THE TENNESSEE PROMISE: CHANGING OUR STATE THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

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TN Higher Education Commission
Two Realities

1) Present and future economic prosperity is directly tied to educational attainment.

2) Employers are no longer drawn to a state solely based on site and incentives.
Tennessee lags behind the rest of the nation...

TN: 33.8%
43rd
...as do all SLC states but one
70,140 Students
2010 high school freshmen

9,642 students did not graduate from high school

20,381 students entered the workforce immediately following high school

35,316 students entered higher education

$10,171
minimum wage
The current message about going to college is broken

• “Going to college” does not always mean “going to a university”

• Students *overestimate* costs of college, do not understand how to apply for available aid
So, now what? Free college.
The Tennessee Promise

• “Last dollar” scholarship program

• Average award: $980
  – Community college tuition: $4,600
  – Technical college tuition: $3,600
How does Tennessee Promise work?
Early Engagement:
Stakeholders Across Tennessee

• From the guidance counselor’s office to the Governor’s office
  • Community engagement
  • Employer engagement
Mentorship and Support

What do I do after this page?
Students have skin in the game.

• Must enroll **full time** (12+ credits) each semester.

• Must complete **8 hours of community service** each semester.
  • **2 million** total community service hours
What has Tennessee Promise done for the state?
FAFSA FILING RATE - #1 IN NATION

2014  60.4%
2015  69.5%
2016  70.3%
2017  73.5%
2018  81.7%

Aid comes from other sources –
Average award: $980
Community college tuition: $4,600
Technical college tuition: $3,600
TENNESSEE’S COLLEGE-GOING RATE

55.7% 57.1% 57.0% 57.7% 58.4% 64.3% 63.3% 63.4%


5,000 more students enrolled in Tennessee Promise’s first year.
TN PROMISE STUDENT SUCCESS

• Enroll **full time**
• Take up **fewer student loans**
  – 20 **percent** fewer students
• Earn **more credits** each year
Fall-to-fall retention rates

- Retained
  - Tennessee Promise students
    - STAY in college.
  - 59.9%

- Non-Retained
  - Non-Promise Recent HS Grads
    - 58.7%

- Promise
  - 40.1%

- Non-Promise Recent HS Grads
  - 41.3%
Student success after five semesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Promise</th>
<th>Non-Promise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recent HS graduates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transferred</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Still Enrolled</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dropped Out</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2015 Recent HS graduates
Statewide Economic Development

• Used as a marketing tool
  – Businesses are expanding within Tennessee
  – Businesses are relocating to Tennessee

• No longer only about tax incentives
  – Educated, skilled workforce
  – “Aren’t you the state with free college?”
Changing our narrative and our culture

New York Times

“First class of TN Promise will start college this fall...the nation is already watching.”
Politico

Tennessee Picking Up Tab For Community College Students
CNN

The Free Community College Experiment Everyone is Watching
PBS NewsHour