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**HASLAM BOLSTERS DRIVE TO 55 CAMPAIGN WITH NEW COLLEGE
COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOLS**
Advise TN to provide college counseling assistance to 10,000 students in first year

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam today announced Advise TN, a program to increase the number of students accessing higher education by providing college counselors to 30 public high schools and 10,000 junior and senior students across the state this fall.

The new initiative, administered by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), supports the state’s Drive to 55 campaign to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary degree or credential to 55 percent by 2025.

“As a result of Tennessee Promise, first-time freshmen enrollment has increased 25 percent at community colleges. We are changing the conversation in Tennessee around going to college, and there’s more we can do,” Haslam said. “Research tells us that having a school-wide culture of college-going – of students knowing that college isn’t only an option for them but it’s an expectation – is one of the best indicators of whether students will pursue higher education. This program will provide schools across the state with one more adult in students’ lives, focused on helping them navigate the transition from high school to college.”

Partner high schools will be selected through a competitive process based on a strong commitment to building a college-going culture. To be eligible for consideration, high schools must have a college-going rate that is less than the state average. For more information and to access an application, visit <http://tn.gov/thec/topic/advisetn>. The deadline for schools to apply is August 12.

College advisors are being hired and trained this summer and will be placed with partner schools in fall 2016. They will work alongside the school’s counselors, educators, parents and local partners to implement college-access best practices and foster the school’s college-going culture, devise creative approaches to reach and connect with students, and, most importantly, assist students and their families as they navigate the college-going process. Advisors will supplement, not replace, existing high school counseling staff.

“Advise TN will complement the programs that have emerged statewide through the Drive to 55 by providing more resources, time, and individual focus to ensure postsecondary access and success,” THEC’s interim executive director Russ Deaton said. “We are all looking forward to



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this expanded school-level collaboration and ensuring that Tennessee’s college enrollment continues to grow.”

Advise TN was included in Haslam’s 2016-17 budget with funding of \$2,455,800. High schools selected to participate in Advise TN are expected to develop sustainability plans to continue the program beyond initial state funding.

About the Drive to 55

In 2013, Governor Haslam launched the Drive to 55 to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary degree or certificate to 55 percent by 2025. As a result, the Drive to 55 has established the Tennessee Promise program, the nation’s first scholarship and mentorship program that provides high school graduates last-dollar scholarships to attend two years of community or technical college free of tuition and fees; reduced the number of college freshmen requiring remediation through the SAILS (Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support) program; provided free technical college for adults through TCAT Reconnect Grants; created Tennessee Reconnect + Complete to help more adults return to college to complete unfinished degrees; developed a more comprehensive state approach to serving student veterans; and leveraged technology to enhance classroom instruction and college advising.

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