have the burden of funding lots of teachers completely out of local funds,

and also have the ability to use money designated for teacher raises on many things that aren't recurring increases to salary.

"TEA will be rolling out legislation next year to address this concern and ensure the promise is kept, and that legislators get the result they want when they pass a raise," said Gray.



State coffers overflow with a surplus of \$1.5 billion over the last two years.