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## Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Signed into law in 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was designed to improve resources for disadvantaged students. Title I, the largest part of ESEA's approximately \$1 billion budget, specifically targeted children from low-income families. In the 1970s, about 94 percent of school districts received money under ESEA.

## No Child Left Behind Act

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the 2001 reauthorization of ESEA, mandated that all students test as proficient in reading and math by 2014.

The law required yearly testing in these two subjects for grades 3-8, and once in high school. Schools whose test scores did not adequately improve were identified by the state for additional assistance. If schools continued to not meet progress requirements, federal law required the state to take further corrective action.

## NCLB Waivers

Beginning in 2012, Tennessee received a series of waivers from the federal government relaxing various provisions of NCLB.

Under the waivers, Tennessee no longer had to achieve 100 percent proficiency by 2014; instead the state set new progress goals for student achievement. The waivers also gave Tennessee more flexibility in helping struggling schools. Previously, under NCLB, the state had to choose from federally prescribed intervention models.

## Education Improvement Act

Tennessee's Education Improvement Act of 1992 (EIA), a landmark education reform, created a new state funding formula. The Basic Education Program (BEP) was designed to direct more state funding to districts with less ability to raise local revenue.

The EIA adopted the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to measure educational progress. Among other things, the EIA also capped maximum class sizes, raised the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 17, and mandated kindergarten for all students.

## First to the Top Act

In 2010, the General Assembly passed the First to the Top Act, in part to strengthen the state's application for the federal Race to the Top grant program. Tennessee received over \$500 million.

Under First to the Top, Tennessee created the Achievement School District, which has five years to move its schools from the bottom five percent to the top 25 percent in student achievement. The new law also based 50 percent of teachers' evaluations on student achievement and growth.

## Every Student Succeeds Act

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in December 2015, is the most recent reauthorization of ESEA and NCLB.

With the passage of ESSA, state waivers will become void in August 2016. While ESSA maintains much of NCLB's original framework, the new law gives more flexibility to states and school districts.

1965

1992

2001

2010

2012

2015