

Education Consumers Foundation

www.education-consumers.org

March 4, 2019

J. E. Stone, Ed.D.

Why [HB 243/SB 1249](#) is Vital to Tennessee's future

Tennessee received national recognition for its improved 2011-2015 [NAEP ranking](#) but then its scores [slipped](#) and returned to a flat trajectory.

The goal of HB 243/SB1249 is to put Tennessee back on the road to a higher national ranking and an improved economy. It will incentivize the state's public universities to produce more highly-effective new teachers, i.e., teachers who lift achievement by 1.5 grade-levels per year and add an [estimated](#) \$667,000 to the lifetime incomes of each class of students.

WHY MORE-EFFECTIVE TEACHERS ARE A MUST

Every year, each teacher gets a new class of students. On average, they grow the achievement of their students by one year's worth per school year. If all students started at grade level and all had average teachers, all students would graduate prepared for college and the work place.

Of course, not all students enter school at grade level. Disadvantaged students may be 1-3 years below average and advantaged students may enter school that well above average. Taught by average teachers throughout their school careers, disadvantaged students will remain below grade level and advantaged students will remain above.

Bottom line, if Tennessee's students are to beat their demographic destiny, they must have teachers who grow student achievement by more than one year's worth per year.

If the State of Tennessee is to beat its demographic destiny, it must build and maintain a teacher workforce of highly-effective teachers, i.e., ones who produce above-average achievement gains year after year.

HOW HB 243/SB 1249 CAN HELP

The use of value-added performance assessment has increasingly focused teachers, schools, and districts on achievement growth. The result has been an increase in the percentage of highly effective teachers and a visibly higher level of [achievement growth statewide](#).

TN's five-point [TVAAS](#) ratings for teachers assign a five (5) to highly-effective teachers, a one (1) to highly-ineffective ones, and a three (3) to those meeting the state average. A rating of five reflects approximately one and one-half years of growth per year and a rating of one reflects approximately a half year per year.

According to 2013 Tennessee Department of Education data, 47% of TN's veteran teachers are rated **4 or 5**, 26% are rated **3**, and 27% are **1 or 2**.

For TN's student achievement and college readiness to improve, its existing teacher-effectiveness profile must improve. The need for more fours and fives and fewer ones, twos, and threes can be shown with mathematical certainty.

New teachers improve with experience, but few increase by more than 2 points--thus few new teachers rated 1 or 2 will rise to above average.

Note that some [districts](#) have a much greater need than others.

WHY HB 243/SB 1249 IS CRITICAL TO TN'S FUTURE

TN's largest providers of new teachers--its publicly funded universities--are infusing districts with so many highly-ineffective new teachers that the improvements in teacher effectiveness gained through experience, professional development, and personnel changes are, to a substantial extent, washed out.

If the teacher-effectiveness profile of new teachers from the universities were compared to those of present-day school [districts](#), it would be among the lowest performers in the state (see chart below).

Of the teachers trained by TN's public universities (providers of over half of all new teachers), 27% are rated **4 or 5**, 32% are rated **3**, and 41% are rated **1 or 2**.

By contrast, of the teachers trained by TN's alternative training programs, 41% are rated **4 or 5**, 30% are rated **3**, and 30% are rated **1 or 2**.

The budgetary incentive posed by HB 243/SB 1249 is a first in the nation and may be the most powerful policy lever yet proposed to address this problem.

If the outcomes of the university-based programs were to rise to the level of the alternative programs, Tennessee would soon become the most improved state in the nation.



Percentage of Effective and Ineffective New Teachers

Based on 2016-2018 Tennessee State Board of Education Data

Public Universities vs Alternative Programs vs Veteran Teachers

