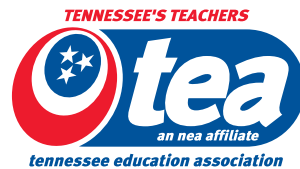




**TEA**  
**LEGISLATIVE**  
**PROPOSALS**  
**2011-2012**



## INTRODUCTION

The Tennessee Education Association promotes, advances and protects public education, the education profession, and the rights and interests of its members.

During the 146 years since the founding of the Tennessee Education Association, the passage of legislation to benefit public education, students, and educators has been a major objective of the Association. Nothing is more American than our historic system of free public education. Public education is critical to the advancement of our free and democratic society and to the economic growth of our state and nation.

This Association is committed to enacting legislation that meets the needs of Tennessee's students and educators. We call on state lawmakers to review carefully these legislative proposals, which reflect the goals of TEA members. We recognize that meeting the challenges facing public education is going to require the collaborative efforts of many – educators, parents, and other stakeholders – in addition to policymakers.

The elected leaders and staff of the Tennessee Education Association look forward to working with state legislators and the Governor as the 107th General Assembly considers legislation vital to the quality of public education in Tennessee.

**Note:** The order in which items are listed does not indicate priority.

## IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING

### TEA PROPOSES:

- ✎ Continuous full funding of the Basic Education Program and improvement of the adequacy of its components and funding levels.
- ✎ Reduced class size in all classrooms beyond BEP standards.
- ✎ Daily planning time for all educators within the instructional day.
- ✎ Adequate funding for necessary instructional supplies and equipment.
- ✎ Adequate funding for appropriate mentoring programs for beginning teachers.
- ✎ Increased opportunities and compensation for quality professional development for all education employees.
- ✎ Improvements to school infrastructure including modernization of buildings and adequate funding for preventive maintenance and the elimination of portable facilities.
- ✎ Adequate funding for purchasing, updating, and maintenance of technology and technological training for all students and education employees.
- ✎ Programs to eliminate any violence, including verbal or physical abuse of students or education employees that disrupts the learning environment.
- ✎ Adequate funding for alternative schools and/or programs to deal with disruptive students in all grades.
- ✎ Development and funding of programs to enhance instruction for non-traditional learners and English Language Learners.
- ✎ Fully funding programs to serve students in at-risk environments at all grade levels.

- ⌘ Adequate funding, guidelines, and additional training to assist education employees in the implementation of a free, appropriate public education for students with special needs.
- ⌘ Accountability standards be the same for all schools receiving public monies.
- ⌘ Home school students be held to the same accountability and performance standards as all public school students.
- ⌘ Full funding of the higher education formula.
- ⌘ Adequate funding and universal availability of quality pre-K programs for all children in Tennessee.

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

### TEA PROPOSES:

- ⌘ The average salary of teachers in Tennessee be equal to at least the national average and that such salary be distributed on a schedule with increased emphasis on education and experience.
- ⌘ Annual state funded salary increases be effective at the beginning of each school year.
- ⌘ Protection and maintenance of the current actuarial soundness of the retirement system.
- ⌘ Retirement benefits be enhanced by improving the retirement benefit formula, providing full retirement benefits prior to 30 years of service, continuing health insurance after retirement, and providing for transferability of prior service.
- ⌘ Improvement in the state health insurance program by increasing funding and benefits.
- ⌘ Improvement of leave provisions.

- ⌘ Higher education tuition reduction for public school employees.
- ⌘ Higher education tuition reduction for the children of active and retired school employees.
- ⌘ Cost-of-living increases for higher education personnel be provided prior to the allocation of merit pay or additional compensation.
- ⌘ Improving the economic benefits and working conditions of Education Support Professionals.

## LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

### TEA PROPOSES:

- ⌘ Protection of the employment and association rights of all education employees.
- ⌘ Protection of tenure (due process) rights for all teachers.
- ⌘ Fair, reasonable and valid systems of evaluation with reasons required when non-renewing a non-tenured teacher.
- ⌘ Improvement of the Professional Negotiations law, including binding grievance arbitration.
- ⌘ Education employee involvement in all levels of decision-making and policy development.
- ⌘ Consistent, statewide standards for licensure and addition of endorsements.



# BASIC PHILOSOPHIES

## ***THE TENNESSEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION STRONGLY:***

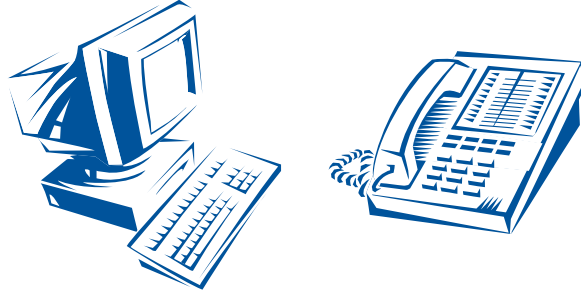
- Supports the preservation and enhancement of a free and public education system in Tennessee.
- Supports a tax structure which provides an equitable, quality education for all students.
- Supports employee working conditions, which will attract and retain quality professionals.
- Supports the right of every student in Tennessee to a quality education in a safe, orderly, and healthy environment.
- Supports the fair, equitable, and legal treatment of all education employees, including evaluations based on multiple measures.
- Supports adequately addressing the teacher shortage in Tennessee.
- Supports measures to recruit and retain African-American and other minority education employees in Tennessee public schools.
- Supports the right of every student in Tennessee to be taught by a person properly licensed in the areas or grades taught.
- Supports reduction of non-essential clerical duties, interruptions, and other distractions that fragment teaching time.
- Supports the monitoring and enforcement of all local, state and federal rules, regulations, and laws.
- Supports continued analysis of statewide testing programs, with adequate classroom teacher involvement, emphasizing protection of maximum classroom instructional time.
- Supports programs which enhance multi-cultural awareness and understanding.
- Supports adequate funding for state special schools and protection of rights of special school employees. All applicable improvements advocated by this program should apply to the state special schools.
- Supports parental and student responsibility, accountability, and involvement in the educational process.
- Supports extension of taxing authority to school boards.
- Supports full funding for any federal education mandates.
- Supports the availability of appropriate nursing, counseling, and other necessary services for all public school students and education employees.

## ***THE TENNESSEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION STRONGLY:***

- Opposes the use of public funds for the support of any non-public school or any non-public school student.
- Opposes profiteering by corporate takeover of public schools.
- Opposes any alternative licensure program that reduces standards for the education profession.
- Opposes restrictions on academic freedom.
- Opposes the legislating of curriculum.
- Opposes any diminution of human and civil rights of education employees.
- Opposes any effort at the state or local level to circumvent the Professional Negotiations law.
- Opposes diversion of retirement monies to fund any other state programs.
- Opposes any effort to privatize the Tennessee defined-benefit retirement plan.
- Opposes any evaluation system that bases the employment status/compensation of teachers solely on subjective evaluation, statistical data, or any arbitrary standards.
- Opposes requiring non-medical personnel to perform medical procedures for students, dispense any medication, or handle blood or bodily fluids.
- Opposes growing commercialization of classrooms, which treats students as consumers rather than learners.
- Opposes any expansion of the charter school law until effectiveness of these schools is independently validated.
- Opposes any state legislative effort to mandate the annual school calendar.
- Opposes any weakening of the sunshine law.
- Opposes any proposal allowing mayoral takeover of schools or school systems.
- Opposes the use of public funds to purchase home school curriculum either printed or electronic.
- Opposes BEP salary funds being used for any purpose other than salaries.



## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR



All legislators can be contacted by **phone** at **1.800.449.8366** – follow the prompts to direct a call to your personal legislator. In addition, all legislators can be reached by **e-mail**. The address is the legislator’s title and name followed by the capitol address. For example:

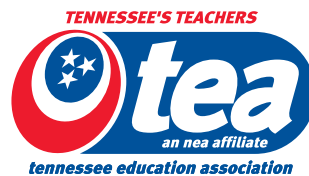
**sen.tim.barnes@capitol.tn.gov**

**rep.joe.armstrong@capitol.tn.gov**

You can also send e-mails to legislators by going to the Legislative Action Center of the TEA web site at [www.teateachers.org](http://www.teateachers.org).

For mail correspondence, addresses are either the Legislative Plaza (LP) or War Memorial Building (WMB). Office numbers are available on the state legislative web site [www.legislature.state.tn.us/](http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/). Click on the “Legislators” button at the top of the opening page.

**Note:** The legislative web site is also an excellent way to track specific legislation by bill number or sponsor. Click on the “Legislation” button at the top of the opening page.



801 Second Avenue North | Nashville, Tennessee 37201-1099  
615.242.8392 | 800.342.8367 | fax: 615.259.4581  
[www.teateachers.org](http://www.teateachers.org)  
[www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)