



Knox County Commission approves \$7 million school budget increase, no tax increase

June 4, 2012

In a 7-4 vote, Knox County Commission approved a \$404,710,000 school system budget at its special called meeting on Monday, June 4, 2012.

In order to fund the budget, County Commission committed the following:

- All sources of funds and tax rates delineated in the County Mayor's school budget proposal of \$397.71 million
- \$3 million committed from the Mayor for early literacy
- \$1 million in expected Basic Education Program (BEP) funding
- \$1.5 million from the Knox County General Fund Balance
- \$1.5 million from the Knox County Schools Fund Balance

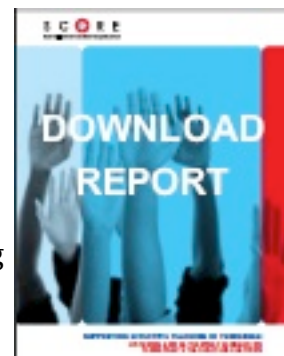
This increase to the budget will allow investment in several important educational initiatives that are delineated in the Knox County Schools' Strategic Plan, including: critical supports for teachers, strategic compensation for educators, interventions and enrichment for students, enhanced magnet programs, community schools, and full-day kindergarten.

Commission has committed to continuing dialogue with the Knox County Board of Education during the next year regarding technology needs and facilities improvements.

Before reaching its decision, Knox County Commission heard two hours of public comment on the issue from nearly 40 constituents.

SCORE releases report following teacher evaluation feedback

The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) recently released a report, [Supporting Effective Instruction in Tennessee](#), regarding Tennessee's teacher evaluation system. The report follows a five-month listening and feedback process SCORE led on the evaluation system to identify what is working well, gather input on challenges and concerns, and report back



with a range of recommendations to the Tennessee Department of Education and State Board of Education. ([Visit the SCORE site](#))

Kindergarten is FULL DAY

Kindergarten students throughout Knox County Schools benefited from a full day of instruction beginning with the 2012-2013 school year. This means that Kindergarten follow the traditional elementary school hours by beginning at 7:45 a.m. and dismissing at 2:45 p.m.

Having a full day in the classroom provides more instructional time to build a strong foundation for academic, social, emotional, and developmental growth. Research and experience with early childhood education also indicates that extending the school day for children in Kindergarten is beneficial to student learning because it:

- Provides more opportunities for interventions and enrichment
- Allows teachers to spend more time with students individually and with small groups in order to explore key concepts in depth
- Creates more time for interactive/hands-on learning

Five year olds work on various activities throughout the day in Kindergarten which encompass active learning, movement, and quiet learning skills.

Visit www.knoxschools.org for a [Full Day of Kindergarten](#) guide or call (865) 594-1800 for more information.

Age requirements

The Tennessee State Board of Education has recently modified age of enrollment requirements for Kindergarten. The new birth date guidelines for Kindergarten entry includes:

- For the 2013-2014 school year, students must be five years old by August 31, 2013
- In 2014-15 the cut-off date for Kindergarten will be August 15. Children will need to be five years old by August 15, 2014.

KCS offering FREE Substitute Teacher training classes



If you are interested in becoming a substitute teacher with the Knox County Schools, the \$39.95 assessment fee for training is being waived for a limited time.

Weekly training sessions begin Monday, June 11 and continue through August 11, 2012 with morning sessions from 8 to 11:20 a.m. or afternoon sessions from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Training sessions will be held at the Sarah Simpson Professional Development Center located at 801 Tipton Avenue, and space is limited.

Using skills, materials, and strategies designed by STEDI, an effective substitute training program, the local training sessions are designed to equip substitute teachers to:

- Handle classroom behavior situations
- Be prepared and professional
- Teach students with special needs
- Assemble a Substitute Pack

For more information or to register, please call Human Resources at (865) 594-1929 or visit <http://www.hr.knoxschools.org/>.

Read 20 minutes each day with your student

Research shows that reading 20 minutes a day will help students excel academically. It is an important skill that when exercised on a regular basis, it leads to successful student outcomes. Reading both at home and in the classroom is a proven way to help students thrive.



The summer months are a terrific time to utilize the [Knox County Public Library](#) System. It has more than 20 facilities that provide more than one million books, periodicals, CDs, films, and audiobooks designed to support the Knox County community. In addition to checking out books, children can also partake in group setting story readings.

Tennessee First Lady Crissy Haslam recently launched the Read20 Family Book Club to promote early literacy and parental engagement in children's academic lives.

To encourage families to read 20 minutes each day this summer, a book will be featured as the "Book of the Month" on the First Lady's Read20 Family Book Club website www.tn.gov/read20, where children and families of all ages can participate and access fun, family engagement ideas, reading activities and tips

Additionally, the [Children's Reading Foundation](#) reports that reading 20 minutes a

day with a child strengthens relationships, encourages listening and language skills, promotes attention and curiosity, and establishes a strong reading foundation. Make the most of your summer and help your child discover a whole new world through reading.



REMINDER: TCAP “quick scores” available online

As a reminder, Tennessee state law and State Board of Education policy now requires that TCAP Achievement Scores be calculated into students’ final semester two course grades(s). Per Knox County Schools Policy, these scores constitute 15% of a student’s second semester grade for each tested subject area.

If parents have not yet had an opportunity to view their child’s TCAP scores, that information can be found by logging into Parent Portal. Scores will be listed in the Student Information Center area under the Standardized Testing Tab.

Parents who encounter difficulties logging into Parent Portal may contact the Knox County Schools Helpdesk at helpdesk@knoxschools.org or 865-594-1852.