

The world is changing...

- Today's high school students will have 10-14 jobs by age 38.
- Tennessee students are competing for jobs not just against students in Alabama and North Carolina, but also against students in India and China.
- Global access to technology has caused extensive and profound changes in business, economics and jobs – changes on a global scale that are dramatically altering America's position in the global marketplace and that will transform the job market for U.S. workers in equally profound ways.
- The U.S. no longer holds a corner on the market for highly qualified workers.
- Today's workers require more education than ever before.
- Between 1995 and 2005, the U.S. lost 3 million manufacturing jobs, and in that same 10-year period, 17 million service-sector jobs were created.

Facts about Tennessee

- Tennessee ranks 41st in the nation for student achievement.
- 77% of Tennessee 8th graders are not proficient in math, and 75% of them are not proficient in reading.
- Nearly 28,000 students dropped out of Tennessee high schools in 2008.
- Approximately 1.2 million Tennesseans over the age of 18 do not have a high school diploma or GED.
- 21% of Tennesseans over the age of 18 cannot read well enough to fill out an application, read a food label, or read a simple story to a child.
- Of every 100 Tennessee ninth graders, only 72 will graduate high school and only 17 will graduate college within six years of leaving high school.

What Has Our State Done About It?

In 2007, Governor Phil Bredesen launched the Tennessee Diploma Project, which sets new curriculum standards for Tennessee students. The governor met with more than 130 senior executives representing 112 companies and organizations from across the state, and their message was clear: our students are not ready for the workplace or college. On Jan. 25, 2008, the State Board of Education approved new college and work ready standards, more rigorous graduation requirements and a single path diploma. The Governor stated, "Today's vote solidifies the work of the past

year of raising education standards to more adequately prepare Tennessee students for 21st century success. These improvements are essential stepping stones to Tennessee's students possessing the knowledge and skills to be at the top of their chosen professions. Adequately educating our young people is, and always should be, Tennessee's top priority."

Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, Tennessee students will experience a new more rigorous and relevant curriculum.

What is the Tennessee Diploma Project

The Tennessee Diploma Project is an initiative to better prepare all Tennessee students for success in work and college. The steps toward this effort include:

- Revising Tennessee's standards so students learn the skills employers and higher education officials have determined are necessary;
- Redesigning the assessment process to match new standards and gauge college-readiness; and
- Revising the graduation requirements to ensure all students take challenging courses that prepare them for college and work.

Similar standards are being adopted by other states and the Tennessee Diploma Project will ensure Tennessee students can compete in the job market!

What does this mean for our students?

1. The new standards will focus on many of the same knowledge/skills but require higher level thinking and a deeper comprehension of the subject matter.
2. Instead of Gateway exams, all students will take end-of-course exams in English I, II and III; Algebra I and II; Geometry or an equivalent; U.S. History; Biology I; Chemistry; and Physics. These exams will count as a percentage of the student's class grade. Students with disabilities may be allowed to substitute an alternative performance-based assessment for an end-of-course exam.
3. All students will take college-readiness pre-tests in 8th and 10th grade to identify gaps in learning so they can be addressed earlier in the high school experience.

Ensuring Student Success

4. All students must complete 22 credits-the “Ready Core”-to receive a regular diploma, including 3 credits in a chosen elective. The Ready Core includes Algebra I and II and two additional upper level math courses; Biology I, Chemistry or Physics and an additional lab science course. A half-credit has also been added each in P.E. and Personal Finance. Students with disabilities may take an alternative lab science instead of chemistry or physics.
5. Students will be better prepared for the global workplace.

What Can School Boards Do?

- Adopt goals, objectives and strategies to demonstrate support for the new standards and to ensure the system implements them.
- Incorporate the implementation of the new standards into the Director of Schools’ evaluation instrument and require regular reports and updates on progress toward the goals.
- Ensure that the Director of Schools and staff have the tools necessary to implement the new standards, including appropriate in-service training sessions.
- Help your students, parents and community find out more about the new standards by providing information on your website with a link to information provided by the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education.
- Reach out to community, political and business leaders and gain their support for these new standards.

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Ensuring Student Success



*How Tennessee Is Working
To Protect Your Child's Future*