

Extended Learning Time

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Key Points

- Extending learning time in schools, either through more hours in the day or more days in the week or year, is one of several reforms being implemented by low-performing schools trying to improve student achievement. Extended learning time schools are typically located in poor, urban areas and attended by economically disadvantaged students.
- OREA identified 79 traditional schools across 38 districts in Tennessee that were using some level of extended learning time in school year 2012-13. Of those, 29 schools were using federal grants that require them to adopt extended learning time as one of several turnaround strategies. In addition to the traditional schools, 49 charter schools, which typically extend learning time as part of their education model, were operating in Tennessee that year. Fifteen more traditional schools and numerous charter schools were implementing extended learning time in 2013-14.
- Often implemented in conjunction with other education reforms, such as improving the quality of instruction, using existing time effectively, and developing data to pinpoint student needs, the effect of extended learning time on student achievement is difficult to isolate, and researchers have yet to establish a strong link between them. Studies to date indicate academic benefits are most likely to come from additional time that is structured and focused, with students fully engaged in learning, and are most likely to positively impact disadvantaged students.
- Best practices suggest that an extra 300 hours per year of school time is needed to reap the most benefits, and that the extra time should be used for:
 - o targeted instruction, such as individual or small group tutoring;
 - o enrichment activities, including performing arts projects, hands-on lab work, and field trips; and
 - o teacher planning time, collaboration, and professional development.
- The U.S. Department of Education does not set a minimum number of hours schools must add to meet extended learning time requirements in federal School Improvement Grants. These grants – to help the lowest performing schools improve academic achievement – drive the adoption of extended school schedules in many schools, but they also fund other required reforms, such as strengthening school leadership and instructional programs, ensuring effective teaching and use of student data, and establishing a school environment that is conducive to learning.
- International comparisons linking the number of hours students spend in school and student achievement levels do not demonstrate a clear pattern of cause and effect. Some countries with high student test scores on international assessments spend less time in school than lower-performing countries.

Introduction

Extending learning time (ELT) in schools, either through more hours in the day or more days in the week or year, is one of many reforms designed to improve student achievement in low-performing schools, especially those in urban, disadvantaged neighborhoods.^A ELT is one of several required strategies for low-performing schools that accept federal School Improvement Grants and a common practice among many charter schools.

The purpose of this brief is to explain what extended learning time is, where it is being used, the different ways it can be implemented, and related costs and funding. This brief also examines efforts to add time to the standard school day or year in Tennessee, profiles select Tennessee schools with extended learning time programs, and discusses the state's participation in the TIME Collaborative, a private, nonprofit initiative supporting extended learning time efforts in 11 school districts nationwide.

Background

What is extended learning time?

ELT is a school reform effort that seeks to improve student achievement by increasing the length of the traditional school year by adding hours to the school day or days to the school year.^B The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) defines ELT as:

increasing the length of the school day, week, or year to significantly increase the total number of school hours so as to include additional time for (a) instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography; (b) instruction in

other subjects and provision of enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, such as physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities; and (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.¹

The USDOE definition is based on the principles of extended learning time developed by the National Center for Time and Learning (NCTL), a nonprofit advocacy group working to support extended learning time initiatives. NCTL is currently working in collaboration with the Ford Foundation to introduce extended learning time reforms in high-poverty, low-performing schools throughout the country. NCTL recommends the addition of at least 300 hours to the traditional school year, or about a 25 percent increase in the number of hours, to maximize the benefits of extended learning time.^C

The USDOE does not require that schools add a specific number of hours to comply with federal grant conditions. The number of hours schools add when implementing extended learning time can vary significantly, ranging from 90 hours per year (30 minutes added per day) to more than 320 hours per year (two hours added to most days and five days more per year). [Exhibit 1](#) shows a possible daily schedule for a school that adds 300 hours to the school year.

National Center for Time and Learning Extended Learning Time Principles

- 300 additional hours
- Involves all students
- Includes three components:
 - Increased instruction for core academics
 - Enrichment activities
 - Planning time and professional development for teachers

^A Other related reforms that affect school time but generally do not extend total time in the classroom include *year-round* or *balanced calendar* school schedules, which typically reorganize, rather than add to, the traditional number of school days, and *revised school day start times*, under which the school day begins at a later time but the number of instructional hours remains unchanged. See more information at Offices of Research and Education Accountability reports: [School Calendar Choices in Tennessee: A Look at Year Round Nontraditional Schools](#), April 2003, <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/>, and [School Day Start Times](#), April 2013, <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/>.

^B ELT may also be referred to as “expanded learning time” or “increased learning time.”

^C Based on 180 six and one-half hour days in a traditional school year, 300 hours of extended school time represents an increase of approximately 25 percent (46 additional days).

Models for implementing extended learning time generally fall into two categories:

1. Increasing the length of the regular school day/ calendar, which applies to all students.
2. Increasing learning time outside of scheduled school time through before- and after-school programs, or weekend, summer, or school break sessions, which students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in.

The model chosen affects an array of operational issues, including staffing, funding, scheduling, and transportation. Optional programs outside of school hours are typically easier and less expensive to implement, but research suggests they may be less effective in increasing student achievement. (See more discussion of implementation models and their costs at “Implementation and Funding.”)

How has the standard school schedule changed over time?

Public school calendars are primarily the result of efforts to create uniform schedules across rural and urban

areas to align with compulsory state attendance laws adopted at the turn of the 20th century.^D The typical U.S. school year – 180 days and between six and seven hours per day (1,170 hours per year)^E – has been the norm since at least the 1960s.

Concerns that the standard school schedule is not adequate for U.S. students to compete academically with students from other developed countries and recommendations for increasing school time were presented in the 1983 publication of *A Nation At Risk*. In 1994, a report by the federally-created National Education Commission on Time and Learning, *Prisoners of Time*, repeated the concerns that the limited time American students spend in school negatively impacts student achievement. (See [International Comparisons](#).)

Where is extended learning time being used?

The National Center for Time and Learning database lists approximately 1,300 schools in the United States that have added at least 30 minutes a day or 10 days a year more than surrounding schools.² Extended learning

time schools are typically located in poor, urban areas and attended by economically disadvantaged students. Eighty-six percent of extended learning time schools are eligible for Title I funding, and a majority have a high proportion of students (75 percent or more) qualifying for free or reduced price lunches.³ (See [Appendix](#) for more about Title I.) Traditional public schools with longer schedules typically rely on federal funds, such as School Improvement Grants for low-performing schools, to pay for the additional time. Approximately 60 percent of extended learning time schools are charter schools, which are free from a number of state and local requirements related

Exhibit 1: Potential Extended Learning Time Schedule



Source: Ford Foundation, “More and Better Learning Time, The School Day, Reimagined,” <http://www.fordfoundation.org/>.

^D Changes to create uniform school schedules generally involved lengthening rural schedules and shortening urban ones. All states had compulsory education laws by 1913.

^E Based on an average of 6.5 hours for 180 days.

to schedules, staffing, compensation, and other operating procedures.⁴

How does the United States compare internationally?

Students in European and Asian nations may attend school for more *days* than their American counterparts, but a comparison based on *number of hours* per year shows students in these nations are in school a similar amount of time per year. As shown in [Exhibit 2](#), the average number of hours that American students spend in school (1,000 hours per year) equals and often surpasses the number of hours in other nations, including Finland, Germany, and Japan.

The number of hours per year is a more accurate method for international comparisons than the number of days per year because of variation in the length of a school day throughout the world. For example, students in India attend school for 200 days in grades 1 through 5

for a total of 800 hours per year and 220 days in grades 6 through 8 for a total of 1,000 hours per year. This is 20 days more in grades 1 through 5 and 40 days more in grades 6 through 8 than the U.S. average of 180. Yet, the average number of 1,000 hours per year in the United States surpasses the total number of hours in India in grades 1 through 5 and matches the number of hours in grades 6 through 8.⁵

Students who spend more time in school do not necessarily perform better on international assessments, however. Results from the 2009 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA),^F an international assessment that measures the skills and abilities of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics, science, and problem solving, ranked the United States at 17 out of 65 participating countries.⁶

^F PISA is coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Exhibit 2: Number of Hours per School Year

Country	Age 7-8	Age 9-11	Age 12-14	Age 15 (Typical Program)	Age 15 (Least Demanding Program)	Pisa 2009 Ranking
Korea	612	703	859	1,020	a	2
Finland	608	683	829	913	a	3
Japan	735	800	877	m	a	8
Australia	982	984	997	982	927	9
Germany	641	793	887	933	m**	20
England	893	899	925	950	a*	25
OECD Averages	790	838	922	948	907	
United States	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	a	17

Notes: (1) *a = the category does not apply to the country. **m = missing data.

(2) Number of hours based on "intended instruction time" as provided by OECD.

(3) School hours presented in chart do not include any out of school program hours. The numbers presented are only required time in traditional school settings.

(4) PISA 2009 ranking out of 65 participating countries.

(5) OECD average is based on data provided by 35 OECD nations. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is an international economic organization with 34 member countries including the United States. The goal of the organization is to promote global economic development.

(6) The number for the United States was not provided by the OECD Report: *Education at a Glance 2012*. Data for the United States was missing in the report. The 1,000 hours was used to take into account variation among state requirements. A comparison of school requirements by ECS in 2011 shows 21 states set minimum hours of instruction with variations by grade. Other states make no variation or only set requirements by days per year. Standard hours per day are reported in various sources as between 5.5 and 6.5. The 1,000 hours is a rough midpoint among these estimates.

Sources: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Education at a Glance 2012*, "Table D1.1: Compulsory and Intended Instruction Time in Public Institutions (2010)" and *PISA 2009 Results: Executive Summary*, "Figure 1: Comparing Countries' and Economies' Performance," Dec. 2010, <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>.

Despite attending school for fewer hours than their American peers, Australian, Japanese, and Finnish students achieved higher scores on the 2009 PISA.⁷

What does the research say about extended learning time?

Research has found some positive correlation of improved academic achievement with increased time in school, but the findings have not been consistent across grades and subject areas. Findings have been stronger in ELT programs that are structured and focused and in studies that have better controls for individual differences between students. Several studies have found extended learning time has more positive effects for disadvantaged students, who “are the most susceptible to summer learning loss compared to their [peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds] because of differences in opportunities to practice and learn outside of school.”⁸

Extended learning time (ELT) is often one of multiple reforms implemented in a school; increased focus on quality teaching, positive school culture, and effective use of time may all be implemented simultaneously, making it difficult to draw conclusions about the direct effect of a specific intervention. Research on ELT has often lacked strong controls in study designs and clear distinctions between differing elements in ELT implementation (such as how school schedules were extended or the amount of time added), thus preventing stronger conclusions about ELT’s effects. The National Center for Time and Learning, an advocate for ELT programs, recognizes that adding time, by itself, will not increase student achievement. “Expanded time acts as a catalyst . . . [I]t is this interaction of more time with other sound practices that leads to meaningful impact.”⁹

No research pinpoints how much time is needed to be effective. Assumptions are that it probably varies by grade level and that benefits are unlikely to accrue until a certain amount of additional time is added to the regular schedule. Researchers also assume that continuing to add time past a certain threshold will not produce more student achievement increases.

Little research has been done on the effects of increased time devoted to areas such as student enrichment and teachers’ professional development and

collaboration. Advocates suggest that increased time for enrichment activities can create deeper student engagement in school and that more time allows teachers and students to build stronger relationships. Attitude surveys suggest that teachers and parents may be more positive and supportive of extended learning time than students.

Implementation and Funding

How is extended learning time implemented?

Models for implementing extended learning time generally fall into two categories, although schools may also combine the two models:

1. Increasing learning time as part of the regular school schedule by adding hours to each day or days to the year.
2. Increasing learning time outside of scheduled school time through before- and after-school programs, or weekend, summer, or school break sessions.

The first model often uses existing school staff and is usually mandatory for all students. The second model may involve partnerships with outside organizations, which often provide their own staff, and typically targets specific student populations, such as students who are struggling with a particular subject. Tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment activities, such as music lessons and museum visits, are examples of possible activities in both models.

What are the costs of extended learning time?

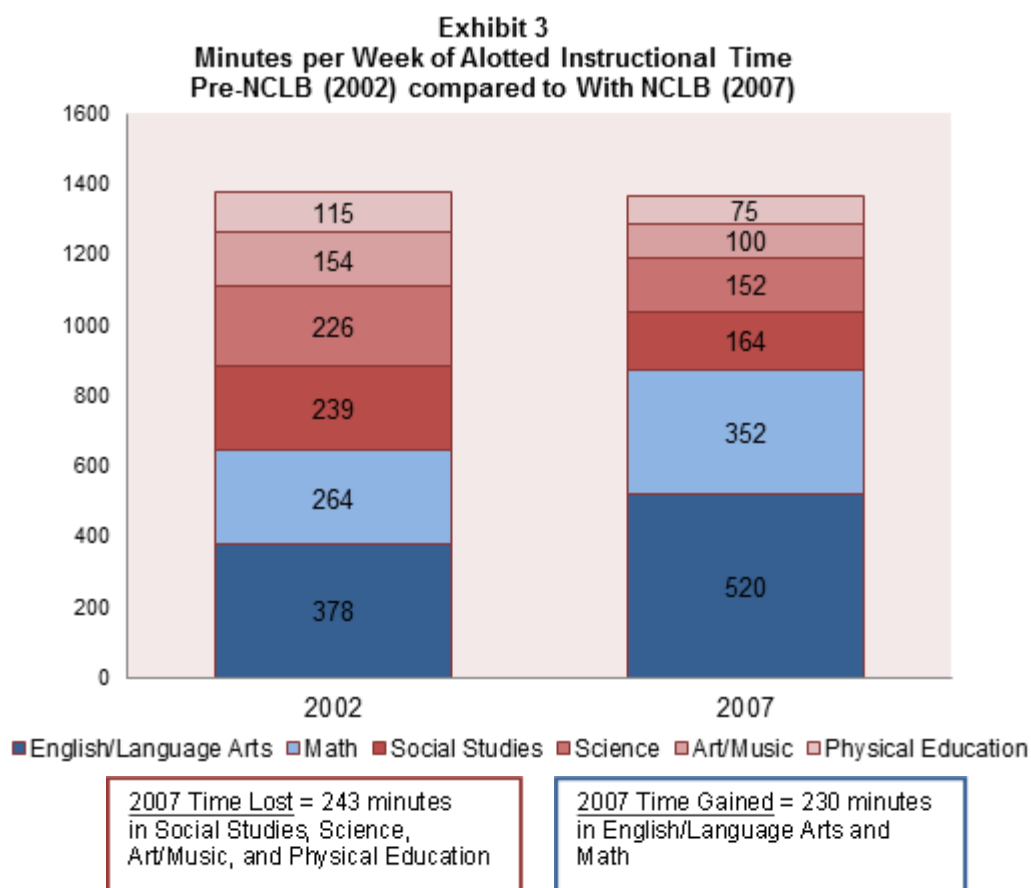
Extended learning time costs depend on the selected program model, staffing plan, transportation option, and

The TIME Collaborative’s Seven Elements of Effective Expanded Time

1. Focused achievement goals based on student data
2. Rigorous academics that include challenging English/language arts, math, science, and social studies courses
3. Individualized academic intervention or acceleration based on student needs
4. Frequent data cycles to improve instruction
5. Targeted teacher development and frequent opportunities for collaboration
6. Engaging enrichment for all students
7. Strong school culture of high expectations

Why include enrichment activities in extended time?

A key factor believed to affect the achievement gap between poor and non-poor students is the availability of and access to learning opportunities outside of school. Research documents a large gap in spending between poor and non-poor parents on children's educational enrichment beyond school. Since the adoption of No Child Left Behind, many schools have reduced or eliminated classes such as art, music, and physical education in order to make more time for reading and math. Some schools have used extended learning time to add enrichment opportunities back into their curricula. Research indicates that art and physical education activities can boost academic achievement as well as improve longer-term success.



Note: Total instructional time changed from 1,376 minutes in 2002 to 1,363 in 2007, a 13-minute decrease. As a percentage of total time, English/Language Arts and Math increased from 47% to 64% of the weekly minutes from 2002 to 2007. The four other subjects decreased as a percentage of total instructional time, from 53% in 2002 to 36% in 2007.

Source: David Farberman, *The Case for Improving and Expanding Time in School: A Review of Key Research and Practice*, National Center on Time and Learning, April 2012, p.6, based on a 2007 Center on Education Policy survey of a nationally representative sample of 349 responding school districts.

other components, which are often dictated by the funding available. Some examples of options selected in Tennessee schools are presented in [Exhibit 5](#).

Extending learning time by adding time to the regular school schedule for all students is usually more expensive than adding time outside of it. Schools that extend school time by 10 percent can expect a six to seven percent increase in costs.¹⁰ An extended learning time initiative in Massachusetts that increased the number of hours in the school year by 30 percent was estimated to produce a 20 percent increase in costs. (Massachusetts awards \$1,300 per student per year; actual additional costs reported in one analysis ranged from \$900 to \$1,500 per student.)¹¹ (See box, [State Profile: Massachusetts](#).)

Adding time to the regular school schedule can be accomplished by adding hours to each school day, or adding full school days to the traditional school calendar, or both. Extending the length of the school day typically costs less than extending the length of the school year. There are a number of fixed costs in a school day that do not change with the addition of hours to the day:

- shifting transportation schedules versus adding days of transportation,
- providing afternoon snacks versus providing a full day of meals, and

- operating utilities and building security for extra hours versus operating additional days.

Staffing approaches vary based on budgetary considerations and program goals. Instructional expenditures (e.g., renegotiating teacher contracts or providing stipends) are generally the largest cost component of ELT programs. A 2011 study of ELT program expenditures in Massachusetts found more than three-fourths (77 percent) of the additional funding was spent on instructional costs, including classroom and specialist teachers.^{9, 12} Methods for reducing instructional expenditures include:

- staffing ELT with para-professionals, who are compensated at a lower rate than certified teachers,
- using retired teachers for targeted academic blocks, rather than hiring full-time teachers, and
- using volunteers and staff from community partner organizations.

Another option is to reallocate the time of existing school staff by implementing a staggered schedule for all instructional personnel. A staggered schedule

⁹ Administrative expenses (nine percent), transportation, meals/snacks, and facilities (seven percent), and materials, supplies, and professional development (seven percent) made up the remainder of the additional expenditures.

Exhibit 4: Factors of Extended Learning Time Implementation

		ELT Models	
		Additional time added to traditional calendar	Additional time added outside of traditional school calendar
Operating Location	School-Based	X	X
	Community-Based		X
Operator	Schools	X	X
	Community Organizations		X
Timing/Hours of Operation	During School Hours	X	
	Outside of School Hours		X
Mode of Expansion	Longer School Day	X	X
	Longer School Year	X	X
Participation Requirements	Mandatory for All Students	X	
	Mandatory for Specific Students		X
	Voluntary		X

Source: Adapted from Zakia Redd, Christopher Boccanfuso, Karen Walker, Daniel Princiotta, Dylan Knewstubb, and Kristin Moore, "Expanding Time for Learning Both Inside and Outside of the Classroom," *Child Trends*, Aug. 2012, <http://www.childtrends.org/>.

eliminates the need to renegotiate compensation since the number of hours worked by instructional personnel is unchanged. For example, one group of teachers would work from 8:00-3:00, while another group works from 9:30-4:30.

ELT outside of the traditional school schedule generally costs less than ELT built into the regular schedule. Programs operating outside of the regular schedule are

often voluntary or required only for selected students; they have lower total costs by serving fewer students. In addition, these programs often operate as before- or after-school programs that are run by community partnerships. The organizations that partner with schools may provide some or all of the program needs, including facilities, staff, volunteers, transportation, and funds.

Exhibit 5: Selected Tennessee Focus Schools' Use of Extended Learning Time and Related Costs

Many focus schools in Tennessee (schools with significant achievement gaps) are currently using ELT as one of several strategies to close the achievement gaps within their schools. These ELT programs are funded by a federal grant.

Elementary School A

Purpose: "Provide an after school focused tutoring program for students who are not achieving."

1. Select 4 teachers (each teacher will tutor two days a week)	1. Cost: \$35/hr. x 2 hr./day x 84 days = \$5,880 per teacher x 4 teachers = \$23,520 per year
2. Provide transportation for students involved in after school tutoring	2. Cost: \$35/day x 84 days = \$2,940 per year
3. Provide after school snack for students involved in after school tutoring	3. Cost: 10 students/day = \$10/day x 84 days = \$840 per year

Elementary School B

Purpose: "Add additional 1.5 hours to regular school day for grades 3-5 Monday-Thursday in order to provide rigorous extended day program."

1. Extend teachers' contracts	1. Cost: 25 teachers x \$2,000/year = \$50,000 per year
2. Provide transportation for students involved in extended time	2. Cost: \$7,000
3. Provide snacks during extended time	3. Cost: \$1,000

Middle School A

Purpose: "Extend school day from 8:00-3:00 to 8:00-4:15 for students participating in Corrective Reading or ESD programs."

1. Salaries for 6 teachers working with extended school day students	1. Cost: \$30/hr. x 2 hr./day x 4 days/week x 25 weeks = \$6,000 per teacher x 6 teachers = \$36,000/per year
2. Salary for facilitator	2. Cost: \$30/hr. x 1 hr./day x 4 days/week = \$120/week 25 weeks = \$3,000/per year
3. Benefits and taxes for 6 ESD teachers	3. Cost: \$6,030
4. Provide snacks for students involved in ESD program	4. Cost: \$10,000
5. Student incentive awards	5. Cost: \$2,500
6. Resources for teachers	6. Cost: \$500/teacher 6 teachers = \$3,000
7. End of year banquet	7. Cost: \$3,750

Source: Tennessee Department of Education, "Focus School Grant Applications, 2012."

*The ELT Programs at these Focus Schools are designed for a targeted student population, not the whole student body.

Transportation is one element that can cost more for ELT provided outside of the regular school schedule than ELT as part of the required school schedule, because it must be provided in addition to transportation already provided for students not participating in ELT. Not offering transportation for students in ELT can significantly limit student participation. When ELT is part of regular school hours and all students are transported on the same schedule, transportation can still be a cost issue if multiple schools share bus routes. Bus schedules may have to be altered or

additional bus trips may be required when schools are operating on different schedules.

What are the funding sources for extended learning time?

Federal grants provide significant funding for low-performing schools to implement multiple reforms, including extending learning time. The USDOE has allocated \$5.2 billion nationally since 2009 for states through its School Improvement Grant (SIG) program to turn around low-performing schools as part of Title I of

State Profile: Massachusetts

Massachusetts has led state efforts in extended learning time with its Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Initiative, begun in 2005. Starting with planning grants to 16 districts in 2005-06, the state's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ultimately chose 10 schools in five districts to receive the first implementation grants in 2006-07. Each school received a grant amount of \$1,300 per student through a total state appropriation of \$6.5 million. The number of participating schools fluctuated but has remained at 19 since 2010-11. State appropriations per child have remained generally level despite budget downturns. Total ELT initiative funding in 2012-13 was \$14 million.

The initiative required schools to expand learning time by at least 300 hours and to conduct a comprehensive redesign of instruction schedules, involving staffing plans, labor agreements, and teacher compensation. Over half the schools relied on partnerships with organizations to help provide enrichment activities. Participating schools are generally in low-income areas (approximately 75 percent of the more than 10,000 students served are low-income). The ELT Initiative is a key component in the state's approach to intervening in the operations of low-performing schools.

The state collaborated with the nonprofit research and advocacy group, Massachusetts 2020 (Mass 2020) to create the ELT Initiative. Working since its founding to expand quality after-school programs in the state, Mass 2020 identified extended time as a common factor among the highest-performing urban high schools in Massachusetts and researched other schools using longer school days or years to increase achievement. Mass 2020's efforts were key to developing policy and building support around an expanded learning time initiative. Once the initiative was established, Mass 2020 continued to work closely with the department, providing targeted technical assistance to the schools as well as continued advocacy.

The results have been mixed. A five-year evaluation of the initiative found that schools varied significantly in how they implemented the initiative's required components of core academics, enrichment, and teacher development, and that "improved academic achievement outcomes for students have not materialized as expected across ELT schools as a whole." Some schools substantially increased student achievement levels, while others experienced little change or a decrease in achievement. In matched comparisons of extended learning schools to traditional-schedule schools, the only statistically significant positive effect of ELT was found in 5th grade science achievement. There is limited evidence that student academic growth at ELT schools was greater than at non-ELT schools, but results were generally not statistically significant.

Sources: Hilary Pennington, *The Massachusetts Expanding Learning Time to Support Student Success Initiative*, Center for American Progress, Jan. 2007, <http://www.americanprogress.org/> (accessed May 24, 2013); Moira Connolly, Director, Office of Charter Schools, Innovation, and Redesign, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, telephone interview, May 22, 2013; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, "Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs: FY2013—Expanded Learning Time Implementation Grant," <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/> (accessed May 20, 2013); Abt Associates, *Evaluation of the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Initiative, Year Five Final Report: 2010-2011*, Vol. 1, Feb. 2, 2012, <http://abtassociates.com/> (accessed May 20, 2013).

the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as the No Child Left Behind Act).¹³

States may also provide funds to schools for ELT implementation. The Massachusetts ELT initiative is funded primarily through a state appropriation. (See box, [State Profile: Massachusetts](#).) Private funds can also support ELT efforts. The Ford Foundation and The Wallace Foundation are each providing ELT initiatives with financial support. Community partnerships also play a role in funding additional school time. These programs provide supplies, staff, tutoring, enrichment opportunities, and charitable donations. Schools may also make adjustments within their existing staffing and budgets to provide funds for ELT.

Because grant funding is time-limited, sustaining effective reform strategies may be a problem for traditional public schools as grant funds expire. Charter schools are less likely to encounter this problem since ELT is often a fundamental component of their structure rather than a supplemental program.

What is the federal government's role in extended learning time?

The USDOE has increased adoption of extended learning time through SIG funding and its requirements for schools implementing turnaround strategies. SIG funds are awarded to the states based on their ESEA Title I funding formulas. States then award the funds to local districts on a competitive basis to implement turnaround strategies – including extended learning time – in low-performing schools that serve low-income student populations. (See [Appendix](#) for definitions of school eligibility categories and turnaround models.)

The federal waiver process, begun in 2011 to allow states more flexibility in addressing the goals of No Child Left Behind (the most recent version of ESEA), promotes the use of extended learning time. States receiving waivers, including Tennessee, have more

discretion over accountability procedures for low-performing schools but must insure that interventions for the bottom five percent of schools (“priority schools”) reflect federal turnaround principles, which include increasing learning time. (See box, [Federal Turnaround Principles](#).)

Waiver states were also offered the option to use funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers to add hours or days to the standard school schedule; these funds were previously limited to before- and after-school programs. The waivers also allow districts that previously were required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds for school choice and supplemental educational services to use those funds for extending learning time and other reforms.

Federal Turnaround Principles

Redesign the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.

Provide strong leadership through an effective principal and provide the principal with flexibility in school operations like scheduling, staffing, curriculum, and budget.

Ensure teachers are effective and able to improve instruction through professional development and hiring practices.

Strengthen the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensure that it is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with state academic content standards.

Use data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including **by providing time for collaboration** on the use of data.

Establish a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.

Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Note: Boldface added to highlight extended learning time provisions.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, [ESEA Flexibility](#), June 7, 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/>.

Extended Learning Time in Tennessee

Funding

How have Tennessee schools funded extended learning time?

Tennessee schools have depended almost exclusively on federal dollars to pay for extended learning time. School Improvement Grants have provided the largest amount of funds, but other federal funds have also been used, including ESEA Title I, ESEA 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and Race to the Top. Tennessee does not allocate any state funds specifically for extended learning time.

SIG Grants to Priority Schools

Tennessee has received federal SIG allocations totaling \$97.6 million since 2009, when the SIG program was expanded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.¹⁴ Tennessee anticipates future allocations to fulfill the three-year grant awards it has made to local districts.

The first cohort of schools that received grants under the expanded SIG program completed the final year of grant implementation in 2012-13. Most of the 72 schools in the first cohort were not required by the grant eligibility rules at the time to adopt extended learning time. (See [Appendix](#) for explanations of school eligibility categories and turnaround models.)

The second cohort of schools awarded SIG grants completed the first year of grant implementation in 2012-13. The Tennessee Department of Education announced a third cohort of SIG grantees in May 2013. Both of these SIG awards, made under waivers of certain eligibility rules, call for the grantee schools to adopt one of the federal turnaround models, which require extending learning time (among other reforms) or restarting as a charter school.

SIG Grants to Focus Schools and Other Programs.

While SIG turnaround grants can only be used for priority schools, states can use other school improvement funds for focus schools' improvement efforts, which may include extended learning time.¹⁴ The Tennessee Department of Education combined these other school improvement funds with Race to the Top monies to award grants of \$100,000 to \$300,000 to one-third of the state's focus schools in October 2012.¹⁵

The grants require schools to provide:

- individualized student support,
- teacher and principal professional development,

¹⁴ School improvement grants reserved only for improving priority schools are authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. School improvement grants that are available for improving non-priority schools are authorized under section 1003(a) of the same act.

¹⁵ Focus schools are the 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps between different student demographic groups such as race or ethnicity, poverty, English language learners, or those with disabilities. Tennessee identified 167 focus schools in 2012; 56 received the school improvement awards.

Exhibit 6: Summary of SIG Grantees (Cohorts 2 and 3)

District	Total 3-year Award		Number of Schools	Turnaround Models Selected
	Cohort 2	Cohort 3		
Achievement School District	\$10,395,111	\$ 7,503,603	6 5	6 – Restart 5 – Transformation
Hamilton County (iZone)		\$11,309,331	6	5 – Transformation 1 – Turnaround
Hardeman County		\$ 1,390,800	1	1 – Transformation
Knox County		\$ 1,504,045	1	1 – Transformation
Metro Nashville (iZone)	\$12,384,213		7	3 – Transformation 4 – Turnaround
Memphis City (iZone) Shelby County (formerly Memphis City) (iZone)	\$14,744,394	\$ 5,520,819	7 4	5 – Transformation 6 – Turnaround

Source: Tennessee Department of Education. See Appendix for an explanation of turnaround models and innovation zones (iZones).

- performance benchmarks, and
- at least one option of the following three:
 - o community engagement,
 - o *extended learning time*, or
 - o another reform strategy proposed by the school.

Most schools selected extended learning time as their optional choice. (See [Exhibit 5](#) for examples of how focus schools are implementing extended learning time.)

The 21st Century Community Learning Center program was established to provide federal grants for tutoring and enrichment activities that enhance academic learning outside school hours, particularly for students in high-poverty and low-performing schools. Tennessee is one of the 21 states that have received approval through the No Child Left Behind waiver to use 21st Century Community Learning Center funds to extend learning time within the school day or year by adding hours or calendar days, in addition to continued funding of before- and after-school programs. So far, however, no schools have applied to use this funding to add hours or days to the regular school calendar, though funds continue to be used to support before- and after-school tutoring and enrichment programs.

Time Requirements

What are Tennessee's school time requirements?

Tennessee law requires a minimum of 180 days per year of classroom instruction.^J The statute does not explicitly require a specific number of hours per school day, but does refer to six and one-half hours of required instructional time.^K State Board of Education rules require a school day of at least six and one-half hours.¹⁶ These requirements are similar to most other states. Actual school time in the state averaged about seven hours per day, based on 2007-08 data.¹⁷

State law and accompanying State Board rules provide that districts may extend the school day to at least seven hours for purposes of offsetting up to 13 days canceled due to weather conditions, illness outbreaks, or dangerous school building conditions.¹⁸ The accumulated instructional time earned from longer days may also be used to offset faculty professional

development, parent-teacher conferences, or similar meetings. All local proposals for use of excess time for professional development must be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

School Profiles

How many schools in Tennessee have extended learning time?

OREA identified 79 traditional schools that were operating with some level of extended learning time in 2012-13 including:

- 29 schools that received SIG funding in 2012-13,
- 43 schools that received two-year Focus School Grants in 2012-13,
- 7 enhanced option schools in Metro Nashville not already included in the count above.^L

Requirements Concerning School Time

Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-3004(a)(1):
Requires 180 days for classroom instruction.

Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-3004(e)(1):
Refers to "the full 6 ½ hours instructional time required by law," although such a requirement does not appear elsewhere in law.

Tennessee State Board of Education
Chapter 0520-01-03.02 (1)(a):
Requires the minimum length of the school day for students shall be 6 ½ hours.

^J *Tennessee Code Annotated* 49-6-3004. Districts must maintain a term of no less than 200 days per year, including 180 days for classroom instruction, five days for professional development, one day for parent-teacher conferences, 10 to 12 days for vacation days, and four other days as designated by the local school board.

^K *Tennessee Code Annotated* 49-6-3004(e)(1) and 49-6-2303(11). The second code cited is very similar to the first, directing that in relation to the Tennessee School Nutrition Standards Act, the State Board of Education shall not limit "the full six and one half hours instructional school time required by statute."

^L This estimate does not include those schools that may use before- and after-school programs or summer school to offer extended learning opportunities to students. Count of traditional schools using ELT was based on SIG Cohort 2 and Focus School grants data from the Tennessee Department of Education and Metro Nashville Public Schools information on enhanced option schools.

In addition, 49 charter schools, which commonly operate with longer school days and/or years, were operating in Tennessee during the 2012-13 school year.¹⁹

The number of Tennessee schools implementing extended learning time increased in 2013-14 with the addition of 17 more priority schools receiving new SIG grants and a few district schools not receiving SIG grants, as well as the opening of numerous new charter schools.

How is extended learning time being implemented in Tennessee?

The following section profiles extended learning time in selected Tennessee public schools, including schools designated as priority and focus schools, a charter school, and a state-run school in the Achievement School District.

Charter schools in Tennessee typically extend learning time, often by adding hours to the school day.^M Some charters have also added Saturday school, summer sessions, or more days to the traditional calendar in addition to longer daily hours.

The Achievement School District (ASD), the state-run school district for selected schools that are in the bottom five percent of schools based on performance, has included ELT in its methods for transforming schools. In 2012-13, three of the six schools in the ASD were following the restart turnaround model and operated under charter school organizations. The other three ASD schools, operated by the state, followed the transformation model and adopted schedules designed to include an additional 300 hours per year. In 2012-13 each school ran from 8:00 to 4:30 four days a week. Wednesdays had an early release at 2:30, allowing students time for homework and free time. In addition to longer days, the ASD calendar includes five additional days of school.²⁰

Metro Nashville, Shelby County (including the former Memphis City School District), and Hamilton County school districts have placed some or all of their priority schools into Innovation Zones, a designation of low-performing schools within a district that receive extra support and greater autonomy. (See [Appendix](#) for more

^M During the 2012-13 school year, charter schools were located in Davidson, Hamilton, and Shelby counties.

Exhibit 7: Sample Charter School Day Schedule

KIPP: Memphis Collegiate Middle Founded 2002

7:30-8:05	Homeroom/Morning Work/Homework Check			
8:07-9:27	Math	Science	Grammar	Reading
9:29-10:49	Math2/Social Studies	Math	Science	Grammar/Writing
10:54-11:24	Lunch			
11:29-12:49	Reading	Math2/Social Studies	Math	Science
12:51-2:11	Grammar/Writing	Reading	Math2/Social Studies	Math
2:16-3:16	P.E./Performing Arts			
3:21-4:41	Science	Grammar/Writing	Reading	Math2/Social Studies
4:43-4:50	Snack Time			
4:50-5:00	Dismissal			

Source: KIPP Memphis Collegiate Middle School, "Program," <http://www.kippmemphis.org/>.

about Innovation Zones.) The length of the school day in Shelby County's iZone schools is approximately eight hours.

Metro Nashville lengthened its school year by adding optional school days for special programming during fall and spring breaks, or "intersession," in all of its schools, including its iZone schools that must extend learning time to meet SIG requirements. During this additional time students are provided with enrichment activities and targeted instruction. Schools and community partners design the programs offered in order to meet the needs of the students. During the 2012-13 school year, intersession attendance was voluntary. Attendance is required for students in iZone schools in 2013-14. Intersession in iZone schools will use certified teachers for core content instruction and staff from community partners for enrichment activities.

Metro Nashville also has nine "enhanced option schools," which extend the traditional school day by 45 minutes and include 10 additional days designated for teacher professional development. Three enhanced option schools are also part of the district's iZone.

Students in these three schools have extended learning time through both longer enhanced option days and the iZone intersession days.

***Lucie E. Campbell Elementary – Shelby County
(formerly Memphis City)***

Grades: PK-5

School Type: Public – Priority – iZone

School Schedule: 2012-13: 8:30-4:30
2013-14: 8:00-4:00

ELT Implementation: Extra hours are used to improve students' deficit areas as well as enrich students' strengths. The block of extra time is used for reading two days a week, math two days, and integrated lessons of reading, math, science, and social studies one day. Reduced student/teacher ratios are achieved by utilizing retired teachers and para-professionals.

Costs: Teacher stipends, retired teachers, para-professionals

Funding: Title I and SIG

Source: Barbara Thomas, Principal, Lucie E. Campbell Elementary School, Memphis City Schools, telephone interview, June 12, 2013.

***Westside Achievement Middle School –
Achievement School District***

Grades: 6-8

School Type: Public – Priority – Achievement School District

School Schedule: 2012-13: 8:00-4:30
2013-14: 7:30-3:30

ELT Implementation: 90 minutes are spent on math and English/language arts each day. 45 minutes are spent on science and social studies each day. Every student receives a 45-minute reading intervention. Every student takes part in the performing arts program (choir, dance, creative writing, African drums, etc.). Physical education is offered daily. Teachers have 60 minutes of planning time every day and weekly collaboration meetings.

Costs: Interventionists specializing in math and reading, software chosen to target students' individual needs

Funding: Race to the Top, Title I, SIG

Source: Dirk Bedford, Principal, Westside Achievement Middle School, Achievement School District, telephone interview, June 17, 2013, and e-mail, Nov. 13, 2013.

Buena Vista Elementary – Metro Nashville

Grades: PK-4

School Type: Public – Enhanced Option – Priority – iZone

School Schedule: 8:00-3:45

ELT Implementation: The extra 45 minutes per day is used for reading intervention. Tutoring staffed by licensed teachers is offered four days per week until 5:30 p.m. All students must attend Fall and Spring intersession. Ten extra days per year are spent on teacher development. Nashville Teaching Fellows run a 4-week summer program focusing on reading and math.

Costs: Technology for every student, furniture on wheels to allow classroom reconfiguration based on students' needs, and the blended learning model

Funding: SIG, 21st CCLC, LEAP, Title I

Source: Michelle McVicker, Principal, Buena Vista Elementary School, Metro Nashville Public Schools, telephone interview, June 18, 2013, and e-mail, Nov. 12, 2013.

Through the program “Community Achieves,” MNPS has partnered with community organizations to establish several community schools. Community schools offer programs in four areas – college and career readiness, family engagement, health and wellness, and social services – and are designed to offer resources and support to parents, students, and the community. During 2012-13, 5,000 students in 19 schools were served through these programs, which include ELT opportunities such as after-school programs and college and career services for students.²¹

Many focus schools throughout the state, which have been awarded Focus School Grants, have chosen ELT as a reform effort to close achievement gaps. (See [Appendix](#) and [Exhibit 5](#) for more about focus schools.) These schools tend to focus their ELT programs toward groups of students who are in need of assistance to improve their academic achievement. Programs offered include before- and after-school tutoring, reading intervention, summer programs, individualized software programs, and parent workshops, among others.

Extended learning time is still a relatively new reform for most Tennessee schools, and school leaders have indicated there is a learning curve to altering the traditional schedule to incorporate ELT. One school found the later dismissal time under their ELT initiative negatively affected more informal teacher-student interaction after school and opportunities for students to participate in athletic practice, especially during the shorter hours of daylight in winter months. The school planned to move its schedule to an earlier start time. Another school found that more focused activities for high school students, such as an online-reading program for 9th graders and ACT prep sessions for 11th graders, were a better use of the 30-minute instructional time it added to extend the school day than student-chosen electives and reduced scheduling issues.

One area that raised logistical and budgetary concerns in schools was transportation. Schools found that providing transportation for ELT opportunities was important to ensure a high level of student involvement. Some districts found ways to tailor their ELT programming to avoid transportation cost increases. For example, one school added 30 minutes to the school day by starting classes 15 minutes earlier and ending

classes 15 minutes later, which left the transportation schedule unchanged.

School leaders whose schools use ELT noted few if any complaints about longer days or years from teachers, parents, or students. Leaders were generally positive about extended learning at their schools. One commented that the best thing about extended time is not having to make the trade-off between academics and arts or physical education.

***Pearl Cohn Entertainment Magnet High School
– Metro Nashville***

Grades: 9-12

School Type: Public – Magnet – Focus School

School Schedule: 7:05-2:05

ELT Implementation: FAST Academy (Firebird Academic Support and Tutoring Academy) – everyday 2:14-4:15 – includes content recovery, credit recovery, tutoring. Recommended by teachers and counselors for specific students as needed or students may choose to participate without recommendation.

Community Achieves – community partners provide programs in social-emotional learning, college and career, health and wellness, and parent and family engagement.

Intersession – targeted student remediation and enrichment activities for all students including creative writing, creative reading, college access, leadership courses.

Social Emotional Specialist – works with economically disadvantaged male students, provides mentoring during school and during activities outside of school including camps, baseball games.

Costs: Teacher stipends, social emotional specialist, incentives for student participation during intersession (community partnerships aid in costs for Community Achieves programs)

Funding: Focus school grant, Title 1, Magnet school grant, community partnerships

Source: Sonia Stewart, Principal, Pearl Cohn Entertainment Magnet High School, Metro Nashville Public Schools, telephone interview, June 13, 2013, and e-mail, Nov. 12, 2013.

TIME Collaborative in Tennessee

The TIME (Time for Innovation Matters in Education) Collaborative is a partnership between the National Center for Time and Learning (NCTL) and the Ford Foundation developed to create extended learning time in schools with the goal of improved student achievement. According to the Ford Foundation, the intended purpose is “to reinvent public school through more and better learning time in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, so that students are prepared equitably for college, career, and civic participation.”²²

Currently, 16 districts across five states have been approved to participate, including two Tennessee districts.²³ Schools in some districts began implementation in 2013-14 and others are in the planning stages to begin implementation in 2014-15. Participating districts must have demonstrated a commitment to school improvement efforts including expanding time, and at least 60 percent of students must be eligible for free and reduced price lunch.²⁴

Schools taking part in the TIME Collaborative are required to add 300 hours to their traditional school schedule.²⁵ NCTL will provide districts with technical support including data analysis, research, and personnel to advise schools on effective forms of ELT implementation. This technical support is funded by the Ford Foundation and is provided at no cost to the schools. Schools may use state and federal funds to cover the additional costs associated with implementing the 300 additional hours required by the TIME Collaborative. The Collaborative does not provide direct implementation funding.

Knox County and Metro Nashville Public Schools are currently in the planning stages for increasing learning time by 300 hours in select schools. Full implementation will begin in the fall of 2014. The TIME Collaborative also offered technical assistance to the Achievement School District in 2012-13 to ensure their extended learning time was being used effectively to improve student achievement.

Endnotes

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- ⁷ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *PISA 2009 Results: Executive Summary*, <http://www.oecd.org/> (accessed June 25, 2013).
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Appendix: Definition and Explanations of ESEA, NCLB, SIG Common Terms

Title I – This is a section of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), last reauthorized in 2001 as the No Child Left Behind Act. Title I of the act provides formula grants to local school districts with high numbers or high percentages of students from low-income families to help schools ensure that all children meet state academic standards. All school districts in Tennessee receive Title I funding. The districts must target the funds to schools with the highest percentages of low-income students. School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I are to help persistently low performing schools improve academic achievement. Under waiver guidelines, the 1003(g) School Improvement Grants are authorized for priority schools. A separate authorization, section 1003(a) of Title I, directs other School Improvement Grants to both priority and focus schools.

Persistently low-achieving schools – *Context:* States identify their persistently low-achieving schools and classify them as Tier 1 or Tier 2 schools. These schools must declare a turnaround model.

“Persistently low-achieving schools” are defined as: (1) any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring status that is a) among the lowest-achieving five percent of such schools or (b) is a high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent for a number of years, and (2) any secondary school that is eligible for but does not receive Title I funds that meets the same criteria in parts (a) and (b).

Tiers – *Context:* Tiers are the federal categories based on achievement levels that states are required to use to set priorities for awarding SIG funds. Tennessee used the tier categories when awarding its SIG Cohort 1 funds. States that received ESEA Flexibility Waivers, including Tennessee, no longer have to use the tier categories.

To award School Improvement Grants to local districts, a state education agency must define three tiers of schools to identify those with greatest need for the grants. A state must select from the identified schools in need those that demonstrate the strongest commitment to using the grants to meet accountability requirements. Schools in the top two tiers are required to implement one of four “turnaround” models of school reform defined by the U.S. Department of Education.

- **Tier 1** – A Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring status that is “persistently lowest-achieving.” A state may also include Title I-eligible elementary schools that are achieving at the same level as the state’s identified persistently lowest-achieving schools and have either not made adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years or are in the state’s lowest-achieving 20 percent of schools.
- **Tier 2** – A secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds and is “persistently lowest-achieving.” A state may also include Title I-eligible secondary schools that have either not made adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years or is in the lowest-achieving 20 percent of schools.
- **Tier 3** – A Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is not a Tier 1 or Tier 2 school because it is not persistently low achieving. A state may also include Title I-eligible schools that do not meet Tier 1 or 2 criteria and have either not made adequate yearly progress for at least two years or are in the state’s lowest-achieving 20 percent of schools. A state may establish additional criteria to encourage LEAs to differentiate among Tier 3 schools in their use of school improvement funds.

Priority and Focus Schools – *Context:* In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education outlined a process for states to seek waivers from a number of requirements of No Child Left Behind including:

- setting annual measurable objectives to determine adequate yearly progress (AYP),
- identifying schools and districts for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring for failure to meet AYP, and
- meeting the 2014 deadline for all students to meet proficiency goals.

The waiver process allows states more flexibility in school accountability systems and directs them to focus interventions on the lowest-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps. Federal waiver guidelines define two types of schools for various state interventions, including awards of SIG funding: priority schools and focus schools. The federal waiver guidelines allow states to award SIG funds under ESEA section 1003(g) (the primary SIG program) to any priority school that implements a turnaround model and to award SIG funds under ESEA section 1003(a) to any priority or focus school.

Priority School: A school that is identified as among the lowest-performing schools in the state. The total number of priority schools in a state must be at least five percent of the Title I schools in the state. A priority school is:

- a school among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the state based on the achievement of the “all students” group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the state’s accountability system, and has demonstrated a lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group;
- a Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years; or
- a Tier I or Tier II school under the SIG program that is using SIG funds to implement a school intervention model.

Tennessee’s waiver plan sets four possible paths for priority schools. They are eligible to (1) enter the state-run Achievement School District (ASD) or (2) enter a district-run Innovation Zone, or (3) implement one of the SIG turnaround models, subject to state approval, without entering an alternative governance structure, or (4) undergo a district-led school improvement planning process, subject to ASD intervention in the absence of improved results. Tennessee’s waiver plan states that, “By 2014-15, the bottom five percent of schools will all be served through one of the first three categories. Each of the first three categories . . . meets the U.S. Department of Education’s turnaround principles for interventions.”

Tennessee’s SIG Cohort 2 and Cohort 3 awards were made under the priority school definition in the waiver guidelines.

Focus School: A Title I school in the state that is contributing to the achievement gap in the state. The total number of focus schools in a state must equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in the state. A focus school is:

- a school that has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup or subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroup or subgroups or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in graduation rates;
- a school that has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, low graduation rates;
- a Title I high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school.

Tennessee’s waiver plan requires districts to submit improvement plans for their designated focus schools to the state Department of Education. The department has established competitive grants for focus schools that are funded from a combination of SIG 1003(a) funds, Race to the Top funds, and other state funds.

SIG Turnaround Models – Context: Schools in Tier 1 and Tier 2 under No Child Left Behind, or that are defined as Priority Schools under ESEA Flexibility Waivers, must adopt one of the four turnaround models to be eligible for SIG funding: Transformation, Turnaround, Restart, or Closure. Two of these models require the use of increased learning time. Three-fourths of schools required to choose a turnaround model select transformation, which includes

replacing the principal, increasing teacher and administrator effectiveness, instituting comprehensive instructional reforms, increasing learning time, creating community oriented schools, and providing operational flexibility and sustained support.

The Transformation and Turnaround models appear very similar. Some key differences are that Turnaround requires that half the staff be replaced and that a new governance structure be implemented while Transformation allows staff besides the principal to remain and requires teachers to be evaluated on student growth.

Transformation

- Teachers and School Leaders: develop and increase teacher and school leader effectiveness by replacing the principal, using teacher and principal evaluations that include student growth, rewarding school staff who have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates, providing ongoing, job-embedded professional development, and implementing strategies to recruit and retain staff who can meet student needs;
- Instructional Reforms: implement comprehensive instructional reforms by using data to implement a research-based and aligned instructional program, and promoting the continuous use of student data to differentiate instruction to meet students' needs;
- Increased Learning Time: increase learning time and create community-oriented schools by establishing schedules that provide increased learning time, and providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement; and
- School Governance: provide operational flexibility and sustain support by allowing the school flexibility to implement comprehensive changes in staffing, calendars, time, budgeting, and other elements to improve student achievement and increase high school graduation rates, and ensuring the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and support.

Turnaround

- Teachers and School Leaders: replace the principal and grant the new principal flexibility to implement comprehensive changes in staffing, calendars, time, budgeting, and other elements to improve student achievement and increase high school graduation rates, screen existing staff and rehire no more than 50 percent, implement strategies to recruit and retain staff with the necessary skills to meet the needs of a turnaround school, and provide ongoing job-embedded professional development;
- School Governance: adopt a new governance structure such as reporting to a state or district turnaround office or contracting with the state or district to obtain more flexibility for more accountability;
- Instructional Reforms: use data to implement a research-based and aligned instructional program and promote continuous use of student data to differentiate instruction and meet students' needs;
- Increased Learning Time: establish schedules that provide increased learning time, and provide social-emotional and community-oriented services and support for students.

Restart

- School Governance: Convert a school to a charter school or reopen a school under a charter school operator, charter management organization, or education management organization. In this model, the school must enroll any former student who wishes to attend the school.

Closure

- School Governance: Close the school and enroll former students in other schools within the district that are higher achieving. These other schools should be in reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available.

Innovation Zones – In 2012, the Tennessee General Assembly passed Public Chapter 962, authorizing school districts:

- to establish an innovation zone (iZone) for the purpose of monitoring, overseeing, and improving schools that are designated as priority schools and approved for inclusion in the innovation zone by the Commissioner of Education;
- to establish an innovation zone office and appoint an office leader with management authority to hire and fire staff for the office, as well as appoint a leader for each school placed in the innovation zone; and
- to allow approved schools in the iZone to have maximum autonomy over financial, programmatic, and staffing decisions.

The iZones offer the schools within them flexibility and autonomy similar to that provided by the state-run Achievement School District, but iZone schools stay under the management of the local school district. The iZones fulfill the role of a new governance structure for schools using the SIG Turnaround model.

The iZone offices are to create local and sustainable capacity to engage in meaningful and innovative turnaround in priority schools. Only districts with multiple priority schools can establish iZones. The iZone offices qualify for SIG funds as do the schools they monitor. Metro Nashville Public Schools initiated its iZone in 2011-12, Memphis City Schools in 2012-13 (which became part of the consolidated Shelby County Schools district in August 2013), and Hamilton County in 2013-14.

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