

Annual Joint Report
on
Pre-Kindergarten
through Higher
Education
in Tennessee

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January 29, 2015

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MISSION STATEMENTS

THE MISSION OF THE TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission is the state's coordinating agency for higher education. Guided by the *Public Agenda for Tennessee Higher Education*, THEC oversees an array of finance, academic, research and consumer protection initiatives that promote student success and support the State's completion agenda for postsecondary education. THEC actively seeks to develop policy recommendations, programmatic initiatives, and partnerships that increase educational attainment in the state while improving higher education access and success for all Tennesseans.

THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The State Board of Education is the governing and policy making body for the Tennessee system of public elementary and secondary education. Its work touches all facets of education from accountability and evaluation to curriculum and teacher education. The State Board of Education's vision is to prepare all Tennessee children for successful post-secondary work, education and citizenship.

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OVERVIEW

The *Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee* complies with the requirements established in T.C.A. §49-1-302(a)(10). State law directs the State Board of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to provide a report to the Governor and General Assembly, all public schools, and postsecondary institutions and their respective boards. This report includes, but is not limited to, a discussion of the following **four areas**:

1. **Minimizing Duplication** - The extent of duplication in elementary, secondary and postsecondary education;
2. **Compatibility** - The extent of compatibility between high school graduation requirements and admission requirements of postsecondary institutions;
3. **Master Plan Fulfillment** - The extent to which respective master plans of the Board and the Higher Education Commission are being fulfilled; and
4. **State Needs in Public Education** - The extent to which state needs in public education are being met as determined by such board and commission.

This year's joint report highlights the progress made in education since the special session of the 106th General Assembly (2010), which included passage of the First to the Top and Complete College Tennessee Acts. Both Acts provide a framework for collaboration between all state systems of education, addressing the overarching need to produce a higher proportion of college- and career-ready graduates.

Change is a constant reality in Tennessee's upwardly striving education system. This edition of the *Joint Report* is published at a time of transition that is particularly significant in terms of education policy. Changes in executive leadership have recently occurred at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Board of Education, and the Department of Education. The 109th General Assembly has just convened for the first year of its two-year term. And in higher education, the policy landscape, which over the last four years has been shaped primarily by the Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) of 2010, is evolving to adopt Governor Bill Haslam's higher education reform agenda, collectively known as the "Drive to 55." In response, both the University of Tennessee and Board of Regents systems are weighing potential changes to their traditional business models that they believe are necessary to ensure affordability for students and the future economic viability of their institutions.

1. MINIMIZING DUPLICATION

Both the Board and the Commission have developed master plans^{1,2} to guide policy development and resource allocation in public education. The plans, while comprehensive, have sharpened the focus on standards requiring progressive student achievement from pre-kindergarten through higher education. The plans have also addressed the need to minimize duplication. The following highlights progress in these areas.

Tennessee Longitudinal Data System

Through the development of the Measure Tennessee Longitudinal Data System (TLDS), Tennessee has expanded its use of data to provide an information-rich view of student influencers and achievement. Multiple data sources are linked to inform stakeholders, guide policymakers, and support data-driven decision making. The data will allow for identification of areas where duplication may be present and subsequently minimized.

Development and implementation of Measure Tennessee was largely completed in 2014. The data team is now transitioning from project implementation to project sustainability. Recently, the data sharing agreement between the agencies was amended to include the Department of Children's Services (DCS) and the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), bringing to five the number of agencies contributing data to the warehouse. Data from these two agencies will be integrated with DOE, THEC, and DOL data in the current fiscal year. Finally, direct data access by approved partner agency personnel is in the testing phase and is expected to be completed by January 2015.

TLDS finalized the second annual release of the Tennessee Department of Education's (TDOE) Report Card which is available on the TDOE website. The Report Card includes information on student achievement, graduation rates, and ACT scores.

TLDS has also been involved with development of integrated data "dashboards" that provide information for state agency personnel, policy makers, and the general public. TLDS supplied data for development of the 9th Grade Pipeline which can be viewed on TDOE's website. The Pipeline illustrates Tennessee students' progression from ninth grade to graduation, post-secondary enrollment, and post-secondary completion. TLDS provided data for the Path to Education Attainment dashboard, available through the Department of Labor's www.jobs4th.gov website. This dashboard tracks earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment level. Finally, TLDS contributed data to the EduTrendsTN web tool which can be accessed at <http://www.edutrendstn.com/>.

¹ State Board of Education Master Plan, FY 2012-2020, <http://tn.gov/sbe/masterplan.shtml>

² The Public Agenda for Tennessee Higher Education 2010-2015, http://tn.gov/thec/Divisions/PPR/planning/master_plan.html

2. COMPATIBILITY

The requirements for high school graduation are compatible with the admission requirements at Tennessee public universities. In 2007, Tennessee joined the American Diploma Project network, which resulted in the implementation of the Tennessee Diploma Project (TDP). Utilizing the priorities of the TDP, high school graduation requirements were revised to better align with undergraduate admission requirements beginning with the graduating class of 2013.

Three years ago, the State Board of Education clarified high school end of course examination requirements. Students, who have successfully completed college courses, earning both college and high school credit, are eligible for exemption, except in the testing areas required to meet the goals of federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

To meet Tennessee college and university admission requirements, students must have high school diplomas or pass the GED test with scores that meet institutional requirements. Institutions determine admissions criteria, including required GPAs and ACT or SAT scores. The Tennessee Board of Regents requires degree-seeking students who have ACT subject scores below 19 in the areas of english, reading, and math to be placed into “Learning Support” for diagnostic assessment and appropriate interventions to address specific competencies needed for their chosen field of study. Institutions within the University of Tennessee System may establish specific placement requirements and placement exam threshold scores.

Tennessee high school graduation requirements are listed in **Appendix A**. Current high school course requirements for regular undergraduate admission in Tennessee public universities are listed in **Appendix B**.

3. MASTER PLAN FULFILLMENT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION [Master Plan: 2012 – 2020]

To prepare all students for successful post-secondary work, education, and citizenship, Tennessee seeks to be the fastest improving state in the nation. Tennessee will be known as a state that leads the nation in the development of a skilled workforce educated and trained by world-class teachers, leaders and schools comprising the strongest and most responsive public education system in the Southeast and in the United States.

In order to meet these goals, the State Board of Education (SBE) recognizes that it will require the involvement of many stakeholders, including parents and community members, teachers and school leaders, and business and government leaders. State board staff and departmental staff will make periodic reports to the state board on progress made toward attaining the following strategic priorities:

- I. Expand students' access to effective teachers and leaders
- II. Expand families' access to good schools
- III. Expand educators' access to resources and best practices
- IV. Expand public access to information and data
- V. Set achievement targets and measure success

I. Expand students' access to effective teachers and leaders

Driving belief: Tennessee students need great teachers and leaders who are focused on preparing their students for college and career. Our best teachers and leaders should reach as many students as possible.

In order to meet our goals, Tennessee education stakeholders must:

- strengthen the links between effectiveness, licensure and program approval;
- expand recruitment and supports for districts to hire effective school and district leaders;
- support districts in hiring effective teachers;
- expand the reach of our most effective teachers and leaders to access more students;
- support the implementation of best practices in teacher preparation including teacher assessment and meaningful internship experiences.

II. Expand families' access to good schools

Driving belief: Parents should be able to choose from multiple, high quality school options. No child should be stuck in a failing school.

In order to meet our goals, Tennessee education stakeholders must:

- turn around the lowest-performing schools in the state through the Achievement School District;
- help districts and schools that are not meeting goals create plans that lead to improvement;
- support the State Board of Education's work to adopt national authorizing standards in its role as an appellate authorizer of charter schools in districts that have a priority school on the current or last preceding priority school list;
- support and incent districts to build strong schools;
- increase families' access to high-quality school options including but not limited to traditional schools, charter schools and virtual schools; and
- support policies and initiatives that lead to increased meaningful parental involvement.

III. Expand educators' access to resources and best practices

Driving belief: Teachers need access to better professional development materials and resources to help improve their practice. The state must lead the effort to implement the Tennessee State Standards.

In order to meet our goals, Tennessee education stakeholders must:

- clarify the path forward on implementing the Tennessee State Standards and provide aligned resources and best practices to educators;
- expand districts' access to strong formative and summative assessments in tested and non-tested subjects;
- through the CORE offices, help educators access best practices from high performing schools and content experts to enhance their overall effectiveness and to improve their content delivery;
- ensure that Tennessee has a world-class Career & Technical Education program that graduates all high school students ready to succeed in college and tomorrow's careers;
- support programs and initiatives that foster creativity and innovation such as STEM, fine arts, and other creative endeavors;

- support teachers through meaningful induction experiences and professional learning communities as defined in the Standards for Professional Learning Policy; and
- support the recommendations of the Basic Education Program (BEP) Review Committee.

IV. Expand public access to information and data

Driving belief: Tennessee must ensure that every stakeholder has access to the information needed to demand a quality school system. Good data, not ideology, will drive the choices made at the state level.

To meet our goals, Tennessee education stakeholders must:

- build transparent data and communication structures that consistently communicate results to districts, families and the public with common terminology;
- drive higher volume of research through internal studies, build open-source data capacity, and encourage outside researchers to analyze our work; and
- communicate consistently and effectively with educators and families about the state of reforms, future plans and results.

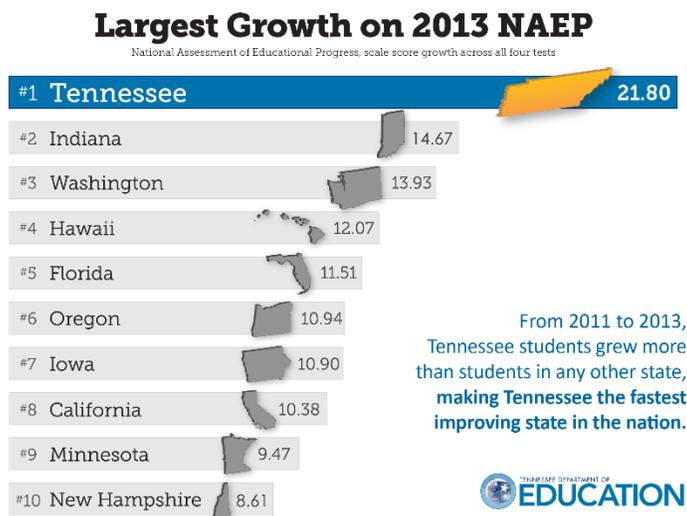
V. Set achievement targets and measure success

Driving belief: Tennessee schools and school systems can make incremental, yet significant, progress in student achievement to meet the goals and targets listed below.

Tennessee has made significant progress across multiple measures of student learning over the past four years. This progress must continue as we chart the next phase of work in partnership with educators and stakeholders.

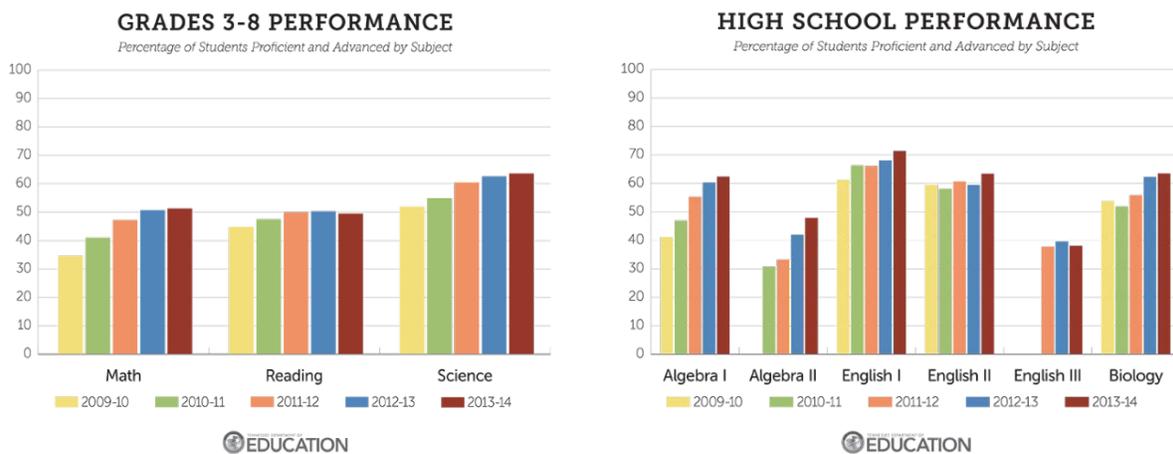
According to the 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) results, Tennessee students grew more than any other state in the nation on all four areas measured by NAEP.

Figure 1: NAEP Results



Since the end of the 2010-2011 school year, Tennessee students have shown consistent growth in almost all grade and subject areas on both TCAP and End of Course Assessments.

Figure 2: TCAP and EOC State Results



TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION [2015-25 Public Agenda]

Calendar year 2015 will usher in a new long-range plan that will supplant the *2010-2015 Public Agenda for Tennessee Higher Education*, which helped set the stage for transformational change in Tennessee higher education. The Volunteer State has been fortunate that its executive, legislative, and campus leaders have remained consistent and focused on the college completion agenda as the unifying framework for all state higher education policy discussions from 2010 to the present day. Stated succinctly, this agenda is to:

- make dramatic increases in degree production and efficiency,
- within available resources (state operating appropriations plus tuition),
- without diminishing educational quality,
- thereby improving community, county, and statewide postsecondary attainment,
- to support improvements in workforce capacity and quality as well as economic and community (i.e., workplace) development.

Accomplishments of the 2010-2015 master planning cycle

The Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) of 2010, and the accompanying *2010-2015 Public Agenda for Tennessee Higher Education*, which helped quantify, clarify, and define the CCTA for the state's higher education community, signaled the beginning of the college completion era in the State of Tennessee. A study underwritten by the Ford Foundation and recently completed by researchers from the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia (in press), found that a fundamental change in culture is taking place on most public college campuses in Tennessee. Institutional leaders now eye most decisions through the lens of college completion, whereas prior to the CCTA, primary institutional drivers might have been characterized as front-end access, continuing enrollment, and institutional prestige.

Upon looking back at the five year period beginning 2010 and ending 2015, the following accomplishments stand out in an era during which the higher education landscape was shaped by the CCTA and the *Public Agenda*.

- 1) *Adopted a new and narrower focus for statewide, systemic, and institutional strategic planning.* The CCTA called for a statewide master plan that would, first and foremost, hold higher education accountable for increasing the educational attainment levels of Tennesseans. Additionally, the plan must: address the State's economic development, workforce development, and research needs; ensure increased degree production within the State's capacity to support higher education; and use institutional mission differentiation to realize statewide efficiencies through institutional collaboration and minimized redundancy in degree offerings, instructional locations, and competitive research.

- 2) *Integrated institutional mission differentiation and state academic and funding policy.* The CCTA called on THEC, in consultation with the respective governing boards, to approve institutional mission statements that would help provide a basis for differentiating among institutions in terms of academic program planning and outcomes based funding. The weighting of performance indicators pursuant to differentiated institutional missions, was the key component of the outcomes board funding (OBF) formula that enabled a common set of metrics to efficiently incentivize an array of community colleges or public universities having a wide range of characteristics and aspirations.
- 3) *Implemented a public higher education funding system distributed solely on the basis of outcomes.* Beginning with FY2011-12, as directed by the CCTA, Tennessee became the first state nationwide to allocate state operating appropriations entirely on the basis of student and institutional outcomes. Tennessee remains the only state to have done so. As a result, system- and state-wide performance on the metrics weighted in the outcomes-based funding formula has increased annually, and individual institutions have responded by proactively examining campus policies, processes, and procedures for better alignment with the overarching college completion goal.
- 4) *Maintained Tennessee's 35-year commitment to Performance Funding.* Even with the overhaul of the THEC formula, the primary funding mechanism for public institutions, Tennessee's firmly-established and well-known Performance Funding program remains as a quality assurance counter-balance to the productivity-driven formula.
- 5) *Improved student transfer policies.* The CCTA amended state law to ensure commonality and full transferability between community colleges and public universities with regard to a 60 credit hour university tract consisting of 41 credit hours of general education instruction and 19 credits of "pre-major" instruction. This led to the collaborative construction of over 50 Tennessee Transfer Pathways by curriculum committees of faculty from UT and TBR campuses. The Pathways, which serve as curricular road-maps for lower division students who ultimately seek to earn a bachelor's degree, can be found on the web at www.tntransferpathway.org.
- 6) *Expanded lottery scholarship usage* by amending state statute relative to the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) program to ensure that TELS dollars will be applied to tuition charges for scholarship recipients' full-time enrollment in summer terms.
- 7) *Completed labor market supply and demand studies* to better inform institutions and the public about labor market growth trends, supply-demand gaps, and graduate earnings by institution, degree level, and "meta-major." These were undertaken to better inform academic program planning decisions by institutions and prospective and current students alike.

- 8) *Overhauled developmental math instruction.* The Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS) program, which began at Chattanooga State Community College, introduces the college developmental math curriculum in students' senior year of high school. Because the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Learning Support math program is embedded in a high school bridge math course for high school seniors who scored less than a 19 on the ACT math subtest, students who successfully complete the program can register for a college-level math course upon entering college, saving themselves up to three semesters of remedial and/or developmental math and some \$1,500 in college tuition. State funds have been invested to support a statewide scale-up of the program, meaning that some 13,600 high school seniors in 189 schools in 79 school districts are dramatically improving their readiness for college-level math.

Additionally, admitted students who do place into developmental courses in either the UT or TBR systems are now acquiring the Math or English competencies they lack more efficiently by enrolling in a gateway course that provides the necessary competencies on a basis co-requisite (or simultaneous) to their enrollment in the college-level Math or English course.

- 9) *Degree Compass:* Introduced at Austin Peay State University and currently being replicated statewide as funds and institutional capacities allow, this web-enabled technology combines students' historical course performance data with predictive analytics to academically advise students in course, major, and career selection in an entirely new way – one that is simultaneously proactive, intrusive, and non-threatening to the student. Coupled with default scheduling, this kind of technology-assisted advising is ensuring that students start and stay on track in order to complete their degrees more efficiently.
- 10) *Implemented a host of initiatives aimed at adult learners.* Tennessee cannot reach its *Drive to 55* degree completion goals simply by doing a better job of serving traditional-aged students. To succeed, the State must engage its 900,000 or so adult residents having some college but no degree. With Tennessee Reconnect, another component of the Governor's *Drive to 55* reform package, adults will be able to attend and earn a certificate at any of the state's 27 Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) completely free of tuition and fees. Additionally, THEC continues to engage institutions in a host of initiatives devoted to serving adult learners, including standardizing Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) policies and practices, providing technical assistance for interested adult-serving institutions, and developing a suite of employer outreach tools and incentives.
- 11) *Introduced the Tennessee Promise.* Landmark legislation passed in 2014 established the Tennessee Promise, which offers two years of tuition-free community or technical college to Tennessee high schools graduates. Tuition assistance is offered on a last-dollar basis, meaning the Promise will cover tuition costs not met by the federal Pell

grant or the state HOPE scholarship or TSAA grant. In addition to, and as important as the financial support, students are provided with an adult mentor who supports them throughout the college application process.

Looking to the decade ahead

For the upcoming master planning cycle, THEC will expand its planning horizon from five to ten years (2015-2025), based on the assumption that Tennessee's core postsecondary issues are unlikely to change fundamentally over the next decade. This next plan will primarily remain focused on improving the State higher education community's responsiveness to the college completion issues and initiatives at hand. This is advisable, given the limited resources and the amount of ground to be covered to achieve the degree productivity and efficiency gains required to meet the Governor's audacious goal for educational attainment – that, by 2025, Tennessee will have increased the size of its certificate- and degree-holding adult population from the currently-estimated 37.1 percent to 55 percent.

The following issues will bear explanation:

- Refining the outcomes-based funding formula to support current initiatives and policy goals, while acknowledging the concepts that will emerge from the systems' shared and separate deliberations regarding their financing models.
- Continuing to leverage technology and data in responsible and cost-effective ways, to enhance the education enterprise's ability to respond to policymakers' information needs, as well as support emerging policy initiatives like reverse transfer, transcript exchange, and online student advising services.
- Leveraging the power of potential partnerships with Tennessee's towns and cities, as well as the worlds of workforce and economic & community development.
- Realizing more fully the potential of competency-based education and all forms of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) in a responsible way to reduce students' degree costs and increase degree productivity and efficiency.
- Building on and expanding current efforts to respond to the needs of adult learners in order to better leverage the adult population's potential to assist the State in reaching its Drive to 55 goals.
- Finding meaningful and responsible ways to engage independent colleges and universities in the statewide agenda for higher education.

4. STATE NEEDS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

State Board of Education

In 2009, the State Board of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission identified objectives for the state's education system that were critical to the future of all Tennesseans. These measures align with the College and Career Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI) benchmarks as adopted by the Board and the Commission.

As a participant in the CCRPI, Tennessee was one of eight states funded by the Gates Foundation, Achieve, and Education Trust to develop a P-16 policy framework to ensure that standards and student learning assessments meet state goals. The CCRPI helps states put elementary and secondary assessment and accountability systems in place that will ensure that all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready. These benchmarks outline skill levels necessary for student progression in elementary and secondary education, and demonstrate the skills necessary for college entry or a career upon graduation from secondary education. Improved assessment and accountability ensure that curriculum is not duplicated and that students obtain the necessary skills before progressing. Appendix C contains 15 indicators that are categorized to follow a student's progression through K-12 and higher education and serve as a viable reporting framework for this joint report. Analysis of each indicator can be found in **Appendix C**.

Appellate Authorizer of Charter Schools

Public Chapter 850 of the 108th General Assembly established the State Board of Education (SBE) as an appellate authorizer for charter schools who apply to an LEA that contains a priority school on the current or last preceding priority school list as designated by the Tennessee Department of Education in addition to the SBE's role as the authorizer if an LEA sponsors a charter school. The law also required that the SBE adopt national authorizing standards in its work as an authorizer of charter schools.

To prepare for this work, the State Board of Education hired an additional staff member, a Coordinator of Charter School Accountability and Policy, to lead the charter school authorization work and dedicated half of the work of the General Counsel to these issues as well. Additionally, the SBE worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers to train the board members and staff on the principles and standards of high quality charter school authorizing and to develop a suite of authorization policies. The new policies govern the process that the SBE will use to handle charter school appeals, to ensure appropriate monitoring and compliance of authorized schools, and to establish guidance for renewal and revocation decisions.

The State Board of Education established a performance framework that contains academic, financial, and organizational benchmarks by which charter schools authorized by the Board will be evaluated on an annual basis. A charter school's performance on these benchmarks will be an indicator of the overall success and health of the school and its impact on the students, the teachers, and the community, and its performance will be reported in an annual report on the schools authorized by the SBE. Additionally, the State Board of Education's decision to renew or revoke the charter of an existing charter school authorized by the Board will be based on the school's cumulative performance on the framework.

In 2014, the charter school appeals heard by the State Board of Education were handled in accordance with national authorizing standards. This process included the establishment of an independent review committee that conducted a de novo review of each charter school application and held a capacity interview with each applicant. The review committee was made up of experts in the fields of academic programs, special populations, finance, charter school operations, and education law, and the committee was trained on its role in the appeal process and the scoring rubric to ensure objective and unbiased reviews of the applications. The review committee scored each application based on the Tennessee Department of Education's scoring rubric, and the committee produced a final report to the SBE staff based on their review and scoring of the application.

In addition to the work of the review committee, a public hearing was held for each charter school appeal in the district in which the charter school proposed to locate. The hearing gave the local school district an opportunity to express their reasons for denial of the application, the sponsor an opportunity to present their reasons why the local district erred in its decision, and the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed school. The review committee's report, the public hearing, and any additional information received on the record by the SBE staff informed the Executive Director's recommendation to the Board. In 2014, the State Board of Education heard six charter school appeals, and three appeals were from districts that contained a priority school. The State Board of Education affirmed the LEA's decision to deny the charter application in all six appeals.

In addition to the establishment of authorizer policies and the performance framework, SBE staff is currently working on formulating a draft charter agreement to be used in the event that the SBE authorizes a school. SBE staff has reviewed existing agreements from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, the Tennessee Achievement School District, and others to formulate this agreement. The State Board of Education will continue to prepare for the work of authorization by developing a start-up checklist, site visit protocol, charter school renewal guidance, and other procedures that are integral to high quality charter school authorization and in line with national authorizing standards.

BEP 2014 Recommendation for Improving Teacher Compensation

The 2014 Basic Education Program (BEP) review committee has priority ranked the following two recommendations as a result of this year's meeting discussions. Video archives for each of the meetings and the full 2014 BEP report can be found online at <http://tn.gov/sbe/bep.shtml>.

Recommendations of the Committee

The BEP Review Committee recommends that the full cost of 12 months of insurance premiums be incorporated into the BEP funding formula. The estimated cost of this recommendation is \$64.411 million. The committee became aware that BEP insurance premiums are funded on 10 months vs. 12 months, based on a March 2011 letter from the Office of the Comptroller. This recommendation was ranked as formula improvement recommendation #1 in the 2012 and 2013 BEP Report. The committee reiterates that school districts have always paid for 12 months of premiums.

In an effort to meet the goal of becoming the fastest improving state in the nation in terms of student achievement, the BEP Review Committee recognizes the need to create an environment that is attractive to highly effective teachers. Compensation is an integral component to creating this environment. Therefore, the BEP Review Committee reaffirms its support of Governor Haslam's goal of becoming the fastest improving state in teacher salaries during his time in office and increasing the BEP salary component accordingly.

State Board of Education Science Education Review Plan

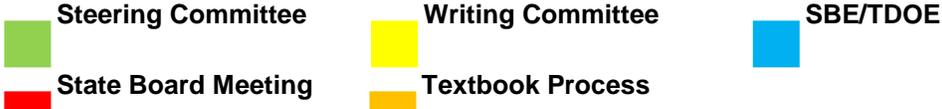
Current Tennessee Diploma Project (TDP) Science Standards were based on the *National Science Education Standards* (1996) and approved by the State Board in 2008 for implementation during school year 2009-2010. Although Tennessee has made slight gains in science scores on TCAP and end of course assessments, the Fordham Foundation characterized the K-12 science framework as a document that was clearly written, but highly disordered, confusing, and missing critical content in every discipline (physical, life, earth). The Foundation assigned the TDP Standards an overall rating of D. Tennessee needs a more rigorous set of science standards that better enable graduates to understand science concepts and employ practices (critical thinking, problem-solving) deemed essential for college and career readiness.

Therefore, the SBE and the TDOE have partnered to provide a process of revising Tennessee's science standards, beginning with the formation of a Science Standards Steering Committee to provide direction on the purpose and outcomes of the standards.

Table 1: Science Standards Committee Members

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members
Mike Edwards, Chair State Board of Education Member Knoxville Chamber of Commerce	Dr. Sara Heyburn, Executive Director of the State Board of Education
The Honorable Mark Green Senate Member of the 108 th General Assembly	Emily Barton Assistant Commissioner of Curriculum and Instruction Tennessee Department of Education
The Honorable Harry Brooks Chair, House Education Committee	Dr. Danielle Mezera Assistant Commissioner of Career and Technical Education Tennessee Department of Education
Dr. Joe DiPietro President of the University of Tennessee	
John Morgan Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents	
Dr. Thom Mason Laboratory Director of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory	
Dr. Sally Pardue Director Millard Oakley STEM Center, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering Tennessee Tech University	
Gale Stanley Tennessee Science Teachers Association (TSTA) STEM Coordinator Campbell County Schools	
Becky Ashe Principal, L&N STEM Academy Knox County Schools	
Katie Kendall Coordinator: School and Community-Based Support John Early Museum Magnet Middle School MNPS	
Dedric McGhee Instructional Specialist, K-12 Science Shelby County Schools	

Table 2: Timeline of implementation considerations.

K-12 Science Standards Revision Timeline	
December 18, 2013	Science Steering Committee meets to determine scope and vision for standards revision process.
February, 2014	Science Steering Committee meets to set parameters for writing teams.
February-March, 2014	TDOE and SBE recruit and assemble writing team members.
Early April, 2014	1 st Meeting of Writing Teams, orientation and scope of work defined.
April-June, 2014	Writing teams work electronically to develop standards.
Late June, 2014	Writing teams meet for vertical alignment of standards.
July, 2014	Stakeholders review of content.
August, 2014	Final edits and revisions made by writing teams.
September, 2014	Science Steering Committee meets to review and approve final drafts.
October 24, 2014	State Board of Education First Reading Science Standards (for implementation in 2016-2017 school year).
November-December, 2014	Public Review of draft Science Standards.
April, 2015	State Board of Education Final Reading of Science Standards (for implementation in 2016-2017 school year) Publishers provided with science curriculum standards for alignment.
Spring, 2015	Publishers submit bids for program materials that are aligned with standards.
Summer, 2015	Teams of TN K-12 teachers review textbooks and program materials for alignment with state standards, make recommendations, and notify textbook commission of committee findings.
Early Fall, 2015	List of acceptable science textbooks submitted for approval to the State Board.
Late Fall 2015 - Spring 2016	Districts review materials on approved adoption list.
April, 2016	Districts notify TDOE of science program materials they intend to adopt.
Summer, 2016	Districts purchase materials and implement with standards.
 <p> Steering Committee Writing Committee SBE/TDOE State Board Meeting Textbook Process </p>	

Tennessee Higher Education Commission

THEC oversees the implementation of several programs that will ensure students' academic preparation for postsecondary coursework and provide greater support for monitoring and evaluating postsecondary student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

College Access Challenge Grant

The College Access Challenge Grant (CACG), a federal formula grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, focuses on developing partnerships to promote college access and success. Tennessee's CACG program is designed to build on previous CACG successes and the state's current college completion-oriented policy environment. The program strives to address three areas of focus: expand statewide college access and success efforts, build capacity to meet college access and completion goals, and bolster *Go Back and Finish* initiatives.

Statewide college access and success initiatives include Path to College events that expand on College Application Week and College Goal Tennessee. Two such events are College Signing Days, a statewide initiative to promote and celebrate schools' college-going cultures, and College Planning Night, a program aimed at engaging parents with the college-going process. Another tool is CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee's comprehensive online postsecondary planning resource, which provides all Tennesseans with career, academic, college, and financial aid planning resources. Over the last year, the site has had over 220,812 visits comprising 3,370,154 page views. Using CACG funds, THEC is expanding the use and implementation of the web portal through robust educator professional development, creation of instructional resources and collateral materials, and increased alignment with Drive to 55 initiatives. In addition to Path to College Events and CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee hosted regional meetings with counselors, administrators, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders to bolster implementation of the Tennessee Promise Scholarship program.

To build Tennessee's capacity to meet college access and completion goals, CACG funds were sub-granted to the Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) for the creation and implementation of professional development opportunities, including at least one statewide conference. In addition to the work of TCASN, local education agencies, nonprofits, and postsecondary institutions are eligible for grants to implement strategies to increase the number of students entering and succeeding in higher education, with priority given to programs serving low-income, underrepresented students and families.

Finally, *Go Back and Finish* initiatives focus on outreach to adult learners, including the development and execution of coordinated adult outreach strategy in partnership with Tennessee higher education systems and institutions, and sub-grants to higher education institutions to develop or expand completion programs for adults.

Core to College

In 2013, Rockefeller Philanthropy Associates awarded a two-year Core to College grant to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in the amount of \$360,000 to fund execution of two projects: General Education Curriculum Alignment and P-16 Curriculum Councils.

The General Education Curriculum Alignment project began with the formation of faculty alignment teams to assess and align the K-12 Tennessee Academic Standards to credit bearing, entry level courses in english and math. Faculty teams created Core-Aligned Course Profiles for Expository Writing and College Algebra, both of which were piloted during the spring 2014 term at various institutions.

Eight regional P-16 Curriculum Councils were formed in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) Offices to promote better communication and relationships between K-12 and higher education regarding curriculum alignment. In October 2014, each CORE office received a \$20,000 mini-grant to continue the work of the P-16 Curriculum Councils and address alignment challenges unique to each region.

GEAR UP TN

In spring 2012, the United States Department of Education awarded a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in the amount of \$29,590,281. GEAR UP, a seven-year discretionary grant program, aims to increase the number of low-income, first generation students enrolling and succeeding in college. Tennessee's program, GEAR UP TN, began implementation in fall 2012, with direct services across the state beginning in January 2013.

GEAR UP TN sub-grants fund programs in 15 school districts across the state, providing direct services in 88 schools. The program is structured to serve approximately 7,500 students in the Class of 2018 (currently in 9th grade) and 5,000 seniors in GEAR UP TN high schools each year. The Class of 2018 cohort began receiving services in 7th grade and will continue to be served by the program through their first year of post-secondary education. Direct services provided to students and their families include academic support, mentoring, advising, college and job site visits, family engagement, and financial aid counseling. Sub-grant funding also provides for professional development for teachers, counselors, and school administration on best practices for creating and sustaining a college access culture.

During Year 2 of GEAR UP TN implementation, the program provided services to 8,111 cohort students, 6,257 12th grade students, 1,041 educators, and 18,951 parents and guardians. Each site also held kickoff events, which included students, families, and their collaborative partners in the local community. In June, approximately 200 GEAR UP TN cohort students attended the annual Youth Summit, cohosted by the Tennessee College Access Network and the Public Education Foundation. The three-day event was held at Belmont University in Nashville and was designed to expose students to a college campus and foster a college-going culture.

Latino Student Success Grant

In October 2011, the Lumina Foundation for Education awarded the Tennessee Higher Education Commission a Latino Student Success Grant aimed at increasing the number of Latinos completing higher education in Memphis. The Memphis Latino Student Success Collaborative directs its work using a three-tiered approach: public will-building through a community-wide Latino student success report card for Memphis and Shelby County, the development and expansion of college access and success programming including the Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) college access and success mentoring program, and the formal development of a community-wide collaborative focused on increasing Latino student success in Memphis.

During the pilot year, 91 percent of high school seniors served by Abriendo Puertas enrolled in higher education, receiving over \$250,000 in financial aid support. During the first full year of implementation, the program expanded to serve five high schools and resulted in an 88 percent postsecondary enrollment rate, with over \$1,800,000 scholarship dollars secured for students.

Race to the Top

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has worked closely with the Department of Education and State Board of Education on many initiatives in the Race to the Top program. THEC administered nine projects seeking to improve teacher training programs, increase Tennessee's competitiveness in STEM fields, provide accountability in teacher preparation, and expand P-20 data systems. While the majority of the grant ended in June 2014, THEC was granted a one year extension for work assisting teacher training programs in incorporating rigorous K-12 standards into teacher curriculum and increasing college access and success in Tennessee.

The Race to the Top projects housed at THEC have had a significant impact on the state in the following ways:

- 500 higher education faculty attended professional development designed to help incorporate college and career ready standards into teacher training curriculum;
- 2,000 higher education faculty and students utilized online resources created to prepare teachers to implement the Tennessee Academic Standards and increase data literacy;
- 43 K-12 STEM teachers were trained by the UTeach Program;
- 700 K-12 teachers received professional development from higher education faculty through STEM Professional Development grants; and
- 60,500 students and families were served by the Tennessee College Access and Success Network.

Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS)

In partnership with the Tennessee Board of Regents and Chattanooga State Community College, THEC is implementing a statewide initiative to reduce the number of Tennessee students that require mathematics remediation upon entering higher education. Funded by the Governor's Online Innovation budget, the SAILS program embeds high quality remedial math instruction in the senior year of high school, allowing students to address math deficiencies prior to entering higher education. Students who successfully complete the program are able to take college math courses, saving them time and money while accelerating their path to a post-secondary credential.

As of December 2014, nearly 9,200 students have successfully completed the SAILS program saving an estimated \$10.8 million in tuition by completing remedial coursework in high school through the SAILS program.

Tennessee College Access and Success Network

The Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) is a not for profit 501(c)3 professional organization with the mission of connecting college access and success programs with other organizations for the purpose of increasing the number of Tennesseans participating and succeeding in postsecondary opportunities. TCASN was established through a Lumina Foundation grant and expanded through Race to the Top funds. As the Race to the Top project comes to an end, TCASN continues its work to secure funding to sustain the work of the organization.

Since its inception, TCASN has awarded more than \$1.6 million in grant funds across 50 projects serving over 60,500 Tennessee students and family members. TCASN continues to boast a membership of over 160 organizations and to further the mission of creating a college-going culture in communities across the state by expanding and creating new college access and success programs, educating professionals, and facilitating statewide advocacy.

CONCLUSION

The 2015 *Annual Joint Report on Pre-Kindergarten through Higher Education in Tennessee* discusses the following four areas, as mandated by T.C.A. §49-1-302(a)(10): 1) the extent of duplication in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, 2) compatibility between high school graduation requirements and college admission requirements, 3) fulfillment of the State Board of Education and Tennessee Higher Education Commission's master plans, and 4) the extent to which the state needs in public education have been met as determined by the board and commission. Tennessee has made significant progress in each of these areas and has set up a robust system of collaboration between different levels of public education in the state. This collaboration has driven the State's goals of increasing the number of college-ready high school graduates and the number of college graduates.

This report demonstrates that the goals set by the T.C.A. §49-1-302(a)(10) are being successfully met. The goal of aligning high school graduation requirements and admission requirements of higher education institutions has been fully attained. Robust data collection across the P-20 sector allows for identification of the areas of duplication that must be minimized. A variety of programs, projects, and initiatives aim to serve the state needs in public education and achieve the specified goals.

The last five years have represented a half decade of astonishing achievement in Tennessee education at every level and in every sector. However, the state cannot afford to stand solely on its past accomplishments. Other states are now pursuing the same college completion agenda that Tennessee has embraced, resulting in competition for a well-educated, well-trained, and adaptive stock of human capital that is not only national but international in scope. Going forward, the aim of the Drive to 55 must be to produce not only an adequate number of postsecondary-trained adults to meet the challenge, but to ensure that we are educating and training students in the areas and at the levels that will be needed in the future. Furthermore, future graduates must leave our campuses with the full knowledge that they will likely return, perhaps several times over the course of their lives, as the world of work will require them to continually adapt and acquire new knowledge, via ever-changing modalities from an ever-expanding set of knowledge sources.

Achievement of the goals outlined in this report will require greater collaboration among all educational sectors to ensure that Tennessee continues to make strides toward increasing educational attainment, building social cohesion, and strengthening the economic vitality of the state.

APPENDIX A

Table 3: Tennessee High School Graduation Requirements

Previous High School Graduation Requirements	High School Graduation Requirements for Students Beginning High School in Fall 2009
TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED: 20	TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED: 22
MATH: 3 Credits Including either Geometry or Algebra II	MATH: 4 Credits Including Algebra I, II, Geometry and a fourth higher level math course
SCIENCE: 3 Credits Including one physical science course and Biology	SCIENCE: 3 Credits Including Biology, Chemistry or Physics, and a third lab course
ENGLISH: 4 Credits	ENGLISH: 4 Credits
SOCIAL STUDIES: 3 Credits	SOCIAL STUDIES: 3 Credits
WELLNESS: 1 Credit	PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS: 1.5 Credits
ELECTIVE: 6 Credits	PERSONAL FINANCE: .5 Credits
	FOREIGN LANGUAGE: 2 Credits FINE ARTS: 1 Credit May be waived for students not going to a University to expand the elective focus
	ELECTIVE FOCUS: 3 Credits Math and Science, Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, Humanities, Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB)
	CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE: Requirements to be determined by local Board of Education

Note: The graduating class of 2013 was the first cohort to complete these requirements.

APPENDIX B

Table 4: Minimum High School Course Requirements for Regular Undergraduate Admissions to Tennessee Public Higher Education Institutions

Subject Area and Units High School Courses Fulfilling Requirements Beginning Fall 2010	
<p>English <i>4 units required</i> English I, II, III, and IV Applied Communication substitutes for English III or IV</p>	<p>Algebra I and II <i>2 units required</i> Algebra I and II Technical Algebra (Formerly known as Math for Technology II)</p>
<p>Visual/ Performing Arts <i>1 unit required</i> Theatre Arts Visual Arts Music Theory Music History Vocal Music Instrumental Music Art History General Music</p>	<p>Advanced Mathematics <i>1 unit of geometry or an advanced course with geometry as significant component required</i> Technical Geometry Pre-Calculus Calculus Probability and Statistics Math IV Trigonometry</p>
<p>Foreign Language <i>2 units in same language required</i> Latin Spanish German Russian Japanese</p>	<p>Natural/ Physical Sciences <i>2 units required one must be a laboratory course in biology, chemistry, or physics</i> Biology I and II Physical Science Chemistry I and II Physics Principle of Technology I Ecology and Conservation of Natural Resources Principles of Technology II Nutrition Science Physiology Biology for Technology Science 1-A (Ag Science) Geology</p>
<p>U.S. History <i>1 unit required</i> U.S. History</p> <p>Social Studies <i>1 unit required</i> World History Ancient History Modern History World Geography European History</p>	

APPENDIX C

Tennessee College and Career Ready Goals and Indicators

**Note: Indicators are included in the State Board of Education’s Master Plan which is not updated annually. Therefore, target goals and indicators are not updated annually.*

School Readiness

1. *The percentage of 3rd grade students (spring) who score at or above proficient on the TCAP reading/language arts assessment; and the percentage of 4th grade students (fall) who score at or above proficient on the NAEP reading assessment.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
3 rd grade TCAP	42%	66%	73%
4 th grade NAEP	28%	39%	56%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

NOTE: TCAP was revised in 09-10 and was operational during baseline years.

2. *The percentage of 3rd grade students (spring) who score at or above proficient on the TCAP mathematics assessment; and the percentage of 4th grade students (fall) who score at or above proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessment.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
3 rd Grade TCAP	48%	64%	77%
4 th grade NAEP	29%	42%	60%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

College and Career Readiness

3. *The percentage of 7th grade students (spring) who score at or above proficient on the TCAP reading/language arts assessment; and the percentage of 8th grade students (fall) who score at or above proficient on the NAEP reading assessment.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
7 th grade TCAP	43%	56%	64%
8 th grade NAEP	28%	38%	55%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

4. *The percentage of 7th grade students (spring) who score at or above proficient on the TCAP mathematics assessment; and the percentage of 8th grade students (fall) who score at or above proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessment.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
7 th grade TCAP	29%	55%	76%
8 th grade NAEP	25%	39%	58%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

5. *The percentage of 8th grade students (fall) who meet college-readiness benchmarks of the ACT EXPLORE assessment in English, reading, mathematics, and science.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
EXPLORE English	65%	71%	75%
EXPLORE Reading	45%	61%	75%
EXPLORE Math	37%	57%	75%
EXPLORE Science	15%	46%	75%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

6. *The percentage of 10th grade students (spring) who meet college-readiness benchmarks of the ACT PLAN assessment in English, reading, mathematics, and science.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
PLAN English	67%	74%	80%
PLAN Reading	41%	61%	80%
PLAN Math	26%	64%	80%
PLAN Science	16%	49%	80%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

7. *The percentage of students who score at or above proficient on the TCAP end of course assessment in English III.*

Indicator	Baseline 2011-12	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
English III	38%	53%	78%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

8. *The percentage of students who score at or above proficient on the TCAP end of course assessment in Algebra II.*

Indicator	Baseline 2010-11	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
Algebra II	31%	46%	71%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

9. *The percentage of high school graduates who meet ACT college-readiness benchmarks in English, reading, mathematics, and science.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
ACT English	55%	68%	80%
ACT Reading	40%	60%	80%
ACT Math	24%	52%	80%
ACT Science	18%	49%	80%
Meet all four	15%	25%	50%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

10. *The percentage of first-time 9th grade students who graduate on-time with a regular diploma (longitudinal cohort method).*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
Longitudinal cohort graduation rate	82% (estimate)	90%	92%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education

11. The percentage of first-time college and university freshmen enrolled in only credit-bearing courses (no remedial or developmental courses).

Indicator	Baseline Fall 2009	Results Fall 2010	Results Fall 2012	Interim Target Fall 2015	Target Fall 2020
Prior year public high school graduates	60,494	62,357	62,376		
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES					
First-time freshman (Prior year public high school graduates)	14,331	14,706	14,528		
no remedial-developmental	11,226 (78.3%)	11,579 (78.7%)	14,454* (99.5%)	90%	92%
COMMUNITY COLLEGES					
First-time freshman (Prior year public high school graduates)	9,982	9,632	9,940		
no remedial-developmental	3,061 (30.7%)	2,779 (28.9%)	3,447 (34.7%)	37%	40%
TOTAL					
First-time freshman Prior year public high school graduates	24,313	24,338	24,468		
no remedial-developmental	14,287 (58.8%)	14,358 (60%)	17,901 (73.2%)	70%	80%

Source: THEC Student Information System

NOTE: High School students under the “baseline” or “results” category graduated during the spring of the specified year. The “first-time freshman” category reports the number of students who graduated during the spring and enrolled at a Tennessee public college or university during the fall of that same year.

* Four-year public institutions no longer offer remedial and developmental courses.

Postsecondary Access and Success

12. The percentage of high school graduates who have attained or are eligible for postsecondary credit through dual enrollment, dual credit, Advanced Placement exams and International Baccalaureate exams, or have attained industry certification.

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Results 2011-2012	Interim Target 2014- 15	Target 2019-20
Prior year public high school graduates	62,357	62,376		
AP subject exam score ≥ 3	3,473 (5.6%)	5,239* (8.4%)	TBD	TBD
Any Dual Enrollment	5,811 (9.3%)	6,449 (10.3%)	TBD	TBD
Both AP and Dual Enrollment	1,215 (2.0%)	1,450* (2.3%)	5%	10%
Either AP or Dual Enrollment	9,771 (15.7%)	11,632* (18.7%)	20%	25%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education.

*Data was unavailable. Entries represent student rates from the prior year.

13. The percentage of recent public high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education.

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Results 2011-12	Interim Target 2014- 15	Target 2019-20
TN public high school graduates	62,357	62,376	TBD	TBD
Enrolling in Postsecondary	35,601 (57.1%)	36,708 (58.9%)	60%	65%

Source: THEC Student Information System.

14. *The percentage of recent public high school graduates who successfully complete one year of postsecondary education, including industry certification.*

Indicator	Baseline 2008-09	Results 2009-10	Results 2010-11 (School Year 2007-2008)	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019- 20
TN public high school graduates	50,396	56,718	57,387	TBD	TBD
TN Community Colleges	6,031 (12.0%)	6,494 (11.5%)	9,091 (15.8%)	TBD	TBD
TN Public Universities	13,176 (26.1%)	14,905 (26.3%)	14,111 (24.6%)	TBD	TBD
Total	19,207 (38.1%)	21,399 (37.7%)	23,202 (40.4%)	40%	45%

Source: THEC Student Information System.

12. *The percentage of first-time, full-time postsecondary students completing degrees within 150% of normal degree program time (e.g., three years for associates degree and six years for bachelor's degree) in Tennessee public institutions.*

Indicator	Baseline 2009-10	Results 2010-11	Interim Target 2014-15	Target 2019-20
CC FTFT freshmen	11,559	11,507	TBD	TBD
CC 6-yr grads (& rate)	3,490 (30.2%)	3,607 (31.3%)	TBD	TBD
TBR university FTFT freshmen	10,271	10,365	TBD	TBD
TBR 6-yr grads (& rate)	4,752 (46.3%)	4,903 (47.3%)	TBD	TBD
UT FTFT freshmen	7,067	6,914	TBD	TBD
UT 6-yr grads (& rate)	4,314 (61.0%)	4,424 (64.0%)	TBD	TBD
TN PUBLIC FTFT freshmen	28,897	28,786	TBD	TBD
TN PUBLIC 6-yr grads (& rate)	12,556 (43.5%)	12,934 (44.9%)	TBD	TBD

Source: THEC Student Information System