

TEA Statement on Governor's Special Session

The Tennessee Education Association thanks Governor Bredesen for his overwhelming support of public education. His support for funding pre-K classrooms, additional funding for at-risk students and full funding of the Basic Education Program (BEP) has undoubtedly strengthened public education in Tennessee.

TEA supports the governor's legislative initiative to position Tennessee to compete for Race to the Top funds. However, Tennessee's teachers tell us that basing more than half of a teacher's annual evaluation on student performance is excessive.

In trying to help the governor reach his objective, TEA will support 35 percent of teacher and principal evaluation being based on student performance. We believe the weight of 35 percent student performance, with the backing of Tennessee's teachers, makes the state very competitive in applying for federal funds.

We believe 35 percent is reasonable because:

- Good teaching does not occur in a vacuum, and depends on student effort and parent support as well as teacher expertise.

- A child is more than a test score. Focusing the evaluation of teachers and students primarily on test results limits learning to only what is tested.
- A teacher's performance should be measured on more than how students score on one multiple-choice test on a single day.

We look forward to working with Governor Bredesen, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education to improve public schools and student learning in Tennessee.