# I. Achievement School District

## a. Priority School Selection Timeline

i. **Request:** ASD must select schools it intends to operate within six months of the Priority Schools List announcement

**Rationale:** Identifying all schools the ASD intends to operate once the Priority List is announced provides LEAs better planning with respect to schools that will leave the district

# b. Limitation on Priority School Selection

i. **Request:** The ASD may not select additional schools to operate until the next Priority Schools List is generated

**Rationale:** Allows districts more opportunity to target Priority List Schools for additional interventions and creates stability within the school and community

#### c. County Cap

i. **Request:** Institute a cap on the number of schools the ASD can operate within one county

**Rationale:** Prevents unequal distribution of ASD schools in one district and ensures that priority schools across the state are addressed

# d. Turnaround Choice

- Request: Allow parents with students attending Priority Schools to provide input on the selection of a turnaround model (ASD, District, Innovation Zone, Charter etc.) as provided in TCA 49-1-602(b)(2)
  Rationale: Gives parents, students, and the community more voice in the selection of the turnaround model for schools on the Priority List
- Request: Mandate that State resources for school turnaround models be allocated based on student academic performance and rate of improvement Rationale: Ensures that limited resources are allocated to turnaround models that have a proven track record of academic success

#### e. Establish Rules and Regulations

 Request: Promulgate Rules and Regulations for the operation of the Achievement School District
Rationale: Establishment of rules and regulations for the ASD ensures that

ambiguities in the law and operational processes are clear for LEAs and the ASD

# f. Facilities (TCA 49-1-614(f))

i. **Request:** Require the ASD be responsible for deferred maintenance in ASD occupied buildings/schools

**Rationale:** Ensures that LEAs are not fiscally responsible for schools outside of their local governance

# g. Return of Schools to Local Governance

 Request: Establish a clear exit process/return of schools to local governance Rationale: Currently, TCA 49-1-614 is unclear in outlining the exit and return process for ASD schools to local governance. Additionally, there are no state of Tennessee Department of Education rules and regulations that govern the ASD with respect to returning schools to the LEA.

# h. Moratorium

 Request: Pause ASD expansion until consistent student academic achievement is demonstrated through substantial academic gains
Rationale: In December 2015, a Vanderbilt study noted that "the performance of ASD schools has been inconsistent across school years, in most cases showing no difference from the comparison schools."<sup>1</sup> A moratorium will allow the ASD to focus on improving academic gains

# *i.* Newly Created ASD Schools

 Request: Prohibit ASD authorization of newly created charter schools Rationale: Allowing ASD authorized newly created charter schools strays from the original mission of the ASD to provide turnaround services to the state's Priority Schools

#### II. Charter Schools

### a. LEA Authorizer Fee

Request: Establish an Authorizer Fee for LEA charters
Rationale: LEA authorizers often incur costs to facilitate the authorization and oversight of charter schools; this will allow LEAs to offset the costs related to supporting charter schools

#### b. Charter School OPEB Liability

i. **Request:** Allow LEAs to assess a fee for OPEB Liabilities calculated on a per student basis

**Rationale:** LEAs that provide post-retirement group health insurance benefits ("post-retirement benefits") must also meet the mandates of GASB 45, which require public agencies to pre-fund the future costs of post-retirement benefits or report them as liabilities. By assessing a fee for OPEB Liabilities, LEAs can pay toward future costs

#### c. Charter Escrow Account

i. **Request:** Require charter operators to maintain an escrow account equivalent to 6 months of BEP funding

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tennessee Consortium on Research, Evaluation and Development *Evaluation of the Effect of Tennessee's* Achievement School District on Student Test Scores <u>http://www.tnconsortium.org/data/files/gallery/ContentGallery/ASD\_Impact\_Policy\_Brief\_Final\_12.8.15.pdf</u>

**Rationale:** Ensures that charter schools have adequate financial resources for operation

# d. Charter Funding Calculation

i. **Request:** Require charter funding to be calculated on previous year student enrollment

**Rationale:** Currently, charter school funding is based on current year student figures, whereas, SCS is provided funding based on prior year enrollment data. As a result, the funding calculation results in a higher per pupil allocation for charter schools than if both were using prior year student enrollment figures

# III. BEP/Fiscal Issues

# a. Full Funding of BEP

 i. Request: Fully fund BEP including unfunded mandates such as Response to Intervention (RTI), testing and teacher evaluation
Rationale: All LEAs were required to begin implementation of the RTI program in 2014-2015; however, funds to support the program are not included in the BEP formula. As such, LEAs must use funds from other programs to support the RTI work.

# b. BEP Fiscal Capacity Calculation

i. **Request:** Calculate the fiscal capacity of the area within the borders of the school district when a county has municipal and county school district funding **Rationale:** Account for all local funding streams

# c. BEP Funding Calculation

i. **Request:** Uniformity in the funding calculation for ASD, Charter Schools, and LEAs

**Rationale:** In September 2016, the Tennessee Comptroller's office found that the BEP Funding calculation for charter schools lacked sufficient clarity. ASD funding is calculated in the same manner as charter schools. SCS requests that the TNDOE establish clear rules regarding the calculation of the BEP for ASD, Charter Schools and LEAs.

 ii. Request: Remove requirement that BEP funding be calculated based on monthly attendance data
Rationale: By using monthly attendance date to calculate BEP, LEAs may be penalized for common district attendance trends

# d. State Board of Education

i. **Request:** Require the State Board of Education to publish a funding report that is calculated based on the specific student needs (i.e. factors utilized could include, but are not limited to, ELL, special needs, disabilities, Title 1 eligibility, per capita income of the families of students in the LEA boundaries, etc.)

**Rationale:** Providing a funding report ensures an accurate accounting of the costs associated with educating special student populations

ii. **Request:** Require the State Department of Education to issue a report annually that identifies the Fiscal note for all of the initiatives (individually & totally) mandated for the LEAs

**Rationale:** Providing an annual fiscal report of all initiatives ensures an accurate accounting of the costs associated with state mandated initiatives

# IV. School Based Issues (TCA Title 49)

#### a. Assessments and Standards

i. **Request:** Reduce the number of state mandated assessments and include funds to pay for the testing and assessment process (including technology costs); also limit the number of times a student is subjected to state mandated assessments in a semester/quarter.

**Rationale:** In absence of direction from the State Board of Education or the State Department of Education concerning the implementation of ESSA, LEAs should be allowed to limit assessment and mandated testing as they see fit as long as they can document a process that includes input from Teachers, Administration, Families, and community

# b. Elimination of RTI<sup>2</sup> Requirements

Request: Eliminate the RTI<sup>2</sup> requirements
Rationale: The current RTI<sup>2</sup> requirements prescribe the screening and progress monitoring processes which requires the purchase of additional assessments. The requirements also specify instructional minutes which require additional staff and resources to implement with fidelity.

#### c. Extended School Day

i. **Request:** Extend the school day at least 1 hours for schools in the Bottom 15% and provide funding

**Rationale:** Extended school day provides opportunity for students to receive intervention in various subjects and can offset the cost of after-school care for parents

#### d. Safe Harbor for School Consolidation

i. **Request:** Exclude the first year of student assessment data for schools that were consolidated following the closure of either an under-performing or under-utilized school

**Rationale:** Allows schools and LEAs an opportunity to adjust to new leadership at the schools as well as establishing a new and accurate depiction of baseline academic performance data for the newly consolidated school

## e. Pre-K

i. **Request:** Continue to fund Pre-K based on the amount of Title 1 student population

**Rationale:** Providing funds for Pre-K classrooms based on Title 1 student population allows LEAs with high poverty rates to direct funds to much needed opportunities to ensure incoming students are at grade-level, thereby lessening the achievement gap

#### f. Schools (TCA 49-1-104; TCA 49-6-3110)

i. **Request:** Class Size Waivers **Rationale:** Allow class size waivers from the state mandated maximum

#### g. Elected Superintendents

i. Oppose

# h. Funding of Educational Assistants

i. **Request:** Provide for additional educational assistants for schools identified by the LEA needing additional support

**Rationale:** Allows LEAs to provide enhanced academic support to target schools on the State's Priority and Focus Lists

#### *i.* Teacher Credentialing Flexibility

Request: Allow credentialing flexibility for hiring teachers
Rationale: Gives LEAs greater ability to recruit second career teachers as well as teachers for hard to staff subjects and schools

#### j. Vouchers

- i. Oppose
- ii. If adopted, include the following:
  - 1. Deduct from each voucher the OPEB liability on a per student basis;
  - 2. Require schools that allow the use of vouchers to administer Tennessee state mandated assessments for K-12;
  - 3. Require that the facilities used for educating voucher students meet or exceed the same standards and requirements for public school facilities;
  - 4. Require evidence of enrollment capacity for the number of vouchers issued by the state and accepted by a non-public school;
  - 5. Establish process for return of funds for students failing to enroll and/or expelled from voucher school;
  - 6. Establish a process for verification of non-public school accreditation