



For Immediate Release

Monday, November 6

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THEC Announces Record-Breaking Year of Tennessee Promise Students

NASHVILLE, TN – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) announced today a record-breaking number of students applied for Tennessee Promise program in the most recent application cycle that closed on November 1, 2023.

Preliminary data for the High School Class of 2024 show that over 66,000 high school seniors applied for Tennessee Promise, an increase of 3.6% over the Class of 2023. Surpassing last year’s record, the Class of 2024 now holds the highest number of applicants since the inception of the Tennessee program in 2015.

“This is an exciting moment as record numbers of Tennessee students took the first step in their pursuit of a postsecondary credential,” said Tennessee Promise Program Director James Snider. “We are thankful for the efforts of our college access partners and professional school counselors in highlighting the program and encouraging students to pursue a brighter future. This news, along with increases in fall 2023 enrollment at postsecondary institutions across Tennessee, paints a compelling picture of the future for Tennessee students.”

The Tennessee Promise program includes a last-dollar scholarship that provides recent high school graduates the opportunity to complete an associate degree, certificate, or diploma program free of tuition and mandatory fees at a public community college, a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT), or a public or private university with an eligible associate degree program. As a last-dollar scholarship, Tennessee Promise funds the remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees after all other gift aid has been applied. The program pairs Tennessee Promise students with a mentor and support through the state’s partnering organizations, tnAchieves and The Ayers Foundation.

Each year, THEC produces a report outlining the impact of Tennessee Promise. The annual report presents descriptive data on Tennessee Promise applicants and students, student outcomes, student transfer behavior, and program finances. Today, THEC released the Tennessee Promise Annual Report for 2023 with several key findings:

- From the inception of Tennessee Promise in 2015 through spring 2023, over 126,000 students have been served by Tennessee Promise at public institutions.

- More Tennessee Promise students are enrolling at Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) than in any previous cohort. In 2022-23 cohort, 16.6% of Tennessee Promise students first enrolled at a TCAT.
- As of fall 2022, nearly 19,000 Tennessee Promise students have transferred to a Tennessee public university to continue their education. Over 41,000 Tennessee Promise students have earned a credential since the program began.

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The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, evaluates postsecondary education policies and programs in Tennessee while coordinating the state's systems of higher education, and is relentlessly focused on increasing the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential.