



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

January 19, 2023

The Honorable Penny Schwinn
Commissioner of Education
Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0375

Dear Commissioner Schwinn:

I am writing to recognize Tennessee's ongoing commitment to the maintenance of equity requirements under section 2004(b) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP). Knowing the numerous, competing priorities facing States, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies, Tennessee's early work to implement these new, critically important resource equity requirements is appreciated. We note that Tennessee's action is a result of cooperative efforts involving Governor Lee, appropriators in your General Assembly, and State educational agency leadership and staff.

ARP maintenance of equity requirements help ensure that State and local education funding supports students who experienced longstanding opportunity gaps before, and were disproportionately impacted by, the COVID-19 pandemic. In implementing these provisions through a mix of data quality efforts, engagement with Department-provided technical assistance, and maintenance of State education funding for the communities and students who need it most, Tennessee is taking critical steps to accelerate academic recovery and close opportunity and achievement gaps.

My team looks forward to continuing our work with yours in implementing the second year of maintenance of equity requirements in fiscal year 2023. Thank you for your collaboration, and all you do for Tennessee's students, educators, and families.

Sincerely,

James F. Lane, Ed. D.
Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions
and Duties of the Assistant Secretary for
Elementary and Secondary Education

CC: The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor
State Capitol, First Floor
600 Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243