



Department of
Education

Updates

Jaime Grammer

School Counseling Manager | Division of Coordinated School Health

July 2026



DISCLAIMER

Generative AI Tools

The **State of Tennessee does not currently permit the use of Generative AI tools**, such as Otter, in meetings hosted on state resources. Meetings with contractors, vendors, and subrecipients are not public meetings and may involve discussion of protected state data.

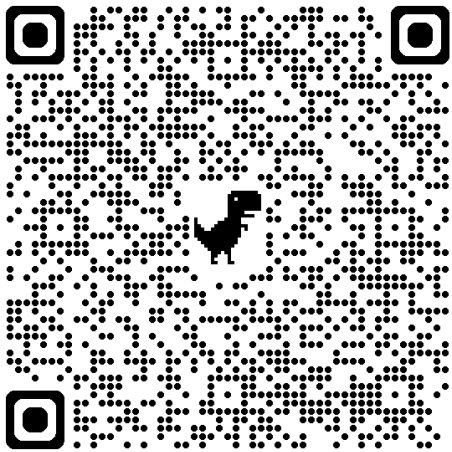
Generative AI tools are not adequately regulated and are designed to train on data that is collected and may misrepresent data or release protected data to the general public.

While the State supports your desire to maintain documentation of the meeting and what you learn, **please respect our decision to safeguard information** and do not attempt to use tools such as these. If you choose to use a tool such as this, the State will block that tool from the meeting.



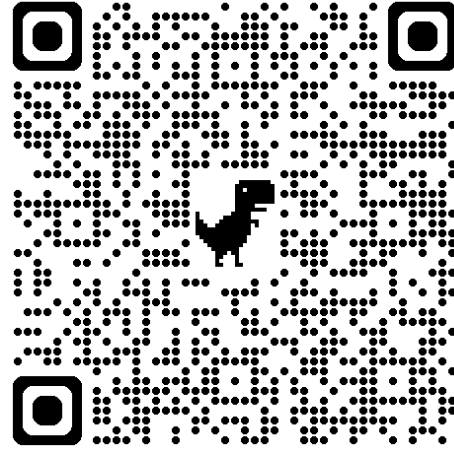
Resources

**Safe Haven
Instructional
Guidance**



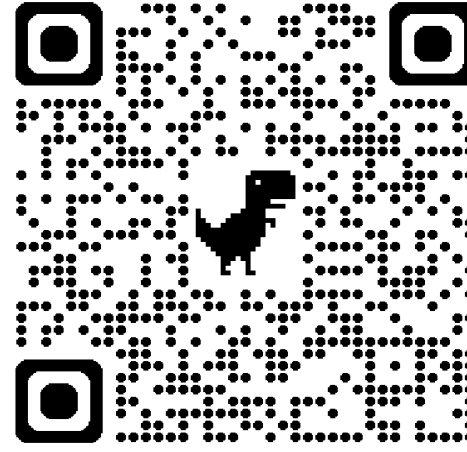
<http://bit.ly/4o8LDcc>

**Teen Social Media &
Internet Safety Quick
Reference Guide**



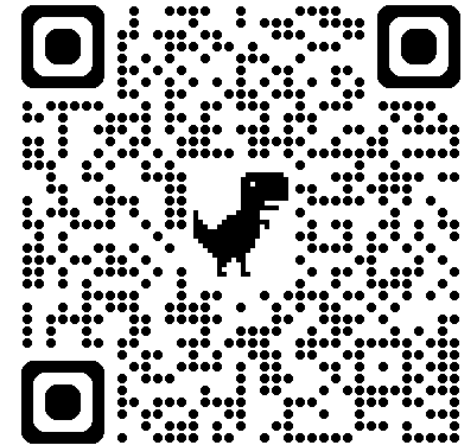
<https://bit.ly/43gPv1m>

**Vaping and Mental
Health**



<https://bit.ly/4vmmA8a>

**American School
Counselor Association
Information-Gathering Tool:
Suicide Concern**



<https://bit.ly/4uehABq>

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Stay Connected

- School Counseling Advisory Council
- School Counselor Regional Response Team
- School Counselor Teams Page
- School Counselor Connection
- School Counselor Listserv
- School Counseling Office Hours
- Regional School Counselor Collaboratives
- District School Counseling Supervisor Bi-Monthly Meetings



Professional Development Opportunities

- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Crisis Recovery Network
- School Counselor and Administrators Leadership Institute (SCALI)
- Fall Student Success Summits
- Spring School Counselor Collaboratives





Contact

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615.638.5235

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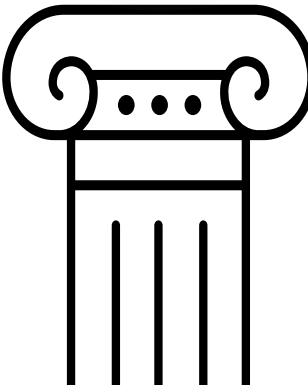
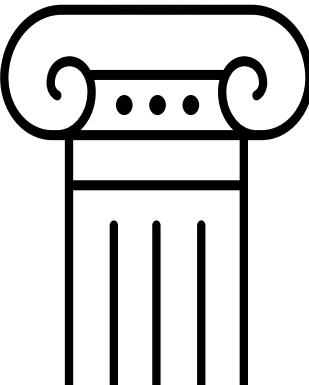
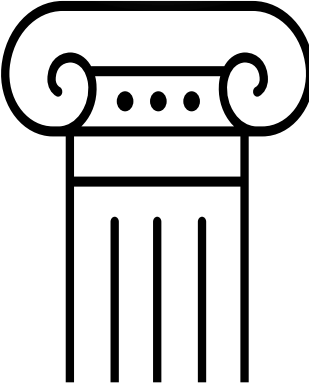
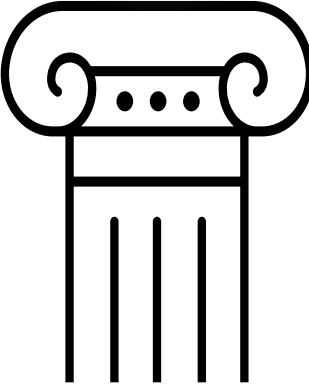
FutureReadyTN

Four Pillar Strategy

Postsecondary and Workforce Strategy Team



FutureReadyTN: Credentials of Value



Individualized Advising Overview

Individualized Advising helps students make informed decisions about their program of study and how their unique abilities and interests play a role in shaping society at large. Ensuring that students complete postsecondary education or training is critical to building a strong, skilled workforce. When students receive individualized support, the benefits ripple outward and lead to stronger communities, higher earning potential, increased community involvement, and an improved quality of life.



Individualized Advising

Key Actions and Milestones

- Build and expand the statewide network of career coaches across districts
- Provide professional development and certification opportunities for career coaches
- Standardize High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) advising practices to ensure high-quality support from 8th grade through two years postsecondary
- Ensure consistent and continuous advising experiences across all districts



Impact of Individualized Advising

- **Clear Direction:** Utilizes results from career assessments and aptitude tests to inform development of HSBP
- **Personalized Focus:** Intentionally identifying areas of interest can encourage earlier participation in early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs)
- **Lasting Success:** Custom strategies increase student engagement by connecting what they are learning in a classroom to their personal goals



Supportive Policies

- High School & Beyond Plan (HSBP) - [Middle Grades Policy 2.102](#) and [High School Policy 2.103](#)
- Key Components:
 - Begins in grade 8 and integrates aptitude and interest results into academic, career and postsecondary planning ([T.C.A. § 49-6-412](#));
 - Updated annually to reflect changes in students' goals and academic progress;
 - Includes required course mapping throughout high school, incorporating aligned Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, EPSOs, IC, and Work-Based Learning (WBL) to guide a student through two years postsecondary; and
 - Includes relevant information and important dates and deadlines for admissions, financial aid, and workforce applications, as well as enlistment information.



Pillar Goals of Individualized Advising

- Launch Career Coach Network to strengthen advising practices
 - Maintain a statewide directory of career coaches
 - Facilitate the Career Coach Advisory Council to elevate needs and collaborate on special projects
 - Build online repository of advising resources and tools



Pillar Goals of Individualized Advising (continued)

- Increase meaningful professional development opportunities
 - Deliver in-person professional development sessions targeting individualized advising
 - Offer consistent virtual professional development sessions as well as office hours to assist with career coach support and implementation of HSBP policies.
 - Collaborate intentionally with districts regarding HSBP implementation and advising practices



Career Aptitude and Interest Assessment

- [T.C.A. § 49-6-412](#)
- **State Requirement:** Tennessee law mandates assessment to support student career readiness.
- **Aptitude Assessment:** must be administered in 7th or 8th grade and will help identify students' strengths and related career paths.
- **Career Interest Assessment:** must be administered in 8th or 9th grade and helps to connect students' interests to career paths.
- **Purpose:** equip students with insights to develop HSBP.



<https://tinyurl.com/bdz86dmk>

Professional Development and Support

- Lunch and Learn Webinars
 - Monthly sessions focused on topics related to advising
- Summer Professional Development – CTE Institute
 - Monday, July 13, 2026
 - Farm Bureau Expo Center, Lebanon, TN

Career Coach Network Launch

- The Career Coach Network (CCN) is a centralized repository that enables career coaches, school counselors, and advising professionals to access high-touch advising resources in one place.



<https://tinyurl.com/5n7t98c2>





Questions?

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Senior Manager of Individualized Advising

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Join Our Newsletter



<https://shorturl.at/mjNQM>

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TN Path to College Registration is Open!

Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to register for 2026-2027 Path to College Resources



<https://bit.ly/4g6UuZY>





Tennessee Higher
Education Commission

News and Updates



Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) Contacts

Dustin Rawls
Asst. Director of
Statewide Services

Mark Photivihok
Direct Admissions
Manager



THEC Information

Formed in 1967, THEC is the state's higher education coordinating board and is responsible for an array of duties under state statute including:

- administration of the outcomes-based funding formula;
- approves all new academic degree programs;
- develops the state master plan for higher education,
- serves as the hub for postsecondary data analysis and research;
- authorizes and regulates proprietary institutions
- serves as the state approving agency for veteran education benefits,
- administers over twenty state student financial aid programs and over \$500 million in state aid;
- provides College Access outreach and training to students, families, and staff; and
- consults with postsecondary financial aid offices to improve program effectiveness, compliance, and efficiency.

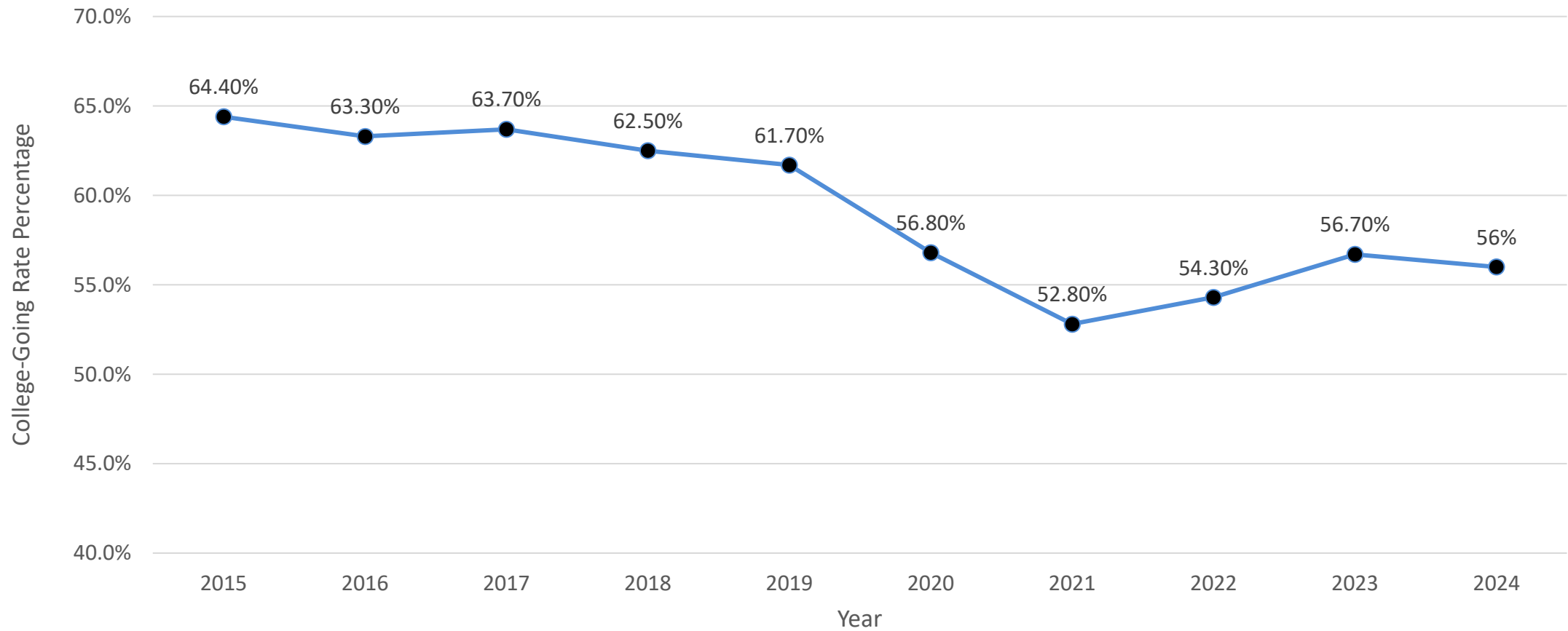


College Access and Outreach Bureau

- GEAR UP TN
- Advise TN
- Statewide Services
- Outreach Team
- Navigate Reconnect
- CollegeforTN.org



Tennessee Statewide College-Going Rate (2015-2024)

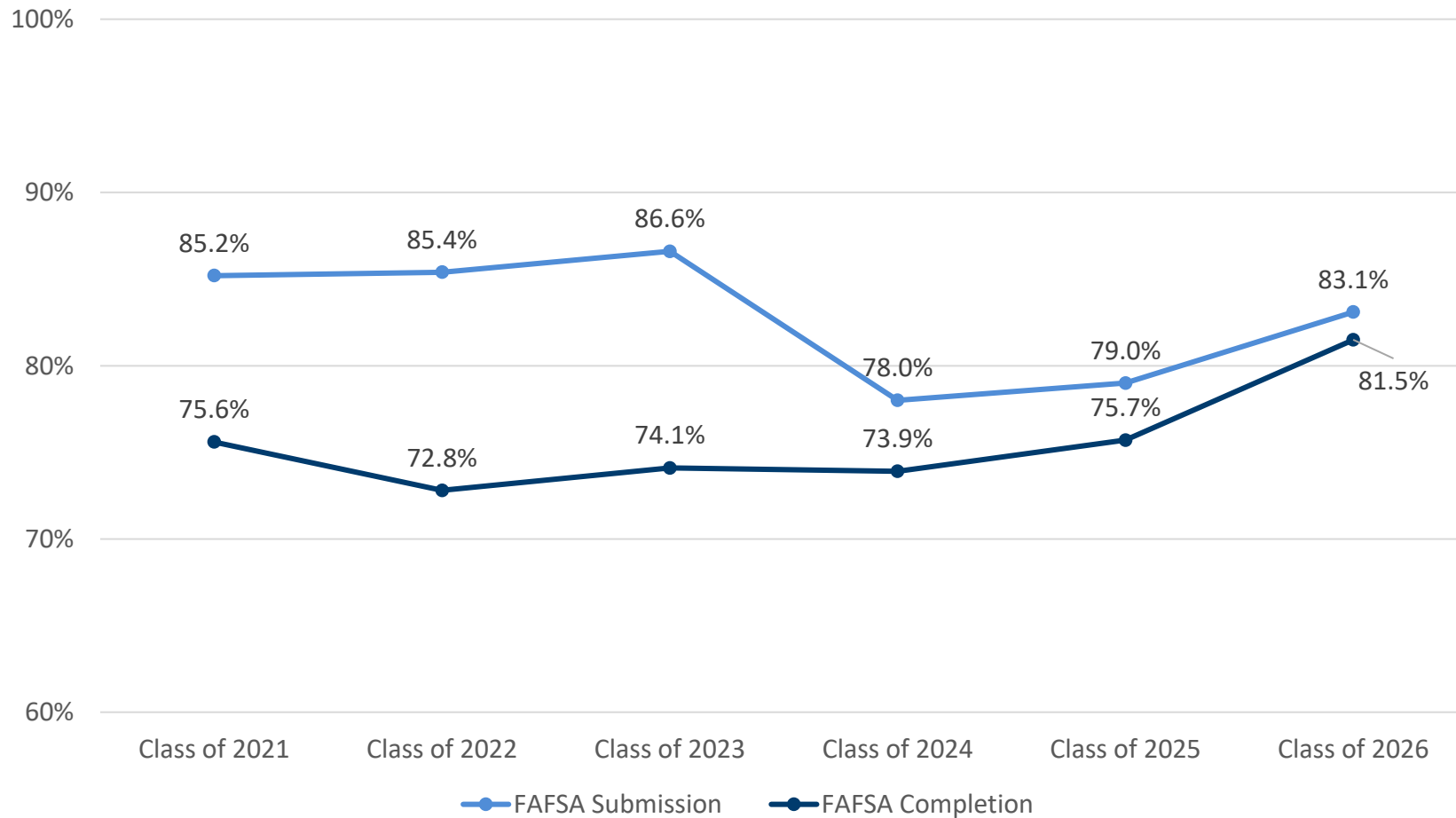


2026-2027 FAFSA Completions

- Through April 1, the Tennessee Promise FAFSA deadline, **81.5% of Tennessee Promise applicants** have completed a FAFSA.
- There have been **48,539 FAFSAs completed and 49,485 FAFSAs submitted** by Tennessee Promise applicants.
- Tennessee is currently second in the nation in overall FAFSA completion according to NCAN's FAFSA tracker.



FAFSA Filing Among TN Promise Applicants - April 1 Deadline





HOW WILL I PAY FOR COLLEGE?

There is money available to help you pay for college. Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the first step on the path to federal and state aid. Learn how to complete the FAFSA at the link below.

[Complete The FAFSA!](#)

CollegeForTN.org

Tennessee's College and Career Website

- College Finder
- Career Finder
- Lifestyle Calculator
- Financial Aid Resources
- School Resources



Communications

1. Monthly Newsletter

- You are automatically subscribed when you register for Path to College

2. Webinars for TN

- Recorded live and posted on CollegeForTN.org/school/resources/educator/webinars

3. Coming Soon

- College Access Podcast



Next Guides

We now have a complete suite of Next Guides for K-12 available for download

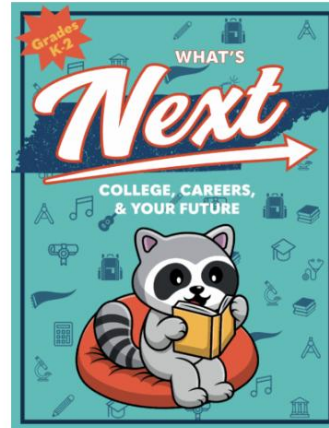
- Coming Fall 2026

Launch Guide:

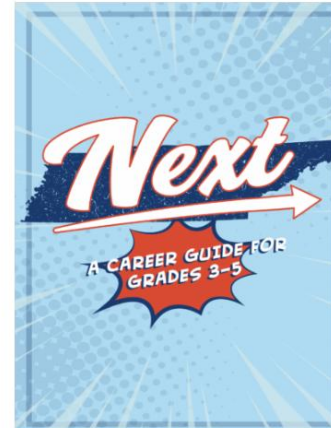
A Guide for Starting College



<https://www.collegefortn.org/next-guides/>



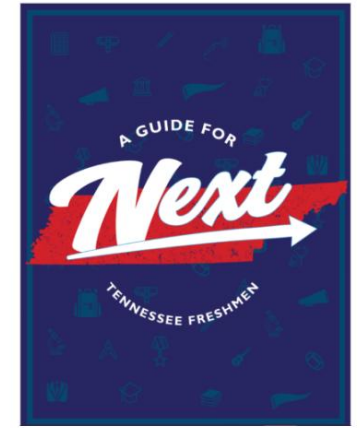
K-2 ELEMENTARY GUIDE



3-5 ELEMENTARY GUIDE



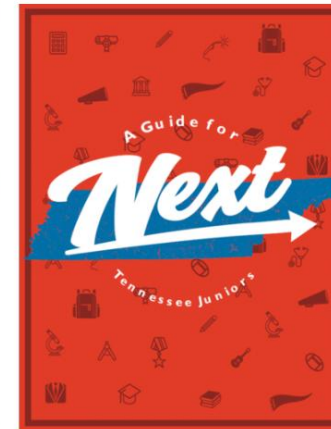
MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDE



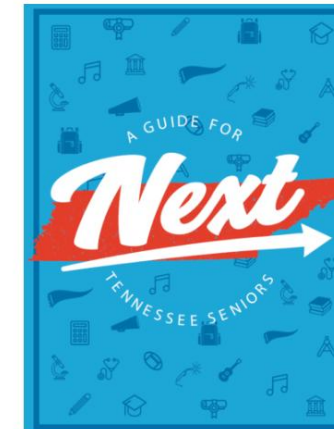
9TH GRADE NEXT GUIDE



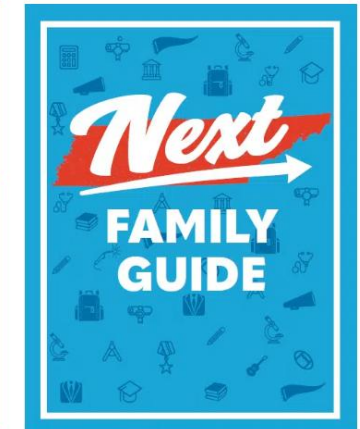
10TH GRADE NEXT GUIDE



11TH GRADE NEXT GUIDE



12TH GRADE NEXT GUIDE



FAMILY GUIDE

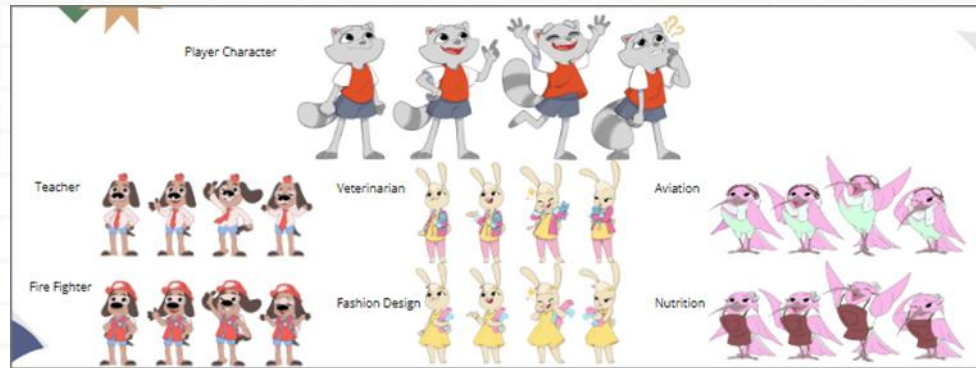


What's Next?

Elementary Career Game on
CollegeForTN.org

Fall 2026:
K-2 Version
Spring 2027:
3-5 Version

*In partnership with
ETSU's Digital Media
program (Digital Game
Design Concentration)*





TN DIRECT ADMISSIONS

POWERED BY TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION



Tennessee Direct Admissions

Goal: Simplify college admission by proactively admitting students based on pre-existing data, eliminating traditional applications and application fees.

Affordability remains a challenge, even with expanded college access from direct admissions programs in 15 states.

Tennessee's Direct Admissions program will be the first to combine direct admissions and financial aid in statewide practice.



Tennessee Direct Admissions Info

- **What It Is:** A statewide program offering admission to eligible high school seniors. No applications or fees required.
- **Who It Reaches:** Over 70,000 state aid eligible seniors in the class of 2027 (includes public, private, and homeschool students).
- **Participating Institutions:** Over 60 colleges including TCATs, community colleges, and public/private universities.
- **Launch Timeline:** Letters beginning to send in September 2026 and continue through the close of Tennessee Promise application and into December.



Participating Higher Ed Institutions

All TBR TCATs and Community
Colleges

Austin Peay State University

Bethel University

Bryan College

Christian Brothers University

Cumberland University

East Tennessee State University

Fisk University

Freed-Hardeman University

Johnson University

King University

Lane College

Lee University

LeMoyne-Owen College

Maryville College

Middle Tennessee State University

Milligan University

Southern Adventist University

Tennessee State University

Tennessee Wesleyan University

Trevecca Nazarene University

Tusculum University

Union University

University of Memphis

University of Tennessee at
Chattanooga

University of Tennessee at Martin

University of Tennessee Southern

Welch College

William R Moore Technical College



Tennessee Direct Admissions Process

1. Senior receives letter with list of postsecondary options, institutional aid, and state-supported aid.
2. Student scans QR code or follows link in Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) Portal to claim their spot.
3. THEC provides student's data file to institution through FAST, serving as the official application.
4. Institution sends follow up email and needed items.
5. Institution follows up in Spring regarding matriculation details.
6. Student enrolls.



Statewide Launch Timeline

April 1, 2026 – Tennessee Promise application opens. It must be completed to be eligible for Direct Admissions

May 27, 2026 – Secure HOPE GPA verification opens. Collection of 6th semester HOPE Scholarship (TELS) GPA from high school counselors

August 17, 2026 – 1st round of data pulled for TN Direct Admissions letter generation. Mailing will begin to arrive in mid September

September 8, 2026 – 2nd round of data pulled for TN Direct Admissions letter generation. Mailing will begin to arrive in early October

October 5, 2026 – 3rd round of data pulled for TN Direct Admissions letter generation. Mailing will begin to arrive in early November

November 2, 2026 – TN Promise application closes. Final round of data pulled for TN Direct Admissions letter generation. Mailing will begin to arrive in late November



YOUR COLLEGE CHOICES

TECHNICAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGES

ALL TUITION AND MANDATORY FEES COVERED BY TN PROMISE

You have been directly admitted to all community colleges and TCATs in TN!
Here are the locations closest to you:

TCAT NORTHWEST

NEWBERN, TN

DYERSBURG STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DYERSBURG, TN

FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES

You are eligible for the following Tennessee scholarships at all your Direct Admissions universities!
TN HOPE Scholarship - \$4,500

AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY | CLARKSVILLE, TN

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP - \$6,000

BETHEL UNIVERSITY | MCKENZIE, TN

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP - \$12,000

BRYAN COLLEGE | DAYTON, TN

PLATINUM SCHOLARSHIP - \$5,600

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS UNIVERSITY | MEMPHIS, TN

30+ CLUB SCHOLARSHIP - \$21,000

CUMBERLAND UNIVERSITY | LEBANON, TN

TRUSTEE SCHOLARSHIP - UP TO FULL TUITION

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | JOHNSON CITY, TN

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP - \$5,000

FSK UNIVERSITY | NASHVILLE, TN

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP - FULL TUITION, ROOM, AND BOARD

FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY | HENDERSON, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - \$7,500

KING UNIVERSITY | BRISTOL, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - \$17,000

LANE COLLEGE | JACKSON, TN

LEE UNIVERSITY | CLEVELAND, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - \$5,000

LEMOYNE-OWEN COLLEGE | MEMPHIS, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - UP TO \$6,000

MILLIGAN UNIVERSITY | ELIZABETHTON, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - QUALIFY FOR AT LEAST \$15,500 IN MILLIGAN SCHOLARSHIPS

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | NASHVILLE, TN

TENNESSEE WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY | ATHENS, TN

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS - \$15,000

TUSCULUM UNIVERSITY | GREENEVILLE, TN

TUSCULUM LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP - \$13,000 FOR COMMUTERS/\$15,000 FOR STUDENTS LIVING IN DORMS

UNION UNIVERSITY | JACKSON, TN

PRESIDENTS SCHOLARSHIP - \$13,000 FOR COMMUTERS/\$17,000 FOR STUDENTS LIVING IN DORMS

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS | MEMPHIS, TN

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA | CHATTANOOGA, TN

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN | MARTIN, TN

CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLARSHIP - \$4,000

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN | PULASKI, TN

CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLARSHIP - \$4,000

YOUR COLLEGE CHOICES

TECHNICAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGES

You have been directly admitted to all community colleges and TCATs in TN!
Here are the locations closest to you:

TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY
BRANDON, TN

COLUMBIA STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, TN

FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES

AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY
CLARKSVILLE, TN

BETHEL UNIVERSITY
MCKENZIE, TN

BRYAN COLLEGE
DAYTON, TN

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS UNIVERSITY
MEMPHIS, TN

CUMBERLAND UNIVERSITY
LEBANON, TN

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
JOHNSON CITY, TN

FSK UNIVERSITY
NASHVILLE, TN

FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY
HENDERSON, TN

KING UNIVERSITY
BRISTOL, TN

LANE COLLEGE
JACKSON, TN

LEE UNIVERSITY
CLEVELAND, TN

LEMOYNE-OWEN COLLEGE
MEMPHIS, TN

MILLIGAN UNIVERSITY
ELIZABETHTON, TN

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
NASHVILLE, TN

TENNESSEE WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
ATHENS, TN

TUSCULUM UNIVERSITY
GREENEVILLE, TN

UNION UNIVERSITY
JACKSON, TN

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS
MEMPHIS, TN

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
CHATTANOOGA, TN

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
MARTIN, TN

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
PULASKI, TN

By claiming your spot
the school's choice
through this site you

TNDIRECT ADMISSIONS POWERED BY Tennessee Higher Education Commission

YOU'RE IN!

You have been admitted to college in Tennessee. Congratulations! Below, you will find information about your college admissions.

STEVEN'S COLLEGE CHOICES

The colleges on the next page have already admitted you through TN Direct Admissions! Keep in mind, you have been accepted to the college itself, not individual majors or programs which may have additional eligibility requirements. **Talk it over with a parent or guardian.** Research the schools listed and what skills and abilities could be gained from the programs they offer. **Which choice makes the most sense for your future?** When you're ready to claim your spot, scan the QR code.

EXPLORE COLLEGEFORTN.ORG

CollegeForTN.org is your one-stop resource for planning your future after high school. You can explore Tennessee's colleges, universities, community colleges, and TCATs and discover majors that match your interests. You'll also find tools to explore careers, learn what education or training each job requires, and see salary information for different fields. CollegeForTN.org offers step-by-step guides for applying to college, completing financial aid, and preparing for life on campus. Check it out today!

READY TO CLAIM YOUR SPOT?

Once you have reviewed your personalized list of colleges on the next page, simply

SCAN HERE



TNDIRECT ADMISSIONS
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave. 9th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243



COLLEGE ADMISSION LETTER ENCLOSED

Taylor Tennessee
123 Poplar Street
Anywhere, TN 54321

All offers of admissions and all financial aid estimates listed are based on the information you have provided or in your high school record and are contingent on earning a Trad High School Diploma, and maintaining any applicable eligibility requirements. While education and training after high school will always include additional costs or expenses beyond book fees, parking, housing, and meals, it is your responsibility to research and understand the costs of the schools you are considering. All offers of admissions and financial aid are subject to change without notice.

Tennessee's public and private universities offer a wide range of academic programs that prepare students for careers, graduate school, and leadership in their communities. These institutions provide a comprehensive college experience, with opportunities for research, internships, campus involvement, and study abroad. Students can pursue bachelor's degrees in fields such as business, education, engineering, the arts, sciences, and more. Universities often offer specialized facilities, expert faculty, and strong alumni networks that support long-term success. Most bachelor's degree programs take about four years to complete, and many universities also offer pathways to advanced degrees. Some universities also offer shorter programs, like associate degrees.

In addition to the state financial aid mentioned earlier, you might be eligible for even more financial aid from specific colleges. Below is the list of colleges you could attend, as well as any institutional scholarships available to you!

- **Austin Peay State University**
- **Bethel University**
 - *TN Promise Eligible: Tuition and Fees covered for associate degrees*
 - *Dean's Honor Scholarship for \$6,000*
- **Bryan College**
 - *Crimson Scholarship for \$2,500*
- **Cumberland University**
 - *TN Promise Eligible: Tuition and Fees covered for associate degrees*
- **East Tennessee State University**
- **Fisk University**
- **Freed-Hardeman University**
- **King University**
 - *Merit Scholarships for \$11,000*
- **Lane College**
- **LeMoyne-Owen College**
 - *Merit Scholarships for \$2,000*
- **Tennessee State University**
- **Tennessee Wesleyan University**
 - *Merit Scholarships for \$10,000*
- **Tusculum University**



Statewide Launch Next Steps

- Create awareness and legitimacy for Direct Admissions–
Materials will be going to the schools in August
- Promote TN Promise registration
 - Opened April 1st
- Send 6 semester GPAs
 - Upload Launched May 27th
- Advise and support students once they receive their letters
 - Transcripts and ACT Scores to institutions chosen





Questions

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TN Direct Admissions Project
Manager

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