

SENATE BILL 496

By Lundberg

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
relative to K-12 finances.

WHEREAS, for decades, policymakers and researchers in Tennessee have utilized state-level and district-level data to analyze funding inequities across various districts throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, due to a provision in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to annually report per-pupil expenditures at the school level, beginning with the 2018-2019 school year; and

WHEREAS, now that a comprehensive compilation of school-specific numbers is developed annually by the Tennessee Department of Education for meeting the new federal mandate, it is imperative for us to examine this data to further understand K-12 finance and fiscal policy at the local level, especially in the area of student achievement; now, therefore,
BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1.

(a) The comptroller of the treasury, through the comptroller's office of research and education accountability, shall review data from the state report card and the annual state report of the department of education for the 2018-2019 school year as required under 20 U.S.C. § 6311, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) The amount of spending per school disaggregated by the federal, state, and local source of the funding;
- (2) The amount of spending per school disaggregated by the following:
 - (A) A school's personnel expenditures; and
 - (B) A school's nonpersonnel expenditures;

(3) If the funding for each school in an LEA is equitable, including if an LEA having a priority school is investing in its priority school;

(4) A comparison of student achievement and per-pupil expenditures of schools within an LEA and across the state having similar grade levels by the following subgroups:

(A) Economically disadvantaged students;

(B) Students with cognitive disabilities; and

(C) English language learners;

(5) A comparison of student achievement and per-pupil expenditures of schools across the state with similar grade levels according to geographic locations; and

(6) Whether the BEP is structured to encourage or discourage spending inequities among schools, including if districts have enough flexibility in making spending decisions with state funding.

(b) The comptroller of the treasury shall report the findings and conclusions of the review to the speakers of the senate and house of representatives and the chairs of the education committee of the senate and the education committees of the house of representatives by January 1, 2022.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.