

Our Work in Tennessee

October 1, 2013–September 30, 2014

TN-01: Virtual Education Plan

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDE) emphasizes the importance of making effective use of virtual education to support teaching and learning. TDE would like to gain capacity in understanding best practices in virtual education, exploring development of a supportive policy environment, and aligning with the state strategic plan and other initiatives. The ARCC will conduct a needs-sensing session with TDE staff members, including its new director of virtual strategy, to refine the virtual education work plan, discuss policy changes, and facilitate related discussions with the Tennessee State Board (TSB) and TDE. ARCC will collaborate with TDE to establish a timeline for completion of a comprehensive virtual education plan and support TDE during the plan's preparation and ensure the plan contains literature-supported, key factors and policies necessary for success. ARCC will continue to collaborate with TDE and TSB to support the implementation of the Virtual Education Plan.

TN-02: Tennessee State Board of Education Teacher Compensation Initiative

The Tennessee State Board of Education (TSB) has stated its intention to develop policies to increase teacher compensation and implement differentiated pay for teachers. This goal aligns with the TDE priority of expanding the access of students to effective teachers and leaders, and its strategic plan's intention to "create marketplaces and supports for districts to hire effective teachers and principals." The ARCC will partner with TSB to identify the capacity building necessary to support the purpose of Tennessee recruiting and retaining highly-qualified teachers through innovative and competitive compensation policies and strategies. ARCC will collaborate with TSB to identify key stakeholders for collaboration on teacher compensation policies and strategies and develop a process and timeline for policy revisions. ARCC will provide coaching, give feedback on policy drafts, and facilitate sessions with TSB and other stakeholders. TSB leaders will gain understanding of how other states have used policy to support increased teacher compensation and differentiated pay structures, and ways that compensation rates can impact education outcomes.

TN-03: CORE Center Initiative

The TDE Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) request technical assistance from the ARCC on how best to coordinate and deploy CORE support. TDE also needs to enhance its capacity to coordinate and sustain the multiple programs and support systems generated by its current large grant awards. ARCC will facilitate a needs-sensing session with TDE CORE to determine needs and develop a plan to improve CORE capacities to support instructional improvement, turn around low-performing schools, and develop change management plans. TDE will partner with ARCC, the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, Center on School Turnaround, and others to investigate research-based strategies, promising practices, and exemplary models of intermediate unit support for improved statewide student achievement, especially in low-performing schools. ARCC will collaborate with TDE and CORE on the analysis and application of feedback data to CORE support systems and processes, and coach and advise TDE and CORE staff throughout refinement or development of new systems and processes.