The Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) is based in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the College of Education, Health & Human Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The mission of the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) is to identify, conduct, and coordinate research on initiatives and ideas designed to enhance higher education at the institution, state, and national levels to enhance policy and practice.


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Executive Summary

This report, *A Snapshot of Tennessee Promise: Pellissippi State Community College, 2015-2018*, was produced by the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at the University of Tennessee. The first in a series of studies to address Tennessee Promise (TN Promise) at specific institutions of higher education, this report was completed in partnership with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning at Pellissippi State Community College (PSCC). PSCC provided aggregated data that were descriptively analyzed to identify trends in full-time, first-time freshmen access, retention, and completion relevant to earning an associate degree or certificate.

The main findings and suggested areas for future study about full-time, first time freshmen enrollment in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College include:

1. Enrollment increased, indicating increased access.
2. Male enrollment increased and is indicative of increased access for this subgroup.
3. Enrollment trends in race and ethnicity mirror the race and ethnicity of the region’s high school population.
4. Enrollment increased for Hispanic students and is indicative of increased access for this subgroup.
5. The number of Pell grant recipients is increasing with each cohort and is indicative of increased access for students from lower income households.
6. The percentage of students in each successive cohort who require co-requisite remediation is trending downward.
7. The average high school grade point average (GPA) of full-time, first time freshmen enrolled in TN Promise is higher than full-time, first time freshmen not enrolled in TN Promise.
8. The average credit hours attempted by full-time, first time freshmen enrolled in TN Promise is higher than full-time, first time freshmen not enrolled in TN Promise.
9. The fall 2015-spring 2016 cohort 1 retention rate for associate degrees was 86.5%.
10. The fall 2015-fall 2016 cohort 1 retention rate for associate degrees was 63.8%, cumulative (including 6.5% transfers).

11. The five-semester, fall 2015-fall 2017, cohort 1 retention rate for associate degrees was 54.4%, cumulative (not including 14.5% transfers).

12. The six-semester, fall 2015-spring 2018, cohort 1 retention rate for associate degrees was 20%, cumulative (not including 16.2% transfers).

13. The five-semester, fall 2015-fall 2017, cohort 1 completion rate for associate degrees was 22.1%, cumulative (not including 14.5% transfers).

14. The six-semester, fall 2015-spring 2018, cohort 1 completion rate for associate degrees was 30.1%, cumulative (not including 16.2% transfers).
# Table of Contents

List of Tables ........................................................................................................................................................................... vi

List of Figures .............................................................................................................................................................................. iii

I. OVERVIEW .................................................................................................................................................................................. 1
   TN Promise ............................................................................................................................................................................. 1
   Pellissippi State Community College .................................................................................................................................. 4
   Methodology ........................................................................................................................................................................... 5

II. TRENDS IN ACCESS .................................................................................................................................................................. 6
   TOTAL FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN ENROLLMENT TREND ............................................................................ 6
   MALE AND FEMALE ENROLLMENT TRENDS .................................................................................................................. 8
   RACE AND ETHNICITY ENROLLMENT TRENDS .............................................................................................................. 9
      African-American .............................................................................................................................................................. 10
      Hispanic ............................................................................................................................................................................ 11

   PELL GRANT RECIPIENT TREND ................................................................................................................................. 12

   COLLEGE READINESS TREND ....................................................................................................................................... 13
      Student Grade Point Average ......................................................................................................................................... 14
      Credit Hours Attempted ................................................................................................................................................ 15

III. TRENDS IN RETENTION AND COMPLETION .................................................................................................................. 16
   TN PROMISE FALL 2015 COHORT 1 RETENTION TRENDS ......................................................................................... 16
   TN PROMISE CERTIFICATE AND ASSOCIATE DEGREE COMPLETION TREND .................................................... 17
List of Tables

Table 1. Required Criteria for Successful TN Promise Applications, Cohorts 1-4  
3

Table 2. Percentages by Race and Ethnicity of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4  
9

List of Figures

Figure 1. Total Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment at Pellissippi State Community College by Enrollment Status, Cohorts 1-4, fall 2007-fall 2018  
7

Figure 2. Percentage of Male and Female Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts Prior to TN Promise and Enrolled in TN Promise, Cohorts 1-4  
8

Figure 3. African-American Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4  
10

Figure 4. Hispanic Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4  
11

Figure 5. Pell Grant Recipients of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4  
12

Figure 6. Number of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in Co-Requisite Course Remediation, by TN Promise Status at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-3  
13

Figure 7. Comparison of Average Credit Hours Attempted by Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Pellissippi State Community College, by TN Promise Status and Cohorts 1-4  
15

Figure 8. TN Promise Fall 2015 Cohort 1 Associate Degree Retention and Completion Trend at Pellissippi State Community College  
16

Figure 9. TN Promise Fall 2015 Cohort 1 Five-Semester Certificate and Associate Degree Completion  
17
I. OVERVIEW

The mission of the higher education system in Tennessee is to promote the economic, social, and environmental betterment of the state by providing access and opportunities for individuals to develop skills and competencies that culminate in a certificate or degree. Tennessee Promise (TN Promise) is part of Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary degree or credential to 55 percent by the year 2025. The TN Promise scholarship and mentorship program removes some of the financial and academic support barriers that prevent many of the state’s high school graduates from pursuing higher education.

TN Promise

TN Promise¹ is a last-dollar scholarship and mentorship program² that was signed into law by Governor Bill Haslam in 2014. It is a scholarship program within the Drive to 55 legislation³ designed to increase higher education attainment. The legislation established an irrevocable trust to fund the scholarship.⁴ Through its focus on Tennessee’s high school seniors, the TN Promise provides a pathway for eligible graduates to earn a certificate or associate degree at one of the state’s 13 community colleges, 27 colleges of applied technology, or other eligible institutions.

College Promise programs are often categorized as “first dollar” or “last dollar,” depending on when the awards are made during the financial aid process. First-dollar scholarships are granted first, or before any other grant or award. First-dollar scholarships are typically fixed amount grants not dependent on the amount of other financial aid or scholarships a student receives, although the “first dollar” amount may vary depending on other factors, such as the student’s year of study or the type of institution. Last-dollar scholarships are awarded after all other aid (except loans) are considered; that is, these scholarships pay the difference between other

² The mentoring program is administered through local, nonprofit partnering organizations (not included)
³ Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam proposed the educational goal, Drive to 55, to increase the percentage of Tennesseans with a post-secondary certificate or degree to 55% by 2025 to develop workforce readiness capacity.
financial aid for tuition and fees (or other expenses depending on scholarship requirements). As a last-dollar scholarship and mentoring program, TN Promise, pays the remaining gap in tuition and mandatory fee expenses only, after other aid is applied (the Pell grant, the HOPE scholarship, and other grant aid).

Some students may not receive any direct funding from the TN Promise Endowment Trust because other sources of scholarships or grants cover their tuition and mandatory fees. For example, low income students who receive full Pell grants (with or without state scholarships) may not need additional funds from TN Promise; however, these students are still considered TN Promise students.

To become eligible for the TN Promise, a student must be a Tennessee resident and a U.S. citizen (or eligible non-citizen), who has graduated from an eligible high school/homeschool or earned a GED/HISET prior to his/her 19th birthday. In addition, TN Promise students must complete several time-sensitive tasks, including applications for the TN Promise and the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA). Table 1 indicates the multiple criteria and the time period during which one must be complete said criteria. Some students lose permanent eligibility for TN Promise because they do not complete one or more criteria by its deadline.

Table 1. Required Criteria for Successful TN Promise Applications, Cohorts 1-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Complete TN Promise application online</td>
<td>By Nov. 1 of senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. File the FASFA</td>
<td>Oct. 1-Jan. (specified date) of senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attend all mandatory meetings coordinated by a partnering institution</td>
<td>Spring semester of senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Apply to a Tennessee community college, Tennessee College Applied Technology, or eligible public or private institution to earn a certificate or an associate degree</td>
<td>Spring semester of senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Perform and report eight hours of community service per term enrolled at managing institution</td>
<td>Specific date prior to each term of enrollment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once enrolled in TN Promise, the student has nine months after graduation from high school to attend the eligible institution on a full-time basis (minimum 12 semester hours), earn or maintain satisfactory academic progress (a 2.0 GPA), perform and report eight (8) hours of community service per term enrolled, file an annual FAFSA, and provide any requested FAFSA verification documentation.

Students are also required to meet or communicate with their mentor once enrolled. Students have five (5) semesters of eligibility for the TN Promise and must attend these semesters consecutively. The TN Promise program begins the first fall semester following a student’s graduation from high school. Semester credits earned as a dual-enrollment student in high school may be applied toward a certificate or an associate degree.

Summer semesters are exempted from the consecutive enrollment requirement. Eligible TN Promise students may receive the scholarship for summer sessions provided they perform and report the eight-hour community service requirement by the due date.
Pellissippi State Community College

Pellissippi State Community College (PSCC) ([www.pstcc.edu](http://www.pstcc.edu)) is an open admission, publicly supported community college in Tennessee. PSCC operates five campuses throughout the greater Knoxville-Blount County metropolitan region. These campuses serve a diverse constituency based on geographic location, access to public transportation, socioeconomic status, and demographic characteristics. PSCC offers programs to earn certificates and associate degrees. In addition, PSCC provides coursework pathways that lead to employment and transfer to baccalaureate-level colleges and universities. Dual-credit and career readiness courses are offered to high school students.

Pellissippi State Community College has had a unique relationship and history with implementing last-dollar scholarship programs since fall 2009. PSTCC participated in the Knox Achieves program, which allowed graduating high school seniors in Knox County, Tennessee, to enroll in local community colleges at no cost. Using the last-dollar scholarship model, the program was started in 2008 and funded through donations and grants. Knox Achieves was available to all Knox County students for three years, then — between academic years 2011-12 and 2013-14 — the model expanded to 27 counties and became known as Tennessee Achieves (tnAchieves) to reflect its growing statewide mission. Beginning with the 2015-16 academic year, tnAchieves became a partnering organization with the TN Promise state-funded program.

Since fall 2009, Pellissippi State Community College experienced an upward trend in its full-time, first-time freshmen fall enrollment. Since 2015, these increases were due in part to the enrollment of participants in the TN Promise program. Although community college enrollment in many states has been decreasing since 2010, PSCC has not experienced a declining trend since 2010.

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6 TN Promise may be used at any of the state’s 13 community colleges and 27 colleges of applied technology, or eligible four-year institutions offering associate degrees.

7 Pellissippi State, Walters State, and Roane State Community Colleges were designated as colleges for Knox Achieves as were technical colleges.

8 These years served graduating seniors beginning in the academic years: 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12.
Methodology

This report is a snapshot of recent trends based on aggregated PSCC student data the institution collected. Its main purpose is to identify overall trends that explain access, retention, and completion by cohort toward certificate or degree awards since implementation of TN Promise. A secondary purpose is to identify trends that might provide more clarity as to whether the goals of TN Promise are being achieved.

Aggregated data for the fall semesters (2013-18) of full-time, first-time freshmen cohorts at PSCC were used. Data are current as of October 24, 2018. To identify general trends, most analyses were comparisons of two subgroups of full-time, first-time freshmen: (a) students enrolled in TN Promise, (b) students not enrolled in TN Promise, plus students enrolled prior to TN Promise. The analyses in this report present descriptive trends in two areas: (1) Access; and (2) Retention and Completion. These trends are depicted in tables and figures throughout this report.

Access is defined as enrollment in a certificate or associate degree program at PSCC; Retention relates to whether a student enrolled in the subsequent semester or academic year; and Completion is based on conferral of a certificate or an associate degree award. All enrollment data is based on student headcounts. All calculations are done in accordance with generally accepted methods. All data are accurate as of October 2018.

This report was completed in collaboration with Ms. Marisol Benitez-Ramirez and Dr. Nancy A. Ramsey of PSCC’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning.
II. TRENDS IN ACCESS

Community colleges are open access institutions. Yet open access does not mean that students face no barriers, real or perceived, to enroll. Among the barriers to access are application procedures, financial need, and inadequate preparation for college-level coursework.

TOTAL FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN ENROLLMENT TREND

TN Promise has had a major impact on student access to the state’s community colleges by enrolling 13,287 full-time, first-time freshmen system-wide in fall 2015, including 1,516 at PSCC.

According to Figure 1, the number of TN Promise students (depicted in orange) increased for each cohort. TN Promise enrollment comprised a majority of the total fall semester full-time, first-time freshmen: 1,516 or 67% (2015); 1,676 or 75% (2016); 1,699 or 76% (2017); and 1,745 or 69% (2018). This trend will likely hold into the future as the number of high school graduates in Tennessee and the immediate PSCC service region is increasing.

Based on increased and stable enrollment above the influence of Knox Achieves and Tennessee Achieves (fall 2009-fall 2014), TN Promise has increased access to PSCC. During the first semester of TN Promise (fall 2015), the full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment at PSCC increased by 25% over fall 2014. Between fall 2014 and fall 2018 enrollment of full-time, first-time freshmen increased at PSCC by 40% over the fall 2014 enrollment.

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9 A percentage of the full-time, first-time freshmen fall 2014 enrollment at PSCC may have been participants in the tnAchieves program, which was a privately funded last dollar scholarship and mentoring program implemented in 2010. TN Promise was modeled after this program.
Figure 1. Total Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment at Pellissippi State Community College by Enrollment Status, fall 2007-fall 2018

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College and the NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Note: KnoxAchieves (Fall 2009-11) and tnAchieves (2011-14), which are privately funded forerunners of the state funded TN Promise, contributed to the enrollment trajectory at PSCC beginning in 2009.
MALE AND FEMALE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

A concerning trend nationally and in Tennessee is the decreasing percentage of male high school graduates enrolling in postsecondary education. Compared with full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment at PSCC prior to and after the implementation of TN Promise, male enrollment percentages have trended up slightly from 48.8% to 51.5% as cohort enrollment in TN Promise increased during the same time period.

These trends are indicative of increased access for male high school students enrolling at PSCC. In Fall 2018, PSCC enrolled a smaller percentage of female students (48.5%) than the system-wide community college average (55.9%).

Figure 2. Percentage of Male and Female Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts Prior to TN Promise and Enrolled in TN Promise, Cohorts 1-4

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

Note: The last dollar scholarship and mentoring program tnAchieves contributed to the full-time, first-time freshmen fall enrollment (2013 and 2014).
RACE AND ETHNICITY ENROLLMENT TRENDS
Minority students are underrepresented in public postsecondary education. This underrepresentation may vary depending on the community in which the postsecondary institution is located. To assess whether TN Promise at PSCC was accessible to minorities, the average race and ethnicity percentages of students enrolled in each high school located in the East TN Core Region\(^{10}\) were calculated and compared with race and ethnicity percentages for each TN Promise full-time, first-time freshmen cohort. Table 2 demonstrates that in the extended service region of PSCC (the East TN Core Region), the trend of minority enrollment percentages of each succeeding cohort of TN Promise students more closely approximates the regional race and ethnicity composition of high school students.

Table 2. Percentages by Race and Ethnicity of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE AND ETHNICITY</th>
<th>AVERAGE % EAST TN CORE REGION(^1), 9-12</th>
<th>TN PROMISE RACE AND ETHNICITY ENROLLMENT PERCENTAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2016-17 Fall 2015 Cohort 1</td>
<td>Fall 2016 Cohort 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE (NON-HISPANIC)</td>
<td>85.4%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICAN-AMERICAN</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 OR MORE RACES</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM. INDIAN/AK. NATIVE</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-RESIDENT</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL(^2)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (HEADCOUNT)</td>
<td>149,590</td>
<td>1,516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

*The East TN Core Region is one of 8 field office regions for k-12 education of which PSCC is located near its geographical center. See https://www.tn.gov/education/district-resources.html; n/a = Not Available.

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\(^{10}\) The East TN Core Region is one of eight field office regions for the Tennessee Department of Education for k-12 education. PSCC is geographically located near the center of this region and thus, students graduating from high schools in this region can be considered potential applicants for TN Promise at PSCC. See https://www.tn.gov/education/district-resources.html
**African-American**

Based on Table 2, the full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment of African-American students at PSCC increased from 5.0% (fall 2015) to 6.4% (fall 2018) which is consistent with current percentages of grades 9-12 African-American students in the East TN Core Region. This trend may indicate that outreach to African-American high school seniors to enroll in TN Promise has been successful. Figure 3 shows a small increase in total African-American full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment in fall 2018 over prior years.

**Figure 3.** African-American Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4

For TN Promise cohorts 1-4, there is a sizable proportion of African-American full-time, first-time freshmen who are not enrolled in TN Promise. The proportions of each cohort range from 56% (fall 2015) to 38% (fall 2018) of African-Americans not enrolled in TN Promise. Since there are multiple reasons why a student would not be enrolled in TN Promise (both within and beyond the control of the student), it would be useful to determine the possible reason(s) for that this subgroup is not enrolling in TN Promise and whether access is impeded.
**Hispanic**

Based on Table 2, the full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment of Hispanic students at PSCC increased from 3.3% (fall 2016) to 5.9% (fall 2018), which is lower than current average percentages of grades 9-12 Hispanic students in the East TN Core Region.

Figure 4 shows an overall trend of increasing Hispanic enrollment for each TN Promise full-time, first-time freshmen cohort compared with years prior to TN Promise. This trend may indicate increased access for the Hispanic subgroup. Approximately 36% of the Hispanic students in cohort 4 attending PSCC are not enrolled in TN Promise, which may be indicative of barriers to access for this group of students. Further investigation may be warranted.

**Figure 4.** Hispanic Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4

![Bar chart showing Hispanic enrollment trends](chart.png)

*Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.*

*Note 1: “NOT ENROLLED TN Promise” status refers to students who either (1) were eligible to apply for TN Promise scholarships and failed to complete the process or (2) were never eligible for TN Promise scholarships.*
PELL GRANT RECIPIENT TREND

Pell grants are a proxy indicator for students from families with lower than average incomes. Students whose total household income is $50,000 or less qualify for a Pell grant, but most grants and the largest dollar amount grants go to students with household incomes under $20,000.

As the number of students receiving Pell grants increases, it may be inferred that an institution may be more accessible to students. The total number of full-time, first time freshmen (both those enrolled and not enrolled in TN Promise) who received Pell grants has increased when compared with total full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment for fall 2013 and fall 2014 as depicted in Figure 5.

**Figure 5.** Pell Grant Recipients of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in TN Promise at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4

![Bar chart showing enrollment numbers for Pellissippi State Community College from Fall 2013 to Fall 2018.]

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

**Note 1:** “Non-TN Promise & Pell Recipient” status refers to students who either (1) were eligible to apply for TN Promise scholarships and failed to complete the process or (2) were never eligible for TN Promise scholarships. These students did receive Pell grants.
COLLEGE READINESS TREND
The ACT is a college readiness exam that measures the likelihood of success in college. At PSCC sub-scores of 18 (English), 19 (Reading), and 19 (Mathematics) indicate readiness for college level coursework. College ready students are not required to take co-requisite remedial courses at PSCC.

Prior to TN Promise, students who were not college ready comprised 1,078 or 63% (fall 2013) and 1,108 or 62% (fall 2014) of full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment. Total full-time, first-time freshmen (including TN Promise students and non-TN Promise students) who required remediation at PSCC numbered 1,359 or 60% (fall 2015), 1,323 or 60% (fall 2016), 1,218 or 54% (fall 2017), 1,384 or 55% (fall 2018).

Figure 6. Number of Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in Co-Requisite Course Remediation, by TN Promise Status at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-3

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

Note 1: “Non-TN Promise” status refers to students who either (1) were eligible to apply for TN Promise and failed to complete the process or (2) were never eligible to apply for TN Promise.
**Student Grade Point Average**

The high school grade point average (GPA) of students enrolled in postsecondary education may indicate the potential strength of peer learning in college classrooms. Students learn from each other through classroom discussion and collaborative assignments. Observing each other leads students to adopt intellectual habits of mind and comportment that support successful completion of an award.

Unlike institutions that can apply selectivity in academic achievement to shape an annual entering cohort, PSCC has an open admissions policy. The institution admits everyone with a high school diploma regardless of their prior academic record. Attracting and enrolling students possessing a wide range of intellectual abilities enhances an institution’s diversity and quality of education.

Students enrolled in the TN Promise program (cohorts 1-3) at PSCC possessed mean high school GPAs of 3.03, with the range from 1.49-4.16. Students not participating in TN Promise (cohorts 1-3) had mean GPAs of 2.78 with a range of 1.37-4.11. Although the numerical difference in GPAs does not appear large, one must remember that three out of every four students in these cohorts is a TN Promise participant. By attracting high-academic ability students to PSCC, TN Promise enhances the learning environment for all.
**Credit Hours Attempted**

The most efficient path toward certificate or degree completion suggests that students maintain full-time enrollment and strive to complete as many credit hours per semester as possible. Some students enter PSCC as full-time, first-time freshmen who have successfully completed college credits through a dual-credit program in high school.

Since the TN Promise scholarship is limited to five consecutive semesters, students who enter PSCC with credit for dual-credit courses completed during high school and/or successfully complete more than the minimum 12 hours of coursework in at least one semester may complete their degree or certificate within that time frame. Based on Figure 7, Full-time, first time freshmen enrolled in TN Promise on average attempted more credit hours during their first semester than Non-TN Promise students.

**Figure 7.** Comparison of Average Credit Hours Attempted (per Semester) by Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4

![Figure 7: Comparison of Average Credit Hours Attempted (per Semester) by Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Pellissippi State Community College, Cohorts 1-4](image)

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

Note 1: “Non-TN Promise” status refers to students who either (1) were eligible to apply for TN Promise and failed to complete the process or (2) were never eligible to apply for TN Promise.
III. TRENDS IN RETENTION AND COMPLETION

Perhaps as important as enrolling students in postsecondary education is to keep them progressing toward a degree (or certificate) until completion. The TN Promise scholarship is designed to encourage Tennessee high school graduates to attend PSCC on a full-time basis with tuition and mandatory fees paid for a period of five consecutive semesters toward the successful completion of a certificate or an associate degree. Students must remain eligible for the scholarship by engaging in eight (8) hours of community service per term enrolled and maintaining a satisfactory academic progress (2.0 GPA).

It makes sense that for students to complete the requirements for an award and graduate, they must be retained as a student making progress. In this way retention trends indicate the upper limit of a cohort’s award completion trend.

TN PROMISE FALL 2015 COHORT 1 RETENTION TRENDS
Students who are enrolled full-time in PSCC coursework, but who will not complete their associate degree that semester are considered retained for that semester. The retention rate trend of the TN Promise Cohort 1 (fall 2015) pursuing an associate degree on a semester basis for the first six semesters is shown in Figure 8.

- The fall 2015-spring 2016 cohort 1 retention rate was 86.2% (not including transfers).
- The fall 2015-fall 2016 cohort 1 retention rate was 63.8%, cumulative (not including 6.5% transfers).
- The five-semester (fall 2015-fall 2017) cohort 1 retention rate was 54.4%, cumulative (not including 14.5% transfers).
- The six-semester (fall 2015-spring 2018) cohort 1 retention rate was 20%, cumulative (not including 16.2% transfers).
Figure 8. TN Promise Fall 2015 Cohort 1 Associate Degree Retention and Completion Trend at Pellissippi State Community College

The TN Promise scholarship is designed to encourage students to attend PSCC with tuition and mandatory fees paid for a period of five consecutive semesters toward the successful completion of a certificate or an associate degree award requirement.

As shown in Figure 8, for the fall 2015 TN Promise cohort the five-semester (fall 2015 – fall 2017) completion rate was 22.1%, cumulative (not including 16.2% transfers). For the same cohort, the three-year (150% or six-semester) associate degree completion rate from Pellissippi State Community College was 30.1%, cumulative (not including 16.2% transfers). Although the sixth semester extends beyond the TN Promise eligibility period, these students were participants in TN Promise for their first five semesters. This percentage compares favorably with the PSCC fall 2014 cohort three-year award cumulative completion rate of 23.5% (combined associate and certificate) from Pellissippi State Community College prior to the implementation of TN Promise.
Figure 9 shows the number of students who completed a certificate or associate degree in five (5) semesters. For the TN Promise cohort beginning in fall 2015 at PSCC:

- The five-semester fall 2015 cohort certificate and associate degree completion rate among TN Promise students was 23.0%.
- The five-semester fall 2015 cohort certificate and associate degree completion rate for students not enrolled in TN Promise was 7.6%.

Figure 9. TN Promise Fall 2015 Cohort 1 Five-Semester Certificate and Associate Degree Completion.

Source: Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning, Pellissippi State Community College.

Note 1: “No TN Promise” status refers to students who either (1) were eligible to apply for TN Promise and failed to complete the process, (2) were never eligible to apply for TN Promise, or (3) who were initially enrolled in TN Promise in fall 2015, but for unknown reasons did not stay enrolled in TN Promise.
The mission of the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) is to identify, conduct, and coordinate research on initiatives and ideas designed to enhance higher education at the institution, state, and national levels to enhance policy and practice.