MEDIA RELEASE

State of Tennessee
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Tennessee Releases 2008 State Report Card on Schools

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Department of Education today released its annual comprehensive report card on pre-K - 12 education including state, district and school-level information on achievement, demographics, discipline and educator preparation. State-level results show Tennessee met federal achievement benchmarks in all but one category, improved achievement in reading/language arts at the elementary level and increased the state's graduation rate to 82.2 percent.

"Under Governor Bredesen's leadership, Tennessee's focus is on raising standards for student learning so all students have the opportunity to graduate well-prepared to pursue higher education or enter the workforce," Education Commissioner Timothy Webb said. "Our aggressive path of improvement means a better chance for students and a stronger workforce for Tennessee."

Since embarking on the Tennessee Diploma Project in January, Tennessee has passed increased academic standards and graduation requirements. Because of this state's commitment to education reform, Tennessee was chosen as one of eight leading states to launch the Career and College-Ready Policy Institute, a national initiative to help other states graduate students ready for 21st century expectations.

The report card also tracks non-academic indicators that influence achievement like teacher preparedness and student discipline. Tennessee's 2008 report card shows an increase in the percentage of courses taught by highly qualified teachers and a decrease in student suspensions and expulsions.

"We know schools have a great influence on young people beyond the education of their minds," Assistant Commissioner of Accountability and Teaching and Learning Connie Smith said. "Part of school success means providing resources to remove obstacles hindering student achievement so they can focus their energy on learning."

A new feature of the online report card allows visitors to easily jump between 2007 report card results and the 2008 report card results using a drop-down feature at the top of each page. To view the statewide report card, visit http://tn.gov/education/reportcard/.

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