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**State Promoting *Finish the FAFSA Week*
Next Week in Big Push to Reach
Tennessee High School Seniors and Their Families**

Education leaders across the state are encouraging students to complete the FAFSA by March 1 to take advantage of Tennessee Promise

NASHVILLE, TN - The Tennessee Higher Education Commission is designating February 20-24, 2023 as "***Finish the FAFSA Week***," and is encouraging all high school seniors and their families to complete the FAFSA before March 1 to remain eligible for up to two years of tuition-free college with the Tennessee Promise.

Completing the FAFSA is one of the most important steps in making college affordable. Students who complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) are also more likely to enroll in higher education, persist in their college coursework, and obtain a degree or credential.

Tennessee students are currently lagging behind the FAFSA completion rate from previous years, at just 58%. In 2022, nearly 73% of Tennessee Promise applicants finished the FAFSA by the FAFSA filing deadline. This means Tennessee families are potentially leaving hundreds of thousands dollars of free financial aid on the table this year by not completing the FAFSA.

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission recently announced three big goals for 2023 to serve as a momentum-building year, with the first being increasing the college-going rate for the high school class of 2023 to at least 60 percent.

"Education and training after high school pave the way for students to access the career – and life – they want," said Dr. Robert Smith, THEC Interim Executive Director. "By completing the

FAFSA, students unlock important financial aid that supports their long-term career goals. We encourage every high school senior to complete the FAFSA before the March 1st Tennessee Promise FAFSA deadline.”

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission and Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation have provided a number of resources for students and schools to support Tennessee’s FAFSA completion efforts at CollegeforTN.org. [Student and parent resources](#) include step-by-step FAFSA-filing instructions and videos. [School resources](#) include guides focused on helping high schools strengthen their FAFSA completion numbers.

ABOUT THEC:

The [Tennessee Higher Education Commission](#) is relentlessly focused on increasing the number of Tennesseans with a post secondary credential. We pursue this goal by innovating for student access and success, creating a policy environment conducive to increased degree attainment, and protecting students and consumers.

For more information on THEC and the TN FAFSA Challenge, visit <https://www.collegefortn.org/tn-fafsa-challenge/>