TN Achieves
Building Tennessee's Future Workforce

CLASS OF 2026 | STUDENT HANDBOOK

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: TENNESSEE PROMISE

WELCOME

Welcome to tnAchieves! We are so excited to be with you on your journey to college and will ensure you stay on track! From providing important resources like this handbook to sending milestone reminders, tnAchieves will be your go-to organization for any questions or help you may need.

tnAchieves is a nonprofit partnering organization to the TN Promise scholarship. tnAchieves works directly with students as they complete the scholarship requirements, including attending a TN Promise Meeting, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), working with a mentor and submitting community service hours. tnAchieves supports TN Promise students beginning in high school and until they receive a college credential.

By completing the TN Promise application, you have embarked on an exciting journey to college! This handbook will serve as a thorough resource for the scholarship requirements you will encounter before you begin college in the fall. Our team will stay in touch about requirements and milestones to ensure you stay informed. It is critical that you are actively checking your email for updates from tnAchieves. We will email you every week and send text messages as deadlines approach - this means you should always keep your contact information up to date with tnAchieves. If it ever changes, you should notify us immediately!

As you read this handbook, you will find each TN Promise requirement detailed beginning with connecting with your tnAchieves Mentor. Your mentor is an incredibly valuable asset, and you are encouraged to connect with them regularly to keep them updated on your progress. It is important to note the deadlines for each requirement and how you will complete them. tnAchieves will be your partner in this process, but it is your responsibility to complete each milestone. This handbook is a great place to find information!

The journey to college can be exciting but also intimidating and confusing. We are here to provide guidance and encouragement every step of the way. **We believe that COLLEGE IS FOR EVERYONE.** That means **YOU!** On page 7, you will find a list of TN Promise eligible institutions. We believe that all of these colleges/universities provide a pathway for every student in Tennessee. Be curious, ask questions and, most importantly, remember *there is a place for you in college in Tennessee! Find your inner fire and make the leap!*

COMMUNICATION WITH TNACHIEVES

Maintaining a connection with tnAchieves is vital to your success. Check your email and text messages regularly to stay engaged and ensure you never miss a deadline or step along the way!
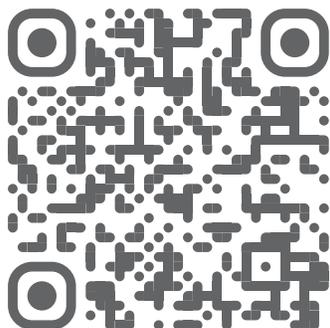
Mondays
Check your email every Monday for an update from tnAchieves. We will be in touch regarding upcoming meeting requirements, college requirements, community service opportunities and other important information. If you do not receive your tnAchieves Monday email, please reach out to tnAchieves@tnAchieves.org so we can update your email address. You can reply to our weekly email if you have any questions! Check your spam/junk or promotions folders if you do not see our emails and add tnAchieves as a safe sender.

Text Messaging
You will receive messages reminding you of your upcoming meeting requirements, FAFSA completion and community service deadlines as well as other important topics. We encourage you to save our number (36782) so you know the messages are coming from us. Also, you can reply to our texts and our team will respond!

CONTACT US

The tnAchieves team is always available to help ensure you are successful. Contact us anytime you have questions or concerns. Scan the QR code to view a full list of tnAchieves staff!

STUDENT HANDBOOK TABLE OF CONTENTS

TN PROMISE IS A UNIQUE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND COLLEGE TUITION AND MANDATORY FEE FREE!

TN Promise is a last-dollar scholarship that allows students to attend up to five semesters at a community college or eligible four-year institution or eight trimesters at a Tennessee College of vApplied Technology (TCAT). As a last-dollar scholarship, TN Promise covers a student's tuition and mandatory fees not paid by federal or state funds (i.e., the Pell Grant, HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee Student Assistance Award and Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant). See below for an example of how the funding operates at various institutions.

How does last-dollar scholarship work?	TCAT	Two-Year Public	Four-Year Public*	Four-Year Private*
Tuition (No books/fees/supplies)	$3,000	$5,000	$8,000	$20,000
HOPE/Wilder-Naifeh	-$2,000	-$3,200	-$4,500	-$4,500
TN Promise	-$1,000	-$1,800	-$200	-$200
Your Cost	$0	$0	$3,300	$15,300

*Check with your institution of choice to determine both college cost and the amount covered by TN Promise or other institutional aid as all four-year institutions process TN Promise differently.

TN PROMISE CHECKLIST

This checklist helps you keep track as you complete each step of the college-going process. Use the space below each requirement to log usernames, passwords or any other important information.

TN Promise eligibility requirements are listed in green.

BY NOV. 3, 2025 — DATE COMPLETED
Complete the TN Promise application at TNPromise.gov.

BY MARCH 16, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Satisfy TN Promise Meeting Requirement.
Meeting date, time and location assigned based on high school

SPRING 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Connect with your tnAchieves Mentor.
See page 3 to learn more about your tnAchieves Mentor.

BY APRIL 1, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
File the 2026-2027 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
Visit StudentAid.gov. See page 5-6 for more information.

BY APRIL 15, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Apply to an eligible TN Promise institution.
A list of eligible institutions can be found on page 7.

BY MAY 1, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Submit all requested admissions documents to anticipated college.
Check your college email for admissions updates.

BY JULY 1, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Complete financial aid verification, if selected.
Verification is completed through your college's financial aid office.

BY JULY 1, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Ensure your college is listed on your TSAC Student Portal and FAFSA.
Visit tnAchieves.org/update for instructions on how to update your TSAC Portal and FAFSA, if needed.

BY AUGUST 1, 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Complete and submit at least 16 hours of community service.
Submit by 11:59 PM CT at tnAchieves.org. See page 4 for more information.

FALL 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Enroll as a full-time student at a TN Promise eligible institution.
Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours or a full-time TCAT program.

FALL 2026 — DATE COMPLETED
Connect again with your tnAchieves Mentor.

YOUR MENTOR

You have the opportunity to be assigned a volunteer mentor who has made the commitment to guide, encourage and support you as you transition from high school to college. This is one of the most valuable resources you have with tnAchieves!

Your mentor is here to help you apply to college, discover your career interests and connect you with essential resources. Be willing to openly communicate with your mentor as you prepare to start your first term of college, and do not hesitate to ask questions. Mentors are invested in helping you succeed!

YOUR MENTOR IS A(N)...

Resource
Your mentor can help answer questions.

Encourager
Your mentor is in your corner!

Person Who Wants You To Succeed

It is important to remember that your mentor is not meant to be your best friend, the person with all the answers or a tutor.

AS A MENTEE, YOU ARE...

Willing To Ask Questions

Responsive to Your Mentor's Communication

Thankful and Kind

It is best to always respond when you hear from your mentor. Timely responses to mentor communication will help facilitate a productive mentor-mentee relationship.

CONNECT WITH YOUR MENTOR WHEN...

You have a question about college.	You have questions about your future career goals and aspirations.
Your mentor texts or emails asking you a question.	You are excited, nervous or worried about starting college.

Students, it is your responsibility to engage with your mentor during the tnAchieves program. This is a chance to learn how to develop meaningful relationships with mentors who can provide support and opportunities for you to grow in your education and career.

MY MENTOR

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

NEXT COMMUNICATION

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

COMMUNITY SERVICE

You must complete and submit a total of 32 hours of community service throughout scholarship eligibility to remain eligible for TN Promise. Completing community service is a great way to learn about the needs of your community and provide a helping hand to valuable local organizations. Since our launch in 2009, tnAchieves students have completed more than 5 million hours of community service!

THE CLASS OF 2026'S FIRST COMMUNITY SERVICE DEADLINE IS AUGUST 1, 2026!

WHAT IS CONSIDERED COMMUNITY SERVICE?

It is your responsibility to identify an organization and complete community service hours. We are often asked whether certain hours will count towards the requirement. To ensure that your hours are accepted, be sure:

- You are volunteering through a nonprofit or community-based organization (e.g., animal shelter, food pantry, community center, school, etc.).
- You are not being paid for your time or being supervised by a family member. You cannot submit hours worked at your job as community service or be compensated for volunteering.
- If you are volunteering through your place of worship/religious institution, you are not submitting hours spent proselytizing or sharing your faith. Lawn care, supervising children, setting up/cleaning up an event and other activities outside of proselytizing at your place of worship/religious institution are acceptable.

See the full community service policy outlined on pages 9-10 of this handbook.

HOW DO I SUBMIT COMMUNITY SERVICE?

Step 1: Logging Into the Form

Students will log into the community service form found at tnAchieves.org/community-service.

The form requires the following information to login:
- First and Last Name
- Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
- Last 4 digits of Social Security Number (SSN)

SCAN TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS!

Step 2: Completing the Form

Once logged in, students will complete the community service form.
Information required includes:
- Name of Organization
- Supervisor Contact Information
- Date(s) Worked
- Number of Hours Volunteered
- Summary of Volunteer Work

Step 3: Submitting the Form

After completing the form, you will hit **Submit.** A confirmation email will be automatically sent to your email address and the community service supervisor. **You must confirm you received the confirmation email and keep it for your records!**

WHEN IS COMMUNITY SERVICE DUE?

Academic Year	Number of Hours Required*	Deadline	Timeframe for Completion
2026-2027	At least 16 hours	August 1, 2026 by 11:59 PM CT	August 1, 2024—August 1, 2026
2027-2028	16 additional hours (32 total hours)	August 1, 2027 by 11:59 PM CT	August 1, 2024—August 1, 2027

*You are required to submit at least 16 hours of community service by August 1, 2026; however, any hours over 16 submitted by this deadline will carry forward to the next deadline (August 1, 2027). Additionally, once you submit a total of 32 hours of community service, you will not be required to submit any additional community service hours for scholarship eligibility.

Any community service completed prior to August 1, 2024 will not be accepted.

2026-2027 FAFSA

2026-2027 FAFSA FILING DEADLINE: APRIL 1, 2026

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) serves as the application for federal and state aid. The 2026-2027 FAFSA is available now to file at StudentAid.gov. Please note that filing the FAFSA is FREE! You should never pay money to file the FAFSA. In addition to being a TN Promise requirement, filing the FAFSA by April 1, 2026 increases the probability that eligible students will receive more financial aid. Some scholarships are offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so completing the FAFSA as soon as possible is strongly encouraged.

First, students AND parents must create StudentsAid.gov accounts to login and file a FAFSA. This will allow you to access Studentaid.gov (Federal Student Aid's online system) and serves as the legal signature for the FAFSA. Students and parents must each have their own StudentAid.gov accounts; therefore, the same email address cannot be used for both. *Students should not use their high school email address, as they may lose access after graduation.* After creating a StudentAid.gov account, store your username and password in a safe place that is easily accessible!

To complete the 2026-2027 FAFSA, students will complete their section of the FAFSA and invite their parent to complete separate section(s). The 2026-2027 FAFSA will be considered finished once all sections have been successfully completed and submitted.

After FAFSA completion, a confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided on the StudentAid.gov account. Please keep this email for your records! We recommend creating a folder to store all of your important financial aid documentation and confirmations.

FAFSA FILING WORKSHEET

This worksheet is designed to help you gather all of the personal and financial information you will need to complete the 2026–2027 FAFSA. By filling out this form in advance, you will be equipped to answer questions accurately and efficiently during the FAFSA filing process.

STUDENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Full Legal Name: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____
- StudentAid.gov Account Username: _____
- StudentAid.gov Account Password: _____
- State of Legal Residence: _____

Users will also be required to provide their Social Security number; however, we do not recommend writing this number down where it could be misplaced.
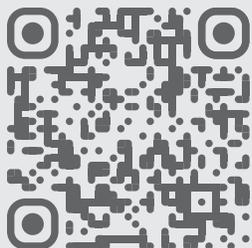
PARENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Full Legal Name: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____
- StudentAid.gov Account Username: _____
- StudentAid.gov Account Password: _____
- State of Legal Residence: _____

Users will also be required to provide their Social Security number; however, we do not recommend writing this number down where it could be misplaced.

HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

- Number of People in the Household: _____
- Number of Household Members in College: _____

2024 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

It is recommended to collect the following documents for students and parents before beginning the 2026-2027 FAFSA to save time and reduce any confusion!

- 2024 Federal Income Tax Return (Form 1040 + all schedules)
- W-2 Forms
- Untaxed income (e.g., child support received)
- Current balances of:
  - Checking and savings accounts
  - Investments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, 529 plans, rental properties)
  - Business and farm net worth (excluding primary residence and retirement accounts)

STEP-BY-STEP FAFSA GUIDES AND OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE ON TNACHIEVES.ORG! SCAN THE QR CODE FOR HELP.

10 STEPS TO FILE THE FAFSA

The following steps will help ensure you successfully file the 2026-2027 FAFSA before the April 1, 2026 deadline. Visit tnAchieves.org/FAFSA to find digital resources to help with the FAFSA filing process.

☐ 1. **Gather Necessary Information:** Before starting the application, gather the necessary documents outlined on page 5.

☐ 2. **Create or Retrieve Your StudentAid.gov Account:** A StudentAid.gov Account (username & password) is required for both the student and one parent. *Create it at studentaid.gov at least a few days before filing*—your Social Security number must be verified. Remember to save your login info in a secure place; you'll use it every year.

☐ 3. **Visit the Official FAFSA Website:** Go to the official website at StudentAid.gov to begin the application process. *Be sure to select the **2026-2027 FAFSA** when filing.* **Deadline: April 1, 2026**

☐ 4. **Choose Your Schools:** You'll be asked to list schools you're interested in attending (list up to 20 different schools). These schools will receive your FAFSA results and will use the information to determine the financial aid they can offer you. **Tip: Add the college you will attend in fall 2026 to the number one spot on this list.**

☐ 5. **Dependency Status:** The FAFSA will determine if you are a dependent or independent student based upon your answers to questions within the personal circumstances section. Dependent students must provide parent financial information.

☐ 6. **Fill Out Financial Information:** Use the documents you've gathered to provide accurate financial information. By providing student and parent financial information, you are determining the federal and state financial aid you qualify for. *Tip: Most users will have their financial information automatically transferred by the IRS Direct Data Exchange (DDX) instead of typing in tax info reducing errors and saving time!*

☐ 7. **Review, Sign and Submit:** Once you have completed all sections, you will need to sign the FAFSA. If you're a dependent student, you will invite your parent(s) to complete separate section(s) of the FAFSA. The 2026-2027 FAFSA will be considered finished once all sections (student AND parent) have been successfully completed, signed and submitted.

☐ 8. **Save Your Confirmation:** Save and/or print the confirmation page with your confirmation number and Student Aid Index (SAI) estimate. This is your proof that the FAFSA was filed successfully.

☐ 9. **Review Your FAFSA Submission Summary:** When your FAFSA processes, you'll receive a FAFSA Submission Summary summarizing the information you provided. Review this for any errors, make corrections if necessary and save for your records.

☐ 10. **Stay Informed:** Check the status of your FAFSA, and make sure to respond to any requests from schools or the federal government for additional information. Remember, you will file the FAFSA every year you are in college, so keep up with those StudentAid.gov Account details!

By following these steps and ensuring accuracy in your information, you maximize your chances of receiving the most federal and state financial aid for which you're eligible and maintain TN Promise scholarship eligibility.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

HOW TO APPLY

Community Colleges/Four-Year Colleges: All community college applications can be completed online. If you do not have internet access, most colleges will allow you to complete an application on campus.

Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT): Most TCAT applications can be completed online. You may also complete a paper application and submit it to the admissions office at the TCAT you plan to attend. Depending on the location and program, students may need to place their name on a waiting list after applying due to space restrictions.

Make sure to complete an application by early spring. **We recommend an April 15 application priority date!**

Tennessee Community Colleges	Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT)		Eligible Four-Year Colleges/Universities*
Chattanooga State Community College	TCAT Athens	TCAT Knoxville	Austin Peay State University
Cleveland State Community College	TCAT Chattanooga	TCAT McKenzie	Baptist Health Sciences University
Columbia State Community College	TCAT Upper Cumberland	TCAT McMinnville	Bethel University
Dyersburg State Community College	TCAT Crump	TCAT Memphis	Bryan College
Jackson State Community College	TCAT Dickson	TCAT Morristown	Carson-Newman University
Motlow State Community College	TCAT Elizabethton	TCAT Murfreesboro	Cumberland University
Nashville State Community College	TCAT Harriman	TCAT Nashville	Fisk University
Northeast State Community College	TCAT Hartsville	TCAT Northwest	Freed-Hardeman University
Pellissippi State Community College	TCAT Henry/Carroll	TCAT Oneida	John A. Gupton College
Roane State Community College	TCAT Hohenwald	TCAT Pulaski	Johnson University
Southwest Tennessee Community College	TCAT Jacksboro	TCAT Shelbyville	King University
Volunteer State Community College	TCAT Jackson		Lane College
Walters State Community College			LeMoyne-Owen College
			Lincoln Memorial University
			South College
			Southern Adventist University
			Tennessee State University**
			Trevecca Nazarene University
			Tusculum College
			Welch College
			William R. Moore College of Technology

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES

Better Job Opportunities and More Money
According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 63% of Tennessee jobs will require employees to have earned a post-secondary credential (certificate, associate or bachelor's degree) by 2031.[1]

High School Graduate
$41,800/YR[2]

College Graduate
$66,600/YR*

Earning a post-secondary degree could represent more than a million dollar increase in earnings over your career!

Smooth Transition
Community and technical colleges offer a less drastic change from high school than some four-year colleges. Class sizes are small and campuses are typically easier to access.

Specialized Degrees and Licensing Programs
Community and technical colleges have specialized programs in areas such as welding, automotive technology, nursing, culinary arts and many others that put you on the fast track to a rewarding career.

Best Value for Your Dollar
Community colleges are a great place to take general education courses (e.g., English, math, etc.). You can complete your associate degree in two years, transfer to a four-year state school using the Tennessee Transfer Pathway and save approximately 50 percent in tuition as you complete your bachelor's degree, compared to directly enrolling at a four-year institution.

[1]Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031 – State Report. Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 2024. https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/Projections_2031-State-Report.pdf
[2]National Center for Education Statistics. Annual Earnings by Educational Attainment. U.S. Department of Education, May 2024. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cba/annual-earnings

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE INFORMATION

*In order to use the TN Promise scholarship at a four-year college or university, students must enroll in and be accepted into an associate degree program at that school – not a bachelor's degree program. Students enrolling in a health sciences program will not be eligible to receive TN Promise funding until admitted into the actual program of study. **If you are a UT Promise student, please visit UTPromise.org for more information.**

Non-credit bearing programs are not TN Promise eligible, even if they are offered at a TN Promise eligible institution. These include WIOA or community education programs. Please confirm that your program of study is eligible for federal and state funding, including TN Promise, with the college you plan to attend prior to enrollment.

**Dental hygiene is Tennessee State University's only TN Promise eligible program. Students enrolling at Tennessee State University in a program other than dental hygiene will be ineligible for the TN Promise scholarship.

At a four-year institution, the TN Promise scholarship may not be last-dollar, meaning it may not fully cover all tuition and mandatory fees. The amount of funding you will receive will be based on the average amount of tuition and mandatory fees at a community college, which is estimated to be $4,700. As a last-dollar scholarship, TN Promise will provide the remaining amount after Pell, HOPE and TSAA funds are applied. For example, if the average tuition and mandatory fees at a community college were $4,700 per year and you were receiving $4,500 in HOPE funds each year but no other federal or state aid, TN Promise would provide $200 to be applied toward tuition and mandatory fees at one of the eligible four-year institutions listed on this page.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Applying to college is only the beginning! After applying, you will complete a series of steps to ensure you successfully begin classes in the fall. From attending new student orientation and registering for classes to tapping into valuable tnAchieves resources like summer programs and coaching, you will find a supported pathway to college. Use the **WHAT'S NEXT?** guide below to ensure you are maximizing your opportunities!

WHAT'S NEXT AFTER APPLYING TO COLLEGE?

☐ **Set up your college account and email address.**
Your college will provide instructions in your acceptance information to set up your college account and email. You are encouraged to complete this step as soon as possible, as your college will use this account to keep you updated on your enrollment process.

☐ **Attend new student orientation.**
New student orientation is an opportunity to learn more about your college and the resources it offers. This is a great time to visit your campus and register for classes. Your college will send information about registering for orientation to your college email.

☐ **Register for classes.**
In college, your classes are not automatically assigned to you. You must select and register for classes based on your academic plan. Meet with an advisor or success coach before you complete registration to ensure you will be taking the correct classes. Please remember, at a community or four-year college, you must register for at least 12 credit hours to remain eligible for TN Promise. If you want to graduate in four semesters, you must take at least 15 credit hours each semester for most concentrations. At a TCAT, you must be enrolled in a full-time program.
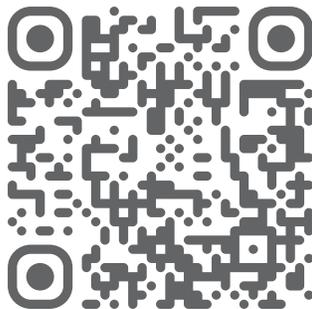
☐ **Show up to your first day of classes!**
After you apply and register, it's time for the most exciting step! Showing up on your first day is a huge accomplishment, and we want you to be fully prepared. If you are feeling unsure about your first day, connect with your tnAchieves Mentor and the tnAchieves team, and we will make sure you know exactly where to go and what to do!

SUMMER INSTITUTE

tnAchieves Summer Institute is a free program that offers incoming college freshmen an opportunity to **earn college credit hours** and **eliminate the need for learning support classes** before their first semester.

- Students who scored below a 19 on their ACT should register for Summer Institute.
- Campuses hosting a Summer Institute this year will be announced in spring 2026.

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN IN SPRING 2026! SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE.

COMPLETE COACHING

We know that college can be confusing, and it can be hard to know where to turn when you have challenges. tnAchieves COMPLETE Coaches are there to help you connect the dots and access valuable resources. COMPLETE Coaches begin working with students in the fall once classes begin. Keep an eye on your email for communication from your coach!

- Coaches are assigned to students around the state. They will work to meet with students in-person on their campuses.
- Coaches will call/text students to ensure they feel supported and have the resources they need.

COMPLETE GRANTS

Students who maintain TN Promise eligibility and qualify for a federal Pell Grant may be eligible for tnAchieves COMPLETE Grants. COMPLETE Grants help students navigate unexpected financial hurdles that impact their ability to succeed in college by providing up to $1,000 per academic period.

Information regarding COMPLETE Grants will be sent via email/text message in fall 2026.

HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attend and graduate from an eligible high school.**
   - Students must apply their senior year of high school with the Class of 2026 and meet the established TN Promise application deadline.
   - A student must be a Tennessee resident.
     - Students' residency will be determined by their post-secondary institution.
     - Students who reside with a parent outside of Tennessee pursuant to military orders will be considered eligible to participate in the scholarship program.
   - Students who complete a GED or HiSET diploma must enroll full-time in an eligible post-secondary program in the fall after they receive their diploma, provided that the diploma was earned before the student reached 19 years of age. This assumes the GED or HiSET student met all TN Promise requirements.
2. **Satisfy the TN Promise Meeting requirement as outlined in the student handbook, tnAchieves website and email reminders.**
   - Students must be present for the entire meeting and follow all instructions provided for attendance to be counted.
   - Students who graduate from a public high school during the fall term are required to return to their high school for the assigned TN Promise Meeting.
   - Students who transfer during their senior year are responsible for alerting tnAchieves and attending the assigned TN Promise Meeting designated for the high school to which they transferred.
   - A parent/guardian cannot attend the assigned meeting or view the Virtual TN Promise Webinar on a student's behalf. It is a student's responsibility to satisfy the TN Promise Meeting requirement by the given deadline to remain eligible for TN Promise.
   - Students who require accommodations at their TN Promise Meeting will be responsible for alerting tnAchieves at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting (e.g.,sign language interpreter).
   - Students who cannot attend their assigned meeting are responsible for notifying tnAchieves prior to or following their missed meeting via the TN Promise Virtual Meeting request form form provided at tnAchieves.org.
   - Virtual TN Promise Meeting request forms will be reviewed for the following: participation in a school-sanctioned event (e.g., athletic event and/or practice, concert and/or rehearsal, national or state conference or competition), death in the immediate family, personal illness, conflict with post-secondary class schedule, conflict with religious observance, personal or immediate family emergency, conflict with work schedule, lack of transportation.
   - All other requests outside those outlined above will not be approved and will result in a student losing TN Promise eligibility. This includes meetings that are rescheduled due to inclement weather or school closings.
   - Students who have an approved request form from tnAchieves must complete the TN Promise Meeting requirement virtually via the Virtual TN Promise Webinar.
     - Students will gain access to the Virtual TN Promise Webinar via email from tnAchieves.
     - Students must complete the TN Promise Meeting requirement by the established deadline to remain eligible for TN Promise.
3. **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 1, 2026. This deadline is tentative and is subject to change should the 2026-2027 FAFSA not open on October 1, 2025.**
   - Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student's TN Promise eligibility.
   - Students must be eligible for in-state tuition.
   - Students must complete the correct year's FAFSA each year prior to the deadline established by TSAC.
4. **Submit all financial aid verification documents each year for community and four-year colleges.**
   - Students attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
   - tnAchieves encourages students to submit all documents by July 1 to ensure the post-secondary institutions have adequate time to process.
   - Students must select the eligible institution they plan to attend on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as direct their TSAC Student Portal to the eligible institution.
   - It is the responsibility of students to confirm with the post-secondary institution that their admissions and financial aid files are verified, processed and ready for award.
5. **Complete and submit community service by the established deadline. See the Community Service Policy for further details regarding this requirement.**

COLLEGE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

6. **Maintain full-time status each term.**
   - If students fall below full-time, they will no longer be eligible.
   - TCAT students must be enrolled in a full-time program.
   - Failure to attend class can result in loss of eligibility.
7. **Begin at an eligible post-secondary institution in the fall term directly following high school graduation.**
   - Students who graduate from high school prior to the spring 2026 term may begin at their post-secondary institution early. Early graduates need to complete the current and previous academic year's FAFSA. Students must also complete their TN Promise Meeting requirement and community service by the established deadlines.
   - Students may begin college in the summer directly following high school graduation if they have met all TN Promise requirements. Please note that community college and four-year students who begin college in the summer directly following high school graduation will have that summer term calculated into their cumulative GPA. GPA will be checked at the end of the student's first full academic year; students must maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA to remain eligible for TN Promise.
   - Students may be granted a medical or personal leave of absence from timely enrollment in the initial semester full-time attendance or continuous enrollment at an eligible post-secondary institution as long as all other acceptable eligibility criteria are met. Students must request a leave of absence with their chosen post-secondary institution or TSAC for approval.
     - An approved leave of absence of six months or less shall not count against the five-semester or eight-trimester limit at an eligible post-secondary institution.
8. **Attend an eligible post-secondary institution for continuous terms.**
   - Students cannot leave the post-secondary institution for a period of time and remain eligible.
   - If students withdraw from all classes or stops attending during the term, they will no longer be eligible.
9. **Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the end of each academic year.**
   - TCAT students must maintain satisfactory academic progress each trimester.
10. **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the established deadline each year throughout their post-secondary experience.**
    - Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student's TN Promise eligibility.
    - Students must be eligible for in-state tuition.
    - Students must complete the correct year's FAFSA each year prior to the deadline established by TSAC.
11. **Submit all financial aid verification documents each year for community and four-year colleges.**
    - Students attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
    - tnAchieves encourages students to submit all documents by July 1 to ensure the post-secondary institutions have adequate time to process.
    - Students must select the eligible institution they plan to attend as their first choice on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as direct their TSAC Student Portal to the eligible institution.
    - It is the responsibility of students to confirm with the post-secondary institution that their admissions and financial aid files are verified, processed and ready for award.
12. **Complete and submit community service by the established deadline. See the Community Service Policy below for further details regarding this requirement.**

COMMUNITY SERVICE POLICY

Complete and submit community service by the established deadlines.

13. **Requirements for Class of 2026 (Effective fall 2025)**
    - Effective fall 2025 and beginning with the Class of 2026, students will be required to meet TWO community service deadlines to remain eligible for TN Promise:
    - August 1 following high school graduation: submit at least 16 hours of community service to cover the first college academic year.
    - August 1 following the first college academic year: submit at least 16 hours of community service to cover the second college academic year.
    - Once a student has completed and submitted 32 hours on record (as outlined by each deadline), they will be finished with the community service requirement for the duration of their TN Promise eligibility.
    - Students may submit community service hours dating back to August 1 of their high school junior year.
    - Additional hours submitted can roll over to the next deadline.
    - Students can complete a total of 16 virtual community service hours for the duration of their TN Promise eligibility; all other hours must be completed in person.
    - Once a student completes 16 hours of virtual community service, they will no longer be able to access the community service webinars.
    - Virtual community service webinars may only be accessed via www.tnachieves.org. All other forms of virtual community service will be denied.
14. **Requirements for Classes of 2025 and Earlier (Effective fall 2025)**
    - Effective fall 2025, TN Promise Classes of 2025 and earlier will have two options

to satisfy the community service requirement:

- **Option 1: New Program Cycle**
  - Complete and submit at least 16 hours of community service by July 1, 2025 for the 2025-2026 academic year.
  - Any hours over 16 will carry forward to the next deadline (August 1, 2026)
  - If a student submits 32 hours, they have completed the community service requirement for TN Promise. No additional hours will need to be submitted.
- **Option 2: Remain in the current cycle, submitting 8 hours of community service per term by the established deadlines for the 2025-2026 academic year. After the 2025-2026 academic year, the community service deadline will align with the new program cycle.**
  - Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service by July 1, 2025 for the fall 2025 term.
  - Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service by December 1, 2025 for the spring 2026 term for a total of 16 community service hours.
  - Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service by April 1, 2026 for the summer term, for a total of 24 community service hours.
    - Students attending a TCAT or William Moore College of Technology are required to enroll in the summer term and must submit at least 8 hours of community service by April 1, 2026.
    - South College students will be required to submit at least 8 hours of community service by April 1, 2026 for the spring term at South College.
      - South College students choosing to enroll in summer 2026 will be required to submit 16 hours of community service by April 1, 2026 to cover South College spring and summer terms.
    - Students choosing to enroll in the summer at a community college or eligible four-year institution must complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service by April 1, 2026.
  - Complete and submit at least 16 additional hours of community service by August 1, 2026 for the 2026-2027 academic year and a total of 32 total hours of community service.
    - If a student is not required to enroll in the summer term due to their program requirements, they will not be required to submit community service hours by April 1, 2026 and will have 32 total hours on record after August 1, 2026.
    - If a student is required to enroll in the summer term due to their program requirements, they will be required to submit community service hours by April 1, 2026 and will have at least 40 hours on record after August 1, 2026.
      - If a student chooses to enroll in the summer at a community college or eligible four-year institution, they will be required to submit community service hours by April 1, 2026 and have a total of 40 hours on record after August 1, 2026.
  - Any community service hours in excess of 8 submitted for each deadline will carry forward to the next deadline.
  - Students can complete a total of 16 virtual community service hours for the duration of their TN Promise eligibility; all other hours must be completed in person.
    - Once a student completes 16 hours of virtual community service, they will no longer be able to access the community service webinars.
15. **Community Service Guidelines**
- **Community service must be completed under the supervision of an established organization (e.g., nonprofit, public service organization). Community service is not:**
  - Work resulting in payment.
  - Work done under the supervision of an extended or immediate family member.
  - Work done for an individual rather than an organization (e.g., babysitting, mowing a neighbor's lawn, picking up trash in the neighborhood).
  - Proselytizing (sharing or teaching faith).
  - Work done off the clock/unpaid at the student's job.
  - Donating blood counts as one hour of community service and can only be submitted once for each deadline. Donating clothes, food, etc. does not count as community service.
- **Virtual community service webinars are available as a means to complete up to half of the total required hours of community service. The remaining hours must be completed via job shadowing and/or community service opportunities that fit within the guidelines.**
  - Each virtual community service webinar counts as one hour. Students will be automatically credited one hour per webinar after viewing the webinar in its entirety.
  - Students are not required to submit a community service form for viewing the webinars.
  - Webinars may only be accessed tnAchieves.org. All other forms of virtual community service will be denied.

SUBMISSION AND APPEALS

16. **Students must complete and submit all information regarding community service by the established deadlines at tnAchieves.org.** Failure to comply by the established dates will result in loss of eligibility. Keep in mind, it is not the responsibility of the organization, supervisor, mentor and/or parent to submit hours on a student's behalf.
17. **Should a student feel that extenuating circumstances beyond their control prohibited them from completing and submitting community service by the deadline, they may file an appeal with tnAchieves at tnachieves.org/appeal-form/.**
    - If the appeal is denied, the student will not be able to submit community service after the deadline and will remain ineligible for TN Promise.
    - If the appeal is approved, the student will have two weeks from the appeal approval to complete and submit community service, unless otherwise specified in the appeal approval.
    - Should a student fail to submit all required community service in the allotted time, they will remain ineligible for TN Promise.
    - Students who are unable to complete community service hours in person due to illness, injury, a documented disability and/or accommodation must file an appeal with tnAchieves prior to the community service deadline.
      - If the appeal is approved, the student will be allowed to complete additional virtual community service webinars over the maximum amount.
    - Documentation is required for any community service appeal submitted to tnAchieves.
    - Unless otherwise specified, an approved appeal only applies to the community service deadline being appealed. Any additional exceptions or accommodations for future terms must be appealed prior to each deadline.
18. **In the event a student's post-secondary institution reverses their ineligibility certification after a community service deadline, an exception to the missed deadline may be considered by tnAchieves.**
19. **If granted, the student will be contacted by tnAchieves.** Community service must be completed and submitted in its entirety no later than two weeks from notification.
20. **Should a student fail to submit all required community service in the allotted time, they will remain ineligible for TN Promise.**

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

21. **Only a member of tnAchieves staff may determine a student's TN Promise eligibility.**
    - Mentors are an extension of tnAchieves but are not tnAchieves staff members.
    - tnAchieves Mentors are volunteers and may lack adequate time to answer all questions; therefore, it is the students' responsibility to confirm eligibility with tnAchieves staff.
22. **TN Promise only funds last-dollar tuition and mandatory fees.** It does not pay for books or other post-secondary expenses (e.g., application fee, program and class specific fees). TN Promise only covers fees required of all students.
23. **A student cannot be mentored by a family member.**
24. **Mentors cannot choose students to mentor.**
    - tnAchieves staff will randomly assign students to mentors.
25. **TN Promise follows the admissions requirements of the post-secondary institution.**
    - TN Promise will fund learning support classes if the student fails to meet the ACT requirements for college-level coursework.
26. **Students are responsible for notifying tnAchieves staff when their contact information changes.** Incorrect information does not preclude students from ineligibility.

GENERAL NOTES

Should students fail to adhere to any/all policies, tnAchieves invokes the right to remove their eligibility. **tnAchieves values honesty and integrity.** A student who submits misinformation will immediately lose TN Promise eligibility. Be respectful in all correspondence and communication, including social media.

Policies may be subject to change without notice. It is a student's responsibility to refer to the policies as posted at tnAchieves.org for updates and changes to the TN Promise legislation.

MEETING NOTES

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME: _____ EMAIL: _____@tnAchieves.org PHONE: _____

REMEMBER:

1 CHECK YOUR EMAIL!   **2** YOU HAVE SUPPORT FROM TNACHIEVES!   **3** YOU BELONG IN COLLEGE!

SCAN TO FOLLOW
Follow us to stay up to date:
@tnAchieves

REQUEST A MENTOR
Scan to be paired with a
tnAchieves mentor!