



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
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**PHIL BREDESEN**  
GOVERNOR

**TIMOTHY K. WEBB, Ed.D.**  
COMMISSIONER

Dear Parents/Guardians:

In early November, the state Department of Education will release the 2009 Report Card. The Report Card is a comprehensive summary of performance for every school and district from the 2008-2009 school year.

**This year there are some important changes that you should consider.**

The state Department of Education has changed the method used to calculate grades for Achievement and Value Added scores. The scale that determines the grades has also been revised. As a result, the scores on this year's Report Card cannot be used as a valid basis of comparison to scores from any previous year. The best way to measure the progress of your child's school is to compare that score to the state average for 2008-2009.

These changes will, in some cases, dramatically affect the individual grades for schools and districts. *It is crucial to remember that changes in grades do not reflect a loss of learning for your child.* The changes to these calculations were required with implementation of the Tennessee Diploma Project to increase the rigor of learning in the classroom and measure the new assessments your child will take next Spring. The Tennessee Diploma Project is designed to better prepare students for college and the workforce.

Please take the time to thoroughly review the Report Card. There is a wealth of information – besides the grades for learning – that provide a good summary of the work being done at your child's school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy K. Webb".

Dr. Timothy K. Webb  
Commissioner,  
Tennessee Department of Education