Governor Bill Haslam’s Tennessee Promise will bring significant changes to the state’s higher education landscape, so we’re taking this opportunity to address several common questions and misconceptions about the new initiative, specifically as it impacts Northeast State Community College.

Tennessee Promise is part of the state’s Drive to 55 campaign, which aims to increase the percentage of Tennesseans with college degrees or certifications to 55 percent by the year 2025. Through Tennessee Promise, graduating high school seniors will be eligible to earn an associate degree or certificate free of tuition and fees.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for the Tennessee Promise?
Any high school senior who is a Tennessee resident and who graduates from an eligible high school or home school program and anyone who completes a GED® or HiSET® diploma before 19 years of age can apply for funds. The program will launch with the high school graduating Class of 2015. Tennessee Promise students who graduate from high school in spring 2015 must begin college in fall 2015 to receive funding. Early Class of 2015 graduates who maintain eligibility requirements will receive funding beginning fall of 2015. Tennessee residents who attend out-of-state high schools should contact 800.342.1663 for eligibility requirements.

What will students be required to do?
To get Tennessee Promise funding, students must take the following steps in their senior year of high school:
1. Apply for the Tennessee Promise program by November 1 (www.tnpromise.gov).
2. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by February 15 (www.fafsa.ed.gov).
3. Attend several meetings organized by tnAchieves.
4. Complete application for community or technical college by February 15.
5. Complete 8 hours of community service. This service must be completed prior to the start of the first day of school (which will be defined by tnAchieves).
6. Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student (12 credit hours), maintain a 2.0 GPA, and complete at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each term. Community service will be required each semester.
7. Students must meet with their tnAchieves mentor a set number of times each semester (tnAchieves will coordinate these meetings).

What does Tennessee Promise fund?
Tennessee Promise is a last-dollar scholarship—that is, it will cover mandatory tuition and fees after PELL (federal) and other state assistance (except for loans and work-study) has been applied. It will not cover books, lab fees, RODP fees and/or standard cost of attendance fees, such as travel and gas expenses.

How will funds be administered?
Tennessee Promise funds will be administered by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) through higher education institutions. Students will never receive funding directly.

For complete details on Tennessee Promise, visit www.NortheastState.edu/Promise.

423-354-KEEP (5337)
promise@northeaststate.edu
I graduated prior to the Class of 2015. Can I receive Tennessee Promise?
No. The Tennessee State Legislature has decided that the Tennessee Promise funds will begin with the 2015 graduating class or GED®/HiSET® completers. Please note that you must be under the age of 19 if you are completing a GED®/HiSET®.

I am a non-traditional student. Can I receive the Tennessee Promise?
No. The Tennessee State Legislature has decided that the Tennessee Promise funds will be for Tennessee residents who are high school seniors and who graduate from an eligible high school or home school program and anyone who completes a GED® or HiSET® diploma before 19 years of age.

Do Non-Citizens qualify for the Tennessee Promise?
No. In order to qualify for the Tennessee Promise you must be a U.S. Citizen and Tennessee resident.

What type of degree can I pursue with the Tennessee Promise?
Tennessee Promise will only cover technical certificates, diplomas and two-year degrees. There are several reasons why Tennessee Promise is focused on certificates and two-year degrees. The primary reason is that forecasts show that much of our increased workforce demand will be in skills provided at our Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) and Community Colleges.

At what schools can you use Tennessee Promise?
Students can use the Tennessee Promise at any of Tennessee’s 27 Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs), 13 Community Colleges or any in-state four-year university or college offering associate degrees. Tennessee Promise funding for enrollment at an eligible four-year school is limited to the associate degree major only and is based on the community college average.

When will the application be available to apply for Tennessee Promise?
The Tennessee Promise application is available August 15 - November 1, 2014, for Class of 2015 high school graduates.

How do I complete the mentoring and community service components?
tnAchieves will provide guidance on how and when to complete these requirements. More information can be obtained by calling 423.354.KEEP (5337).

When do I have to finish the FAFSA by?
A completed 2015/2016 FAFSA must be submitted by February 15, 2015.

When do I apply for college admission?
You must have the application for admission to the college of choice submitted by February 15, 2015.

What if I miss a deadline?
Then you may become ineligible to receive Tennessee Promise.

Can I use Tennessee Promise if I attend a four-year program first then transfer to an eligible Tennessee Promise college?
No. You must begin your college enrollment at an eligible Tennessee Promise college and in an eligible program.

About 25,000 high school seniors are expected to apply to higher education institutions in fall 2015 through Tennessee Promise. The initiative is estimated to cost about $34 million per year, and the funds will come from existing sources, including modifications to the HOPE Scholarship.