



2026 Higher Education County Profile

Polk County

Education Attainment Rate (age 25-64)	County	TN
Adults with HS+	89.8%	90.6%
Adults with Some College, No Degree	21.4%	20%
Adults with Associate or higher	28.9%	40.4%
Adults with Bachelor's or higher	15.1%	32%

Socioeconomic Profile	County	TN
Labor Force Participation Rate	50.7%	60.5%
Share of Population in Poverty	13.3%	13.8%
Unemployment Rate	2.3%	2.9%
Population Ages 25-64	9,361	3,632,793
Rate of Population Growth (2023-2025)	1.3%	1.8%
Population Projections (2025-2035)	2.4%	6.9%
Median Household Income	\$60,227	\$67,097

● County ● Tennessee

Public High School Graduation Rate
79.4%
89.2%

College-Going Rate
51.8%
56%

First-Time Freshman Receiving HOPE
71.2%
69.1%

ACT Scores (Scores range from 1-36)
18.4
19.3

FAFSA Completion Rate
79.3%
75.7%

Note: 2024 Federal Public High School Graduation Rate and 2024 Average ACT Scores provided by [TDOE](#). 2024 College-Going Rate and HOPE Recipient Rate for Fall 2024 provided by [THEC](#).

Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Recipients

Scholarship	Recipients
HOPE Scholarship	90
HOPE with GAMS	11
HOPE with Aspire	33
Dual Enrollment Grant	103
HOPE Foster Care Grant	-
Non-Traditional Student Scholarship	-
Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant	13
Total Amount Awarded	\$885,766

Tennessee Student Assistance Award



183
TSAA-Eligible
FAFSAs Filed



101
Awards



\$209,336
Awarded

The TSAA is a state-funded grant program. This scholarship provides non-repayable need-based financial assistance to undergraduate students who are residents of Tennessee. TSAA Awardees must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment, at least part-time, at a public or an eligible non-public postsecondary institution in Tennessee and have a Student Aid Index below the eligibility threshold.

Top Colleges Selected by 2024 High School Graduates



1. Cleveland State Community College	28
2. Chattanooga State Community College	11
3. University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; University of Tennessee, Knoxville	<10
4. TN Private 4-Year Institution; Tennessee Wesleyan College; TCAT Athens	<10
5. East Tennessee State University; Middle Tennessee State University	<10

Top 5 In-Demand Occupations by Projected Annual Openings and Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) - Entry-Level Hourly Wage

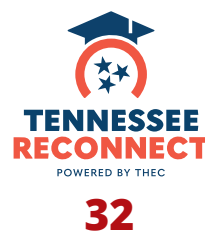
1. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$19.21
2. Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$15.45
3. Medical Assistants	\$15.03
4. Accountants and Auditors	\$24.15
5. Financial Managers	\$37.51

*Note: 2025 Top Occupations are identified annually in the **THEC Supply and Demand Report**, using data provided by TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development and TN Department of Economic and Community Development. This list represents the top five occupations ordered by the highest number of projected annual openings from 2020-2030. Entry-level wage data is presented with each occupation.*

Additional in-demand occupations in the LWDA can be found on THEC's website.



public high school seniors applied for Tennessee Promise in the 2023-24 school year. **27.5%** of those applicants enrolled as part of the Tennessee Promise program in the 2024-25 school year.



grant applications for Tennessee Reconnect were received for the 2024-25 school year. A total of **7** Reconnectors were served by Tennessee Reconnect Communities.



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designated VETS Campus(es) serve the county: Cleveland State Community College, TCAT Athens.



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school participated in the Electronic Transcript Exchange, which allows schools to submit transcript data to colleges for admissions and to TSAC for scholarship purposes.



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financial aid outreach hours spent in 2024-25 with **6** attendees. **156** students received multiple communications about state aid webinars and FAFSA resources.



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schools participated in Path to College, which provides resources and information to students, building a college-going culture in their schools.

Outreach Specialist

Rita Turchetta

Rita.Turchetta@tn.gov

Tennessee Reconnect Navigator

Whitney McLaughlin

Whitney.McLaughlin@tn.gov

Undergraduate Enrollment

