TENNESSEE PROMISE ANNUAL REPORT 2021

THEC TSAC

This report is prepared pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-4-708(e), which instructs the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC)[1] to:

> "…provide assistance to the general assembly by researching and analyzing data concerning [Tennessee Promise], including, but not limited to, student success and scholarship retention. TSAC shall report its findings annually to the education committee of the senate and the education administration and planning committee of the house of representatives…."

In pursuit of its mission to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential, THEC and TSAC have implemented various programs and initiatives to encourage Tennesseans to engage with higher education and support students through completion. The most prominent and highly publicized of these programs (and the focus of this report) is the Tennessee Promise, signed into law by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2014.

[1] For more information about THEC and TSAC, please see the Glossary in Appendix A.

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Executive Summary

The 2021 Tennessee Promise Annual Report provides an update on the status and impact of the Tennessee Promise program. Six cohorts of Tennessee Promise students have matriculated into eligible public and private institutions, and the seventh cohort will enroll in fall 2021. The report presents descriptive data on Tennessee Promise applicants and students, student outcomes, student transfer behavior, and program finances. Key findings from the report are summarized below.

- Tennessee Promise has enrolled nearly 108,000 students in college since its inception in 2015. In that time, it has helped Tennessee students cover over $129 million in college costs.
- Across the first six cohorts of Tennessee Promise applicants, approximately 86% filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the Promise filing deadline, 52% completed community service requirements by the specified deadline, and 29% enrolled at an eligible institution as Promise students.
- Tennessee Promise students for Cohort 6 have reported an average ACT composite score (19.2) below that of Promise applicants who did not enroll using Promise (20.1). Promise applicants who did not enroll using Promise includes both applicants who did not enroll anywhere and those who enrolled but did not qualify for Tennessee Promise—including students headed to non-Promise eligible four-year institutions. This general trend is consistent across all six cohorts.
- Cohort 6 applicants have had a higher Promise take-up rate (30.2%) than previous cohorts (29.2%, on average). This may be due in part to deferred rules in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The proportion of Hispanic Tennessee Promise applicants and students has steadily risen since the first cohort in 2015 (from 3.5% to 7.1%). Cohort 6 had the highest percent of Hispanic applicants convert to Promise students since the program's inception.
- The average number of credit hours attempted by Tennessee Promise students in their first semester is 13.7. The average Promise student does not complete 3.4 credit hours of credit bearing hours attempted in the first semester.
- Almost 9,000 Tennessee Promise students have transferred to a Tennessee public university to continue their education. This number is growing more rapidly as the Promise program matures.
- Tennessee Promise cohorts continue to increase their undergraduate credential attainment. 46% of Cohort 1, 42% of Cohort 2, and 35% of Cohort 3 had earned an award as of Summer 2020 (See **Table 10**).
- Promise enrollment as a percent of the overall cohort is increasing at TCATs and Austin Peay State University and Tennessee State University. 17.7% of Cohort 5 Promise students enrolled at a TCAT or APSU/TSU, compared to 22.6% of Cohort 6 students.
- Indicators suggest Cohort 3 may be lagging the successes seen by Cohorts 1 and 2 in terms of retention and graduation. The success rate (students graduated or still enrolled) of Cohort 3 fall enrollees at the end of the third year was 49.3%, which was slightly lower than Cohorts 1 (51.2%) and 2 (50.4%) at the same time in the process. Cohort 4 appears to be on track with Cohorts 1 and 2.

Introduction

The 2021 Tennessee Promise Annual Report comprises five sections:

1. The first section provides descriptive characteristics for Tennessee Promise applicants in the first six cohorts.
2. The second section provides descriptive characteristics for students who enrolled and were certified as eligible for Tennessee Promise.
3. The third section examines the outcomes of Tennessee Promise, including FAFSA-filing, college-going, student retention, degree completion, and enrollment changes at public institutions.
4. The fourth section examines transfer behavior among Tennessee Promise students.
5. The fifth section provides information about program finances, including the total annual cost of the program and the average cost per student.

Data

Data in this report come from the THEC Student Information System (SIS) and the TSAC e*GRandS database. The SIS is used to assess enrollment, transfer, and completion while the TSAC e*GRandS database is used to assess payments, financial aid, and first institution attended.

Cohort 6 data in the report are preliminary unless otherwise noted and will continue to change through 2021.

Privacy Notice

Throughout this report, THEC complies with federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements to protect students' personally identifiable information. When tables are presented, individual cells containing five or fewer observations are suppressed. The suppressed counts are included in the table totals.

Effects of COVID-19 on Tennessee Promise

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TSAC temporarily lifted rules created for gaining or maintaining Promise eligibility. This included adjusting deadlines for Promise applications and FAFSA filing, moving mandatory meetings online, and waiving the community service requirements for current and prospective Promise students. More details on temporary rule deferrals for the Promise scholarship and other programs can be found at TSAC's COVID-19 Campus & Financial Aid webpage. Data presented in future iterations of this report may not be comparable to the current and to past reports.

Section 1:

Program Description

Program Description

The Tennessee Promise is a last-dollar scholarship that provides recent high school graduates the opportunity to complete an associate's degree or certificate program free of tuition and mandatory fees at a public community college, a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT),[2] or a public or private university with an eligible associate's degree program.[3]

As a last-dollar scholarship, Tennessee Promise funds the remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees after all other gift aid[4] has been applied. The amount of the Tennessee Promise award is based on the other gift aid a student receives. First, the federal Pell grant is applied, followed by state gift aid (e.g., Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship awards and the Tennessee Student Assistance Award). After all federal and state gift aid is applied to the student's total tuition and mandatory fees, the remaining balance is paid by Tennessee Promise. **Table 1** displays three different funding scenarios. Individuals who have met all eligibility criteria for Tennessee Promise and who have all tuition and mandatory fee expenses covered by gift aid (i.e., have a balance of $0.00) are still considered a Tennessee Promise student.

Table 1: Tennessee Promise Award Scenarios

	Example A	**Example B**	**Example C**
Tuition/mandatory fees	$4,000	$4,000	$4,000
Grant aid (HOPE, Pell, TSAA)	$4,250	$3,250	$0
Gap between grant aid and tuition/mandatory fees	$0	$750	$4,000
Tennessee Promise award amount	$0	$750	$4,000
Tuition/Mandatory Fees Balance	$0	$0	$0

[2] For more information about TCATs, please see the Glossary in Appendix A.

[3] Awards for students attending eligible four-year institutions are equal to the average cost of tuition and mandatory fees at the public two-year postsecondary institutions less all other gift aid.

[4] Gift aid is money allotted to a student that does not need to be repaid, like scholarships and grants.

The 2020-21 application process and corresponding deadlines, applicable to Cohort 7, are as follows:[5]

1. December 1st: Complete an online application for the Tennessee Promise program.
2. March 15th: File the FAFSA.
3. Fall and Spring: Attend a mandatory meeting coordinated by the partnering organization.
4. Spring: Apply to a Promise eligible postsecondary institution.
5. July 1st: Complete and report eight hours of community service.
6. Fall: Enroll full-time at a community college, TCAT or other eligible institution.
7. Fall: If selected, provide requested documentation to complete FAFSA verification.

Tennessee Promise students are paired with a mentor to guide them through the postsecondary application and enrollment processes.[6] Students are required to complete eight hours of community service for each semester in which they enroll using Tennessee Promise.

Once enrolled, Tennessee Promise students must complete the following steps to remain eligible for the scholarship:

1. Renew the FAFSA by the Promise deadline each year they plan to receive the scholarship.
2. Maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 for students enrolled at community colleges and universities.
3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress (as determined by the institution) for students enrolled at TCATs.
4. Complete eight hours of community service for each semester in which they enroll using Tennessee Promise.[7]

Students may receive Tennessee Promise funds until they earn an associate's degree or TCAT diploma or complete five semesters at an eligible postsecondary institution (whichever occurs first).

[5] As of March 15th, 2021. Archived student checklists outlining steps and dates in prior years' application processes are located on the Tennessee Promise website at https://www.tn.gov/tnpromise/students.html.

[6] The mentorship and community service components are coordinated by two privately funded partnering organizations across the state: tnAchieves and the Ayers Foundation.

[7] TSAC made exceptions to the community service requirement during the COVID-19 pandemic for summer 2020, fall 2020, spring 2021, summer 2021.

Section 2:

Tennessee Promise Applicants

Tennessee Promise Applicants

Applying for Tennessee Promise involves several steps. **Table 2** displays the total number of applicants for the first seven cohorts who maintained scholarship eligibility at each interval in the application process. The number of applicants at each stage increased steadily through the fifth cohort. While application numbers for cohort six were down slightly, the cohort fared better than previous cohorts at the other application checkpoints, resulting in the largest Promise cohort in the program's history.

Table 2: Tennessee Promise Application Process by Counts, Cohorts 1 through 7

	Cohort 1	**Cohort 2**	**Cohort 3**	**Cohort 4**	**Cohort 5**	**Cohort 6**	**Cohort 7**
Applied for Tennessee Promise[8]	57,692	59,374	60,443	62,403	64,249	64,073	61,892
Filed the FAFSA	45,744	49,053	51,862	55,668	56,765	57,471	52,756
Completed community service	22,716	23,725	25,686	27,598	28,673	N/A*	
Enrolled at an eligible institution	16,207	17,191	17,913	18,355	18,991	19,326	

***Notes:** Community service requirements were waived for Cohort 6 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 3 below presents the proportion of applicants completing each step in the application process by cohort. Across the first six cohorts, approximately 86% filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid by the specified deadline, 52% completed community service requirements by the specified deadline, and 29% met all eligibility criteria and enroll at an eligible institution. Cohort 6 had the highest proportion of applicants become students (30.2%) in the program's history. This increase helped make cohort 6 the largest Promise cohort since the program began in 2015.

Table 3: Tennessee Promise Application Process by Proportion, Cohorts 1 through 7

	Cohort						
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Applied for Tennessee Promise	57,692	59,374	60,443	62,403	64,249	64,073	61,892
Filed the FAFSA	79.3%	82.6%	85.8%	89.2%	88.4%	89.7%	85.2%
Completed community service	39.4%	40.0%	42.5%	44.2%	44.6%	N/A*	
Enrolled at an eligible institution	28.1%	28.9%	29.6%	29.4%	29.5%	30.2%	

***Notes:** Community service requirements were waived for Cohort 6 due to Covid-19.

[8] Appendix B displays the Tennessee Promise application rates by public school district for the first five cohorts.

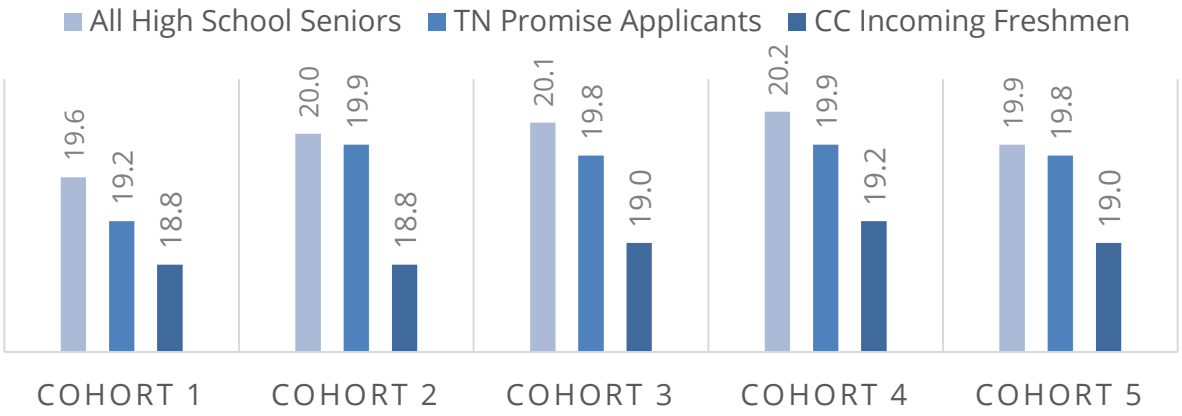
Table 4 presents demographic information for all Tennessee Promise applicants in Cohorts 4 through 6, including gender, race, first generation status, ACT composite score, and financial elements. Median adjusted gross income and expected family contribution have both grown steadily over this time period.

Table 4: Demographics for Tennessee Promise Applicants, Cohorts 4 through 6

	Cohort 4	**Cohort 5**	**Cohort 6**
Gender			
Male	49.7%	50.4%	49.6%
Female	50.3%	49.6%	50.4%
Race			
White	61.4%	61.1%	62.8%
Black	20.2%	19.7%	19.9%
Hispanic	5.5%	6.6%	7.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.7%	1.9%	1.9%
Other	2.5%	2.6%	2.7%
Unknown	8.7%	8.1%	5.6%
First generation	36.8%	35.8%	35.6%
Average ACT composite score	19.9	19.8	19.8
Median Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)[9]	$51,782	$54,422	$58,037
Median Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	$2,305	$2,583	$3,080
Total	62,403	64,249	64,073

Figure 1 displays the average ACT composite scores for Tennessee Promise applicants in Cohorts 1 through 5 compared to all high school seniors and the total incoming freshmen at community colleges across the state. The vertical axis has been truncated to demonstrate the differences between groups more clearly. ACT scores range from 0-36.

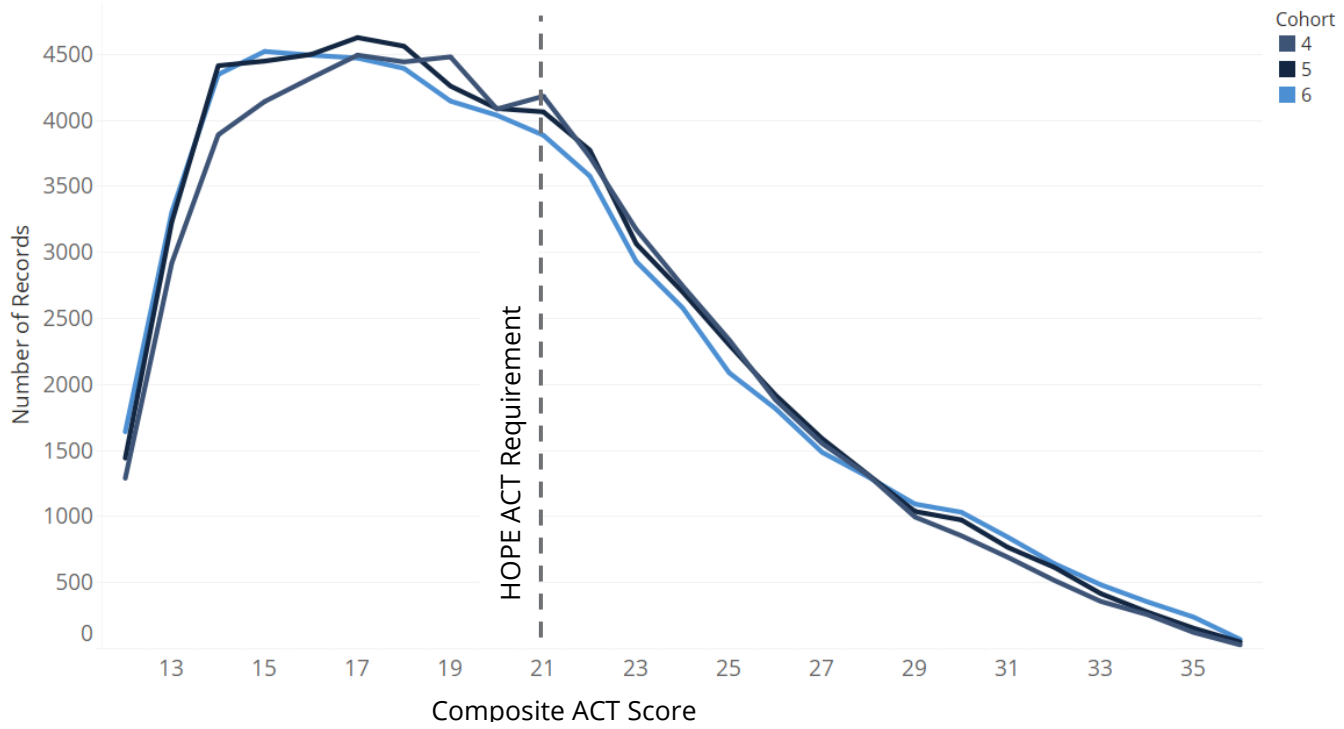
Figure 1: Average ACT Composite Scores, Cohorts 1 through 5



[9] Median AGI is calculated differently in this year's report and is not comparable to previous reports. For this report, missing AGIs have been excluded.

Figure 2 compares the distributions of ACT composite scores for the fourth, fifth, and sixth cohorts. The HOPE scholarship eligibility threshold is indicated below with a vertical dashed line (21 or above). The horizontal axis has been truncated to demonstrate the differences between groups more clearly. Most Promise students do not meet the college-ready benchmark set by HOPE.

Figure 2: Distribution of ACT Composite Scores, Cohorts 4 through 6



Section 3:

Tennessee Promise Students

Tennessee Promise Students

Figure 3 displays the average ACT composite scores for Tennessee Promise applicants and students in Cohorts 1 through 6.

Figure 3: Average ACT Composite Scores, Cohorts 1 through 6[10]

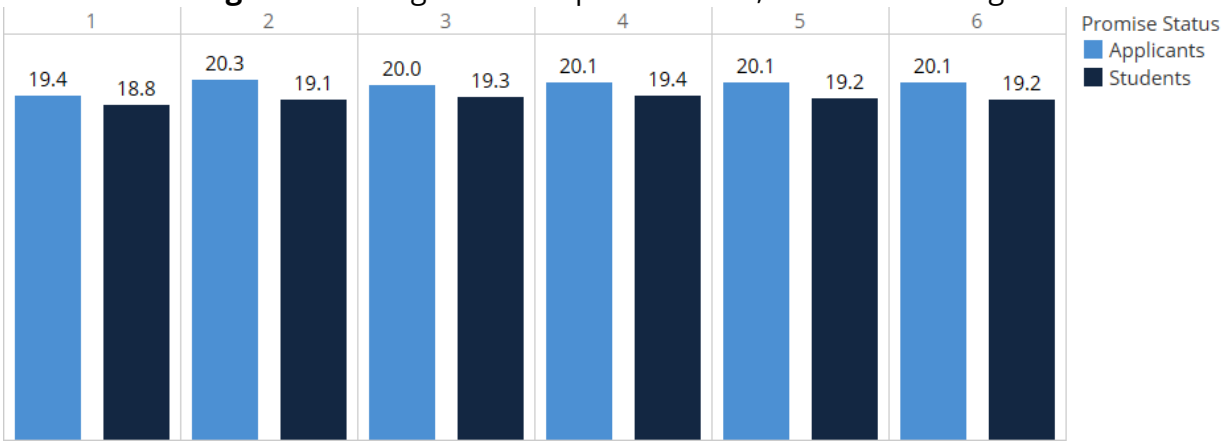


Table 5 presents the demographic characteristics of the Tennessee Promise students in Cohorts 4, 5, and 6 as compared to the demographic characteristics of the total applicant pool. Tennessee Promise applicants are those who submitted a Tennessee Promise application, while Tennessee Promise students are those who enrolled and were certified as eligible for Tennessee Promise by an institution (including those who received $0 from Tennessee Promise). Though approximately 50 percent of Promise applicants are male, only about 47 percent of students are. The proportion of Hispanic applicants and students have trended upward in recent years. Additionally, we see that while roughly 20% of Promise applicants are Black, only 14% of Promise recipients are.

Table 5: Tennessee Promise Applicants and Tennessee Promise Students, Cohorts 4 through 6

	Cohort 4		**Cohort 5**		**Cohort 6**	
	Applicants	Students	Applicants	Students	Applicants	Students
Gender						
Male	49.7%	46.6%	50.4%	47.3%	49.6%	46.0%
Female	50.3%	53.4%	49.6%	52.7%	50.4%	54.0%
Race						
White	61.4%	69.6%	61.1%	69.0%	62.8%	70.0%
Black	20.2%	14.1%	19.7%	13.4%	19.9%	13.9%
Hispanic	5.5%	5.1%	6.6%	6.5%	7.1%	7.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.7%	1.4%	1.9%	1.5%	1.9%	1.5%
Other	2.5%	2.1%	2.6%	2.2%	2.7%	2.5%
Unknown	8.7%	7.7%	8.1%	7.5%	5.6%	5.0%
First generation	36.8%	38.3%	35.8%	39.0%	35.6%	38.2%
Median Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)[11]	$51,782	$57,956	$54,422	$59,310	$58,037	$61,271
Median Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	$2,305	$3,782	$2,583	$3,886	$3,080	$3,968
Total	**62,403**	**18,355**	**64,249**	**18,991**	**64,073**	**19,326**

[10] Applicant and student groups are treated as separate groups in this figure.

[11] Median AGI is calculated differently in this year's report and is not comparable to previous reports. For this report, missing AGIs have been excluded.

Table 6 displays the sector in which Tennessee Promise students first enrolled. The majority of Tennessee Promise students enroll first at a community college, but a growing proportion are matriculating to TCATs and private institutions. **Appendix C** provides Tennessee Promise enrollment counts by institution.

Table 6: First Enrollment of Tennessee Promise Students by Sector, Cohorts 4 through 6

	Cohort 4		**Cohort 5**		**Cohort 6**[12]	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Community college	13,966	76.1%	14,335	75.5%	13,571	70.2%
TCAT	2,455	13.4%	2,730	14.4%	3,374	17.5%
Private institution	1,095	6.0%	1,304	6.9%	1,393	7.2%
APSU or TSU	839	4.6%	622	3.3%	988	5.1%
Total	18,355	100.0%	18,991	100.0%	19,326	100.0%

Table 7 provides financial aid information for Tennessee Promise students in cohorts 1 through 5. These data are reflective of a student's eligibility for financial aid through their entire enrollment history. For example, if a student ever received a Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA) (regardless of when or even if only in one semester), the student is included in the percentage of students receiving TSAA. The proportion of students who are eligible for the Pell grant at any amount has declined since cohort 1, while the proportion of students eligible for the maximum Pell grant has increased over that time.

Table 7: Financial Aid for Tennessee Promise Students, Cohorts 1 through 5

	Cohort 1	**Cohort 2**	**Cohort 3**	**Cohort 4**	**Cohort 5**
Eligible for Pell Grant (any amount)[13]	63.8%	62.4%	63.0%	62.9%	61.4%
Eligible for maximum Pell Grant ($0 EFC)	28.4%	29.3%	30.4%	30.0%	30.7%
Received TSAA[14]	41.1%	39.9%	41.7%	37.9%	37.8%
Received HOPE, GAMS, Aspire, or Access[15]	52.8%	53.6%	55.8%	55.5%	55.7%
Received Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant	14.9%	13.9%	13.2%	12.4%	11.3%
Total	**16,207**	**17,191**	**17,913**	**18,355**	**18,991**

Notes: The statistics quoted in Table 7 are not limited to public institutions.

[12] THEC continues to verify cohort 6 data.

[13] Data sourced from e*GRandS

[14] TSAA is a first-come, first-serve, need-based grant. Due to limited funding, the eligibility requirements for TSAA are more stringent than the eligibility requirements for a Pell Grant, so fewer students qualify for and receive TSAA compared to Pell.

[15] For more information about the TELS program, please see the Glossary in **Appendix A**.

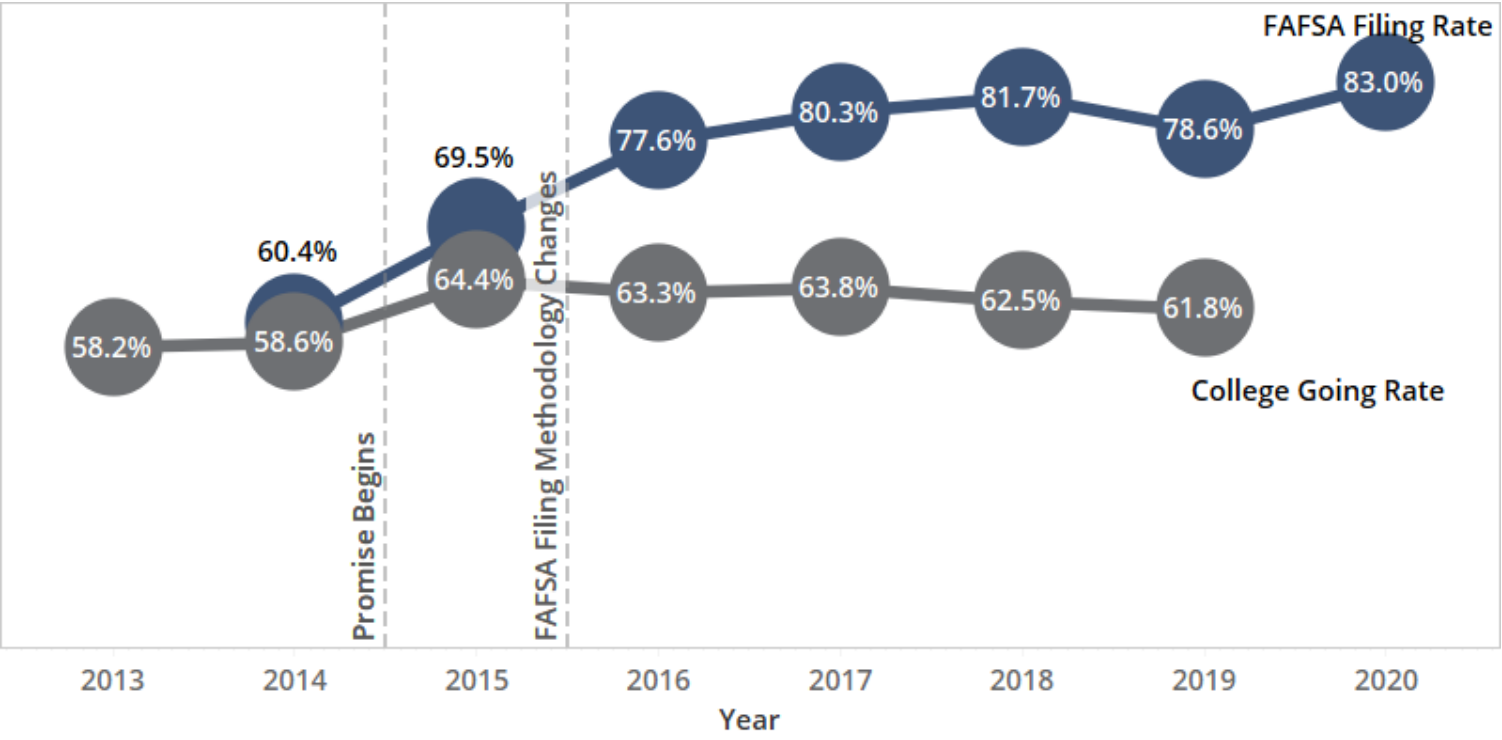
Section 4:

Tennessee Promise Outcomes

Impact on Students

Figure 4 displays Tennessee's FAFSA-filing and college-going rates. The first dashed line represents the implementation of Tennessee Promise in 2015, and the second dashed line represents a change in the methods for calculating the FAFSA-filing rate.[16] The college-going rate reflects the share of public high school graduates who enroll at a postsecondary institution in the summer or fall semester immediately after high school graduation. This figure shows all public high school students.

Figure 4: Tennessee FAFSA-Filing and College-Going Rates[17]



[16] Previously, the FAFSA-filing rate included first-time filers 18 and younger. Beginning in 2016, the FAFSA-filing rate includes first-time filers 19 and younger. Due to the change in methodology, the FAFSA-filing rates for 2016-2018 are not directly comparable to previous years.

[17] Fall 2020 data used to calculate the college-going rate is unavailable at the time of this report's release.

Figure 5 displays the credit hours attempted and earned by each cohort in the first semester they enrolled.[18] Tennessee Promise students are required to enroll in at least 12 hours to maintain scholarship eligibility. Cohorts 1-5 have averaged 13.8 hours attempted overall.

[18] Credit hour analyses here are limited to students who enrolled with Tennessee Promise at a community college or university.

Figure 5: Hours Attempted and Earned (Including 0 Hours Earned) in First Semester, by Cohort[19]

Figure 6 below shows the same figure as above, excluding observations where the hours earned in the first semester were zero. Zero credit hour earners in the first semester may have been enrolled at the census date but did not successfully complete any credit hours that semester, potentially indicating a student who withdrew completely prior to the end of the semester. This figure depicts what credit loss looks like for those Promise students who earned at least one credit hour in their first semester. Excluding zero credit hour earners, the average Promise student loses about two hours of credit in their first semester.

Figure 6: Hours Attempted and Earned (Excluding 0 Hours Earned) in First Semester, by Cohort[20]

Retention and Completion

The figures below depict the success rates of Tennessee Promise students through their first three years of the program, limited to fall and spring semesters. The success rate comprises students who are still enrolled with no award, students who earned a credential and remain enrolled, and those who have

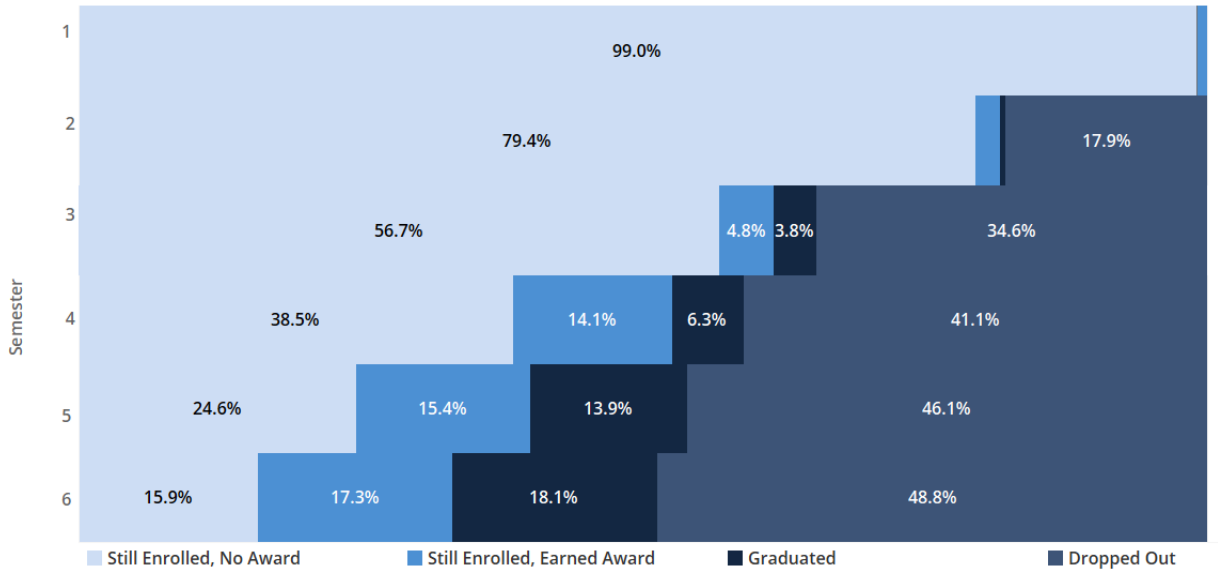
[19] Data are limited to enrollees at the public community colleges and universities.

[20] Data are limited to enrollees at the public community colleges and universities.

graduated. These data are inclusive of all Tennessee public institutions, including TCATs. Enrollment and awards data for private institutions are not included. Awards data include certificates, diplomas, associate's, and bachelor's degrees.

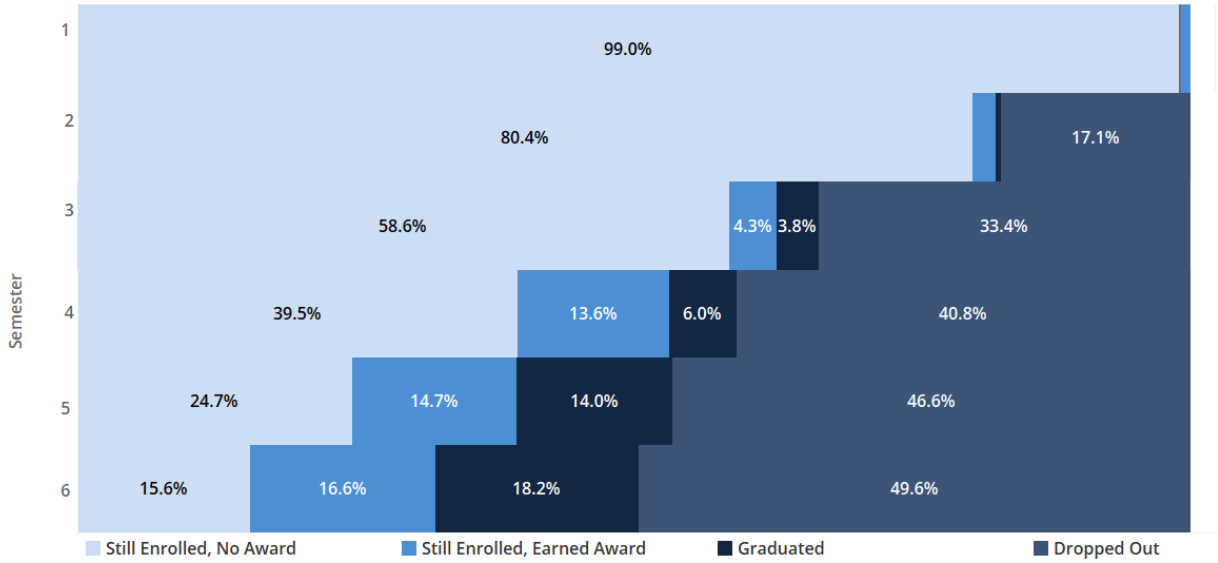
Each figure begins with the fall semester. Each cohort shows similar trends in outcomes by semester. The biggest loss of students to dropout occurs within the first year of enrollment. Completions begin as early as semester one, with students earning certificates. Large jumps in credential attainment occur at the end of the second year (semester 4).

Figure 7: Success Rates by Semester, Cohort 1



Notes: Semester 1 shows fall 2015 results, semester 2 shows spring 2016, semester 3 shows fall 2016 and so on. Data are limited to students who enrolled in the fall of their cohort year. Awards are noted as of the end of that semester.

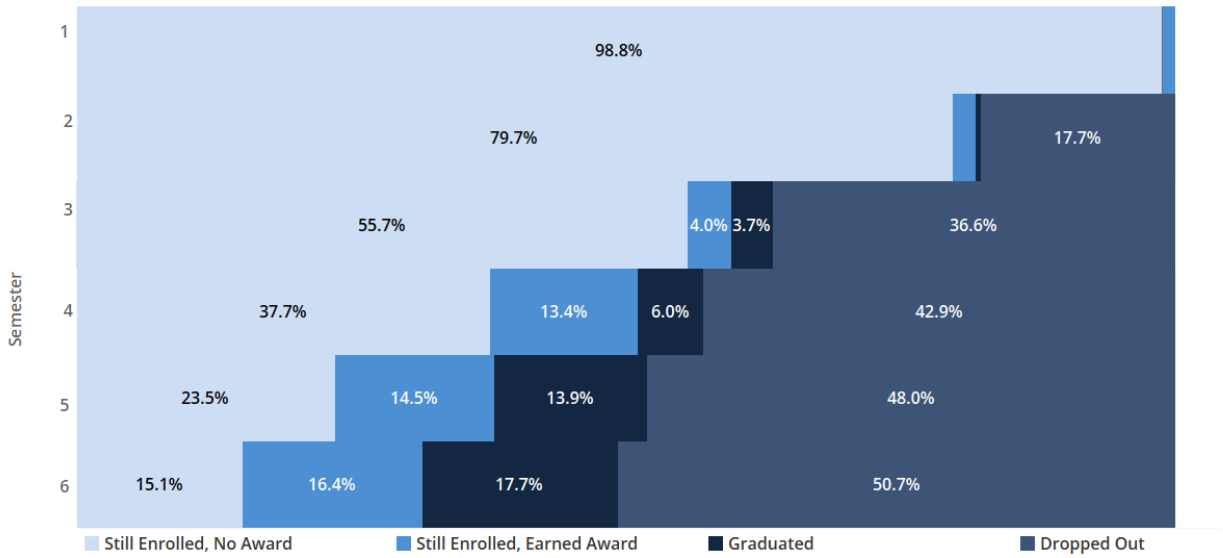
Figure 8: Success Rates by Semester, Cohort 2



Notes: Semester 1 shows fall 2016 results, semester 2 shows spring 2017, semester 3 shows fall 2017 and so on. Data are limited to students who enrolled in the fall of their cohort year. Awards are noted as of the end of that semester.

Figure 9 shows Cohort 3, which lagged the successes seen by Cohort 1 in terms of both graduation and retention and behind Cohort 2 for retention.

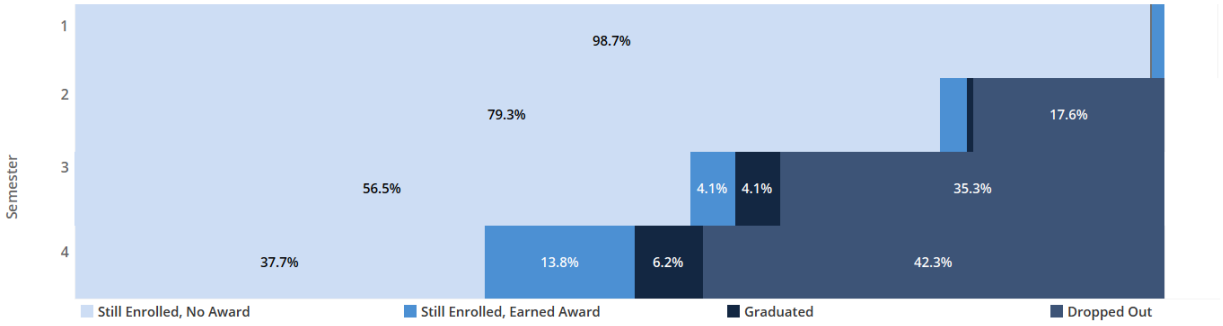
Figure 9: Success Rates by Semester, Cohort 3



Notes: Semester 1 shows fall 2017 results, semester 2 shows spring 2018, semester 3 shows fall 2018 and so on. Data are limited to students who enrolled in the fall of their cohort year. Awards are noted as of the end of that semester.

Figure 10 shows the success rates for Cohort 4, by semester. Cohort 4 remains eligible for Tennessee Promise as of this report and data reported are limited to the first four fall and spring semesters. Cohort 4 is succeeding at rates similar to previous cohorts, outpacing prior degree completions in semesters 3 and 4.

Figure 10: Success Rates by Semester, Cohort 4



Notes: Semester 1 shows fall 2018 results, semester 2 shows spring 2019, semester 3 shows fall 2019 and so on. Data are limited to students who enrolled in the fall of their cohort year. Awards are noted as of the end of that semester.

Transfer rates are lower for cohorts 2 and 3 than previously reported for cohort 1 at the same timeframe. We will continue to track transfer success to ensure all Promise students who wish to continue their education at a university are able to do so**.**

Table 8 shows the proportion of students from each community college that have transferred to a four-year institution, by cohort. Motlow State leads among Cohort 2 and 3 transfers to four-year institutions. Cohorts 2 and 3 have had more time to transfer than Cohort 4. Transfer rates for Cohort 4 will continue to increase as students have more time in higher education. Transfer rates are lower for cohorts 2 and 3 than previously reported for cohort 1 at the same timeframe. We will continue to track transfer success to ensure all Promise students who wish to continue their education at a university are able to do so.

Table 8: University Enrollment for Tennessee Promise Students by Community College and Cohort

	Cohort 2		**Cohort 3**		**Cohort 4**	
	Total Enrollment	% with University Enrollment	Total Enrollment	% with University Enrollment	Total Enrollment	% with University Enrollment
Chattanooga State	1,036	19.8%	1,058	12.8%	1,156	2.3%
Cleveland State	506	20.7%	514	14.0%	488	3.2%
Columbia State	1,126	24.7%	1,204	20.1%	1,247	4.5%
Dyersburg State	368	24.9%	331	21.2%	345	8.0%
Jackson State	757	21.0%	724	18.1%	713	4.0%
Motlow State	1,365	29.1%	1,402	23.9%	1,223	3.9%
Nashville State	1,049	17.9%	853	11.1%	849	3.4%
Northeast State	1,112	26.8%	1,161	20.0%	1,041	2.0%
Pellissippi State	1,798	23.6%	1,839	18.9%	1,901	5.9%
Roane State	1,005	21.3%	1,066	17.4%	988	3.6%
Southwest TN	1,107	17.3%	1,242	12.8%	1,259	2.9%
Volunteer State	1,452	18.0%	1,632	16.9%	1,576	3.9%
Walters State	1,172	20.9%	1,275	16.9%	1,180	3.1%
Total	**13,853**	**22.1%**	**14,301**	**17.4%**	**13,966**	**3.8%**

Table 9 provides a matrix with the number Tennessee Promise students from Cohorts 1 through 5 that each community college sent to each Tennessee public university through summer 2020. Pellissippi State has sent the largest number of students onto public universities (N=1,316), followed by Motlow State (N=1,224) and Volunteer State (N=893). Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee Tech University, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville lead among recipients of Tennessee Promise students, with each enrolling well over a thousand Tennessee Promise students to date.

Table 9: Tennessee Promise Transfer to Universities by Sending Community College, Cohorts 1-5

Sending Institution	APSU	ETSU	MTSU	TSU	TTU	UofM	UTC	UTK	UTM	**Total**
Chattanooga State	*	19	62	*	37	*	382	29	*	539
Cleveland State	*	33	25	*	31	*	139	50	*	278
Columbia State	37	6	392	17	79	9	88	71	68	767
Dyersburg State	9	*	14	*	10	83	6	7	121	250
Jackson State	28		46	12	7	165	12	12	183	465
Motlow State	23	12	819	26	230	*	58	42	14	1,224
Nashville State	123	8	154	66	62	9	22	24	37	505
Northeast State	*	741	13	*	37	*	8	32	*	831
Pellissippi State	18	137	97	*	102	10	73	874	*	1,316
Roane State	*	98	46	*	334	*	32	144	*	654

Sending Institution	APSU	ETSU	MTSU	TSU	TTU	UofM	UTC	UTK	UTM	**Total**
Southwest TN	24		39	18		449	8	14	20	572
Volunteer State	121	16	238	58	305	*	62	79	14	893
Walters State	11	406	27	*	35	*	25	180	11	695
Total	399	1,476	1,972	207	1,269	725	915	1,558	468	8,989

Table 10 displays the awards earned by summer of 2020 by each of the Promise cohorts. By this time, 46% of cohort 1, 42% of cohort 2, and 35% of cohort 3 had earned an award.

Table 10: Awards Earned as of Summer 2020, by Promise Cohort

	Cohort				
Degrees Earned	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Certificate only	12.8%	11.6%	10.5%	8.8%	2.7%
Associate's only	15.1%	19.6%	21.6%	12.7%	0.5%
Bachelor's only	3.0%	1.4%			
Certificate and Associate's	5.5%	4.5%	3.0%	2.0%	
Associate's and Bachelor's	8.0%	3.9%	0.2%		
Certificate, Associate's, and Bachelor's	1.7%	0.7%			
Certificate total	20.1%	16.9%	13.5%	10.7%	2.7%
Associate’s total	30.2%	28.7%	24.8%	14.6%	0.5%
Bachelor’s total	12.6%	6.0%	0.3%		
Subtotal (total % with an award)	**46.0%**	**41.7%**	**35.3%**	**23.4%**	**3.2%**
No award	54.0%	58.3%	64.7%	76.6%	96.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Section 5:

Program Finances

Program Finances

Tennessee Promise awards are funded by the interest generated from the Tennessee Promise scholarship endowment fund[21] and excess Tennessee Education Lottery funds.

Table 11 and **Table 12** depict the average Tennessee Promise dollars awarded in each semester since program inception. **Table 11** shows averages including students who were paid $0, and **Table 12** shows averages without $0 payments included. In each case, the average amount for the winter semester is substantially lower than other semesters because winter is a payment term only used for TCATs and select private colleges.

Table 11: Average Tennessee Promise Dollars Awarded Per Student, by Academic Year and Semester ($0 Payments Included)

Academic Year	Fall	Spring	Summer	Winter	Total Cost
2015-16	$521	$556	$903	$209	$15,169,156
2016-17	$576	$619	$1,054	$249	$25,106,165
2017-18	$580	$607	$664	$244	$28,142,509
2018-19	$579	$604	$423	$251	$28,739,786
2019-20	$593	$614	$730	$259	$32,112,038

Table 12: Average Tennessee Promise Dollars Awarded Per Student, by Academic Year and Semester ($0 Payments Excluded)

Academic Year	Fall	Spring	Summer	Winter	Total Cost
2015-16	$985	$927	$1,072	$504	$15,169,156
2016-17	$1,035	$1,010	$1,160	$531	$25,106,165
2017-18	$1,071	$1,032	$1,058	$569	$28,142,509
2018-19	$1,089	$1,057	$965	$598	$28,739,786
2019-20	$1,127	$1,094	$869	$622	$32,112,038

[21] The Tennessee Promise scholarship endowment fund was created by T.C.A. § 49-4-708(d).

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary

Locally Governed Institution (LGI): There are six public universities in Tennessee that have a local governing board. The six institutions are as follows: Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University, and the University of Memphis.

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR): The Tennessee Board of Regents is one of the two public systems of higher education in Tennessee. The Tennessee Board of Regents governs 13 community colleges and 27 Colleges of Applied Technology across the state.

Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs)[22]: *There are 27 TCATs around the state that provide technical training in areas such as nursing, automotive technology, and industrial maintenance, and more.*

Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS): The Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship program is a collection of scholarship and grant programs funded by state education lottery proceeds. These programs are intended to provide financial awards to offset costs associated with pursuing postsecondary education (HOPE, GAMS, Aspire, Access, and Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, among others).

Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC): The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly to coordinate and foster unity within higher education. The Commission coordinates two systems of public higher education (the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee Board of Regents) and the six locally governed institutions (Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University, and the University of Memphis).

Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA)[23]: TICUA is a membership organization for Tennessee's private colleges and universities to work together in areas of public policy, cost containment, and professional development. There are currently 35 member institutions.

***Tennessee Promise Endowment*:** As stated in T.C.A. § 4-51-111(b)(3), a minimum of $100 million must remain in a reserve account to fund Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships (e.g., HOPE Scholarships). The transfers to the Promise Endowment account took place in 2014-15 (July through Oct 2014) in the following amounts: $312,542,000 from the lottery reserve, and $48,839,300 from TSAC's operating fund for a total initial transfer of $361,381,300.

Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC): The Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation was created in 1974 by the Tennessee General Assembly as a non-profit corporation with the merging of the Tennessee Educational Loan Corporation and the Tennessee Tuition Grant Program. Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) administers over 20 different state student financial aid programs, including the HOPE scholarship, Tennessee Promise, Tennessee Reconnect, Tennessee Student Assistance Award, and the Dual Enrollment grant.

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[22] Office of Education Accountability (OREA). Defining Tennessee Education: A Glossary of Education Terms. https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/collections/glossary.html#T

[23] Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA). About TICUA. https://ticua.org/page/about

The University of Tennessee (UT): The University of Tennessee is one of the two public systems of higher education in Tennessee. The University of Tennessee's Board of Trustees governs 3 universities (Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Martin), the Health Science Center, the Space Institute, the Institute for Agriculture, and the Institute for Public Service.

Appendix B: Tennessee Promise Application Rates by District, Cohorts 1 through 6[24]

School District	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Cohort 6
Achievement School District	90.1%	89.7%	91.2%	88.5%	78.4%	94.3%
Alcoa	85.4%	78.5%	83.2%	92.8%	97.6%	98.7%
Anderson County	97.9%	97.7%	86.6%	89.5%	90.4%	90.9%
Arlington	56.4%	91.7%	87.0%	98.8%	100.0%	88.6%
Bartlett	49.5%	43.1%	53.8%	67.6%	67.5%	66.7%
Bedford County	92.5%	89.1%	89.1%	88.9%	91.1%	89.9%
Benton County	90.9%	94.4%	92.2%	89.5%	95.2%	95.7%
Bledsoe County	82.8%	83.5%	56.4%	91.6%	95.9%	100.0%
Blount County	70.6%	67.5%	75.4%	83.8%	98.8%	91.0%
Bradford	100.0%	100.0%	86.1%	100.0%	100.0%	85.3%
Bradley County	83.1%	75.0%	82.6%	91.1%	95.6%	95.1%
Bristol	88.2%	76.0%	87.5%	90.6%	92.4%	92.2%
Campbell County	94.4%	90.2%	92.6%	90.2%	93.6%	92.6%
Cannon County	87.8%	85.1%	86.4%	95.7%	90.2%	91.2%
Carter County	94.0%	95.5%	88.6%	92.1%	95.6%	100%
Cheatham County	75.6%	83.7%	82.0%	84.4%	92.1%	91.6%
Chester County	100.0%	100.0%	95.6%	96.1%	96.7%	96.0%
Claiborne County	96.4%	98.5%	97.4%	96.1%	97.5%	96.5%
Clay County	100.0%	100.0%	96.8%	100.0%	98.8%	96.9%
Cleveland	78.6%	68.1%	72.6%	71.5%	91.4%	89.9%
Cocke County	89.7%	93.6%	99.7%	100.0%	94.6%	98.3%
Coffee County	83.7%	87.2%	85.0%	94.8%	94.7%	100%
Collierville	40.1%	54.0%	62.6%	68.8%	51.4%	68.0%
Crockett County	94.4%	93.9%	92.1%	93.7%	97.6%	92.3%
Cumberland County	76.2%	86.1%	85.4%	81.0%	93.9%	96.5%
Davidson County	86.7%	85.3%	80.1%	76.0%	81.0%	83.6%
Decatur County	100.0%	98.9%	98.3%	98.4%	97.5%	97.3%
DeKalb County	64.1%	66.9%	63.3%	61.9%	68.0%	74.7%
Dickson County	85.9%	80.8%	92.5%	98.1%	98.3%	95.9%
Dyer County	97.1%	95.6%	96.8%	95.7%	95.7%	96.1%
Dyersburg	89.8%	88.0%	94.4%	69.8%	96.8%	99.4%
Elizabethton	81.6%	83.6%	82.7%	88.8%	83.5%	90.1%
Fayette County	95.9%	98.0%	93.2%	92.8%	95.7%	95.2%
Fayetteville	96.0%	91.4%	97.4%	96.6%	95.2%	100.0%
Fentress County	97.7%	98.0%	98.2%	97.8%	95.2%	98.4%
Franklin County	86.2%	92.0%	89.9%	92.7%	96.3%	94.3%
Germantown	24.7%	42.0%	56.2%	51.5%	56.4%	55.6%
Gibson County	93.7%	94.7%	97.4%	98.0%	95.2%	95.7%
Giles County	96.9%	96.1%	93.1%	97.4%	97.4%	97.0%
Grainger County	96.4%	92.2%	95.4%	99.1%	93.5%	93.8%

[24] Students applying from private schools, or those without a school district listed, are not included in this analysis.

School District	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Cohort 6
Greene County	99.2%	97.4%	94.6%	96.1%	92.9%	94.8%
Greeneville	82.0%	85.8%	94.0%	90.6%	96.2%	94.8%
Grundy County	88.1%	96.7%	95.6%	94.9%	94.8%	90.7%
Hamblen County	91.6%	88.6%	90.5%	91.6%	90.7%	94.3%
Hamilton County	78.0%	75.5%	74.3%	77.1%	76.5%	85.2%
Hancock County	90.5%	94.0%	94.7%	90.0%	94.9%	93.4%
Hardeman County	97.0%	97.3%	93.1%	97.2%	98.4%	95.4%
Hardin County	92.1%	95.8%	97.6%	92.4%	95.6%	92.9%
Hawkins County	92.5%	94.3%	96.7%	97.2%	99.6%	96.6%
Haywood County	100.0%	91.0%	92.9%	93.3%	92.2%	92.9%
Henderson County	96.0%	98.1%	94.2%	97.5%	95.1%	98.7%
Henry County	46.3%	46.4%	84.1%	92.9%	95.6%	95.3%
Hickman County	93.3%	96.3%	96.6%	95.5%	96.0%	96.4%
Hollow-Rock Bruceton	100.0%	84.6%	87.3%	97.6%	95.6%	87.5%
Houston County	66.3%	72.1%	58.3%	64.0%	28.6%	87.1%
Humboldt	100.0%	100.0%	97.4%	98.4%	94.1%	85.3%
Humphreys County	82.4%	82.3%	83.7%	88.9%	97.2%	97.6%
Huntingdon	76.1%	67.0%	68.1%	74.4%	100.0%	96.9%
Jackson County	94.7%	89.2%	90.1%	91.3%	100.0%	93.5%
Jefferson County	71.3%	89.1%	89.0%	94.9%	95.3%	98.8%
Johnson City	53.2%	60.5%	59.9%	57.1%	62.6%	58.7%
Johnson County	92.3%	92.9%	94.0%	89.2%	92.4%	91.1%
Kingsport	73.8%	82.4%	72.2%	80.2%	75.6%	86.1%
Knox County	78.8%	80.9%	79.1%	82.0%	81.5%	87.0%
Lake County	93.0%	94.8%	96.2%	100.0%	95.7%	93.6%
Lauderdale County	96.5%	94.3%	96.4%	94.5%	95.8%	91.9%
Lawrence County	89.6%	91.6%	92.6%	93.5%	96.3%	91.1%
Lenoir City	78.8%	82.9%	88.5%	94.6%	93.3%	92.0%
Lewis County	98.6%	100.0%	97.0%	95.0%	98.2%	91.9%
Lincoln County	88.0%	82.0%	96.7%	97.3%	92.3%	93.3%
Loudon County	76.3%	81.5%	83.2%	91.8%	91.2%	90.2%
Macon County	95.2%	97.8%	95.1%	94.1%	95.9%	94.7%
Madison County	100.0%	100.0%	89.8%	90.0%	93.7%	90.3%
Marion County	94.3%	93.3%	89.2%	94.9%	89.7%	95.9%
Marshall County	83.7%	85.8%	92.8%	97.1%	96.3%	95.8%
Maryville	70.0%	73.0%	80.4%	90.3%	86.7%	92.8%
Maury County	90.7%	93.3%	93.6%	97.2%	93.2%	90.8%
McKenzie	78.6%	86.5%	97.7%	82.0%	98.2%	94.7%
McMinn County	90.8%	90.5%	87.1%	81.9%	81.7%	87.6%
McNairy County	96.2%	95.1%	96.3%	98.2%	95.0%	94.6%
Meigs County	95.2%	100.0%	97.7%	95.2%	99.2%	97.0%
Milan	100.0%	96.7%	93.2%	94.8%	94.9%	95.1%
Millington	88.9%	88.2%	92.4%	94.4%	97.7%	97.0%
Monroe County	97.6%	93.3%	87.3%	95.6%	96.6%	94.8%
Montgomery County	74.0%	74.7%	71.8%	77.5%	73.4%	75.2%
Moore County	97.2%	92.3%	98.3%	97.4%	97.1%	96.6%

School District	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Cohort 6
Morgan County	85.0%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
Oak Ridge	74.5%	77.4%	74.0%	86.4%	92.0%	90.7%
Obion County	96.5%	97.0%	93.1%	93.2%	98.6%	97.6%
Oneida	92.4%	92.6%	97.3%	94.9%	98.8%	98.0%
Overton County	98.6%	92.1%	95.9%	97.5%	100.0%	99.6%
Perry County	99.0%	95.0%	98.9%	100.0%	94.4%	96.1%
Pickett County	89.1%	93.1%	90.9%	95.2%	97.4%	100%
Polk County	91.7%	93.0%	72.9%	77.1%	94.3%	96.6%
Putnam County	65.3%	69.1%	64.0%	76.6%	92.4%	92.8%
Rhea County	83.7%	74.2%	92.1%	82.3%	93.3%	94.9%
Richard City	86.7%	96.4%	100.0%	100.0%	84.2%	86.4%
Roane County	96.1%	92.3%	95.7%	97.0%	97.5%	97.0%
Robertson County	73.4%	75.6%	85.2%	85.6%	94.3%	87.9%
Rutherford County	72.3%	75.6%	79.8%	77.7%	84.8%	86.9%
Scott County	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.2%	96.4%	100%
Sequatchie County	86.6%	95.1%	93.6%	97.1%	93.4%	98.1%
Sevier County	84.5%	84.4%	86.3%	86.0%	93.7%	91.6%
Shelby County	87.3%	82.2%	86.3%	81.2%	87.3%	87.6%
Smith County	83.4%	92.6%	93.9%	83.3%	91.5%	90.0%
South Carroll	91.9%	93.5%	100.0%	86.2%	94.4%	95.8%
Stewart County	59.3%	66.0%	74.2%	89.9%	74.9%	100%
Sullivan County	93.2%	92.5%	94.2%	96.1%	94.4%	96.5%
Sumner County	89.3%	93.5%	96.3%	99.4%	98.5%	95.3%
Tipton County	97.1%	96.5%	93.8%	93.7%	95.7%	97.6%
Trenton	93.7%	93.8%	96.1%	95.6%	97.2%	98.9%
Trousdale County	98.7%	87.2%	91.3%	94.0%	96.8%	98.8%
Tullahoma	74.6%	72.0%	65.0%	62.2%	89.8%	91.2%
Unicoi County	93.0%	86.1%	97.0%	95.2%	95.6%	93.6%
Union City	98.9%	98.8%	39.8%	92.6%	87.9%	96.7%
Union County	96.8%	95.6%	91.8%	98.3%	97.9%	100%
Van Buren County	95.5%	78.7%	95.8%	100.0%	98.3%	96.6%
Warren County	98.4%	100.0%	95.8%	92.7%	93.9%	94.8%
Washington County	77.4%	83.4%	77.1%	79.2%	87.2%	88.1%
Wayne County	100.0%	97.8%	95.8%	97.2%	96.0%	95.2%
Weakley County	79.4%	61.7%	53.7%	86.9%	81.3%	73.7%
West Carroll	94.2%	97.1%	93.9%	92.1%	100.0%	94.9%
White County	93.4%	96.5%	96.0%	100.0%	100.0%	94.6%
Williamson County	53.6%	58.8%	54.7%	63.6%	73.8%	82.2%
Wilson County	96.1%	94.2%	93.4%	89.2%	86.0%	86.3%
Total Applicants	**57,692**	**59,374**	**60,443**	**62,403**	**64,249**	**64,073**

Appendix C: Enrollment Counts by Cohort and Institution

	Cohort					
Institution	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6[25]**
Community Colleges						
Chattanooga State	1,089	1,036	1,058	1,156	1,096	957
Cleveland State	442	506	514	488	644	591
Columbia State	1,004	1,126	1,204	1,247	1,324	1,251
Dyersburg State	300	368	331	345	377	415
Jackson State	690	757	724	713	803	742
Motlow State	1,350	1,365	1,402	1,223	1,442	1,322
Nashville State	1,151	1,049	853	849	843	896
Northeast State	1,085	1,112	1,161	1,041	1,019	1,003
Pellissippi State	1,756	1,798	1,839	1,901	1,866	1,812
Roane State	997	1,005	1,066	988	970	950
Southwest TN	964	1,107	1,242	1,259	1,143	1,140
Volunteer State	1,445	1,452	1,632	1,576	1,580	1,432
Walters State	1,096	1,172	1,275	1,180	1,228	1,060
Public 4-Years						
Austin Peay State University	322	584	615	818	589	947
Tennessee State University	55	48	41	21	33	41
Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology						
TCAT-Athens	98	65	86	68	95	101
TCAT-Chattanooga	95	119	100	132	139	161
TCAT-Covington	21	24	29	40	56	65
TCAT-Crossville	46	50	47	75	66	111
TCAT-Crump	28	41	29	68	73	84
TCAT-Dickson	127	135	177	177	171	181
TCAT-Elizabethton	94	88	114	139	168	229
TCAT-Harriman	62	79	87	83	99	113
TCAT-Hartsville	75	90	103	108	78	85
TCAT-Hohenwald	100	62	74	90	94	103
TCAT-Jacksboro	39	35	34	66	90	72
TCAT-Jackson	57	57	47	59	82	96
TCAT-Knoxville	204	226	202	180	165	473
TCAT-Livingston	97	91	95	98	99	93
TCAT-McKenzie	33	40	25	28	35	47
TCAT-McMinnville	51	32	36	42	57	71
TCAT-Memphis	143	98	93	90	150	108
TCAT-Morristown	140	148	173	214	259	276
TCAT-Murfreesboro	107	102	107	126	180	189
TCAT-Nashville	103	118	140	194	175	221
TCAT-Newbern	39	54	62	60	55	85
TCAT-Oneida	27	16	31	60	50	37
TCAT- Paris	34	35	28	48	59	56
TCAT-Pulaski	61	61	58	65	96	134

[25] THEC continues to verify cohort 6 data.

Institution	Cohort 1	2	3	4	5	6[25]
TCAT-Ripley	13	6	5	8	17	20
TCAT-Shelbyville	129	144	103	117	99	138
TCAT-Whiteville	15	22	16	20	23	25
Private and Proprietary						
Art Institute of TN - Nashville	23	*	*	*	*	*
Bethel University	24	29	13	29	48	61
Bryan College	24	18	26	13	40	65
Carson Newman University	27	53	47	87	99	45
Cumberland University	61	232	357	409	473	420
Hiwassee College	34	36	37	36	*	
John A Gupton College	6	7	10	7	11	9
Johnson University	*	*	*	13	6	27
Lane College	*	*	10	31	85	78
Lemoyne-Owen College	*	19	28	31	20	14
Lincoln Memorial University	11	14	24	11	16	17
Martin Methodist College	99	117	102	131	111	116
South College	69	77	129	175	209	227
Southern Adventist University	14	20	13	22	29	30
Trevecca Nazarene University	22	19	26	25	23	89
Tusculum University	*	6	10	52	94	138
Welch College	*	10	19	21	22	19
WM R Moore College of Technology	*	*	*	*	*	25