

# MEASURING UP 2008

THE STATE REPORT CARD  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION



## What is Measuring Up?

The purpose of a state report card is to provide the general public and policymakers with information they can use to assess and improve postsecondary education in each state. *Measuring Up 2008* is the fifth in a series of biennial report cards.

The report card grades states in six overall performance categories: **Preparation:** How adequately does the state prepare students for education and training beyond high school? **Participation:** Do state residents have sufficient opportunities to enroll in education and training beyond high school? **Affordability:** How affordable is higher education for students and their families? **Completion:** Do students make progress toward and complete their certificates or degrees in a timely manner? **Benefits:** What benefits does the state receive from having a highly educated population? **Learning:** What is known about student learning as a result of education and training beyond high school?

Grades compare the current performance of each state with the best-performing states, but do not compare with past performance. Key indicators (back page) allow states to compare current performance with past performance.

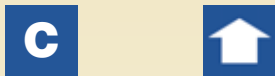


THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC POLICY AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# Tennessee



## PREPARATION

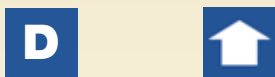


2008 Grade Change Over Time

Tennessee has made strides in preparing young people for college, though compared with other states its performance is only fair.

- Eighth graders perform poorly in math, science, and writing, but student scores on the math test have increased substantially over the past 15 years.
- Only 81% of blacks have a high school credential, compared with 90% of whites.

## PARTICIPATION

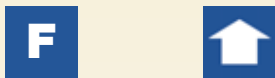


2008 Grade Change Over Time

College opportunities for young and working-age adults are fairly low.

- Despite improvement, the likelihood of enrolling in college by age 19 is only fair.
- Twenty-nine percent of black young adults are enrolled in college, compared with 37% of whites.

## AFFORDABILITY



2008 Grade Change Over Time

Despite some improvement over the decade, the costs of higher education remain high for families.

- Poor and working-class families must devote 13% of their income, even after aid, to pay for costs at public four-year colleges. However, Tennessee is among the top-performing states in the share of income needed to pay for public four-year colleges.
- Financial aid to low-income students is low. For every dollar in Pell Grant aid to students, the state spends only 16 cents.

## COMPLETION



2008 Grade Change Over Time

Tennessee performs well in awarding certificates and degrees relative to the number of students enrolled, but relatively few students complete a bachelor's degree in a timely manner.

- Fifty percent of college students complete a bachelor's degree within six years of enrolling.
- Forty-one percent of blacks graduate within six years, compared with 53% of whites.

## REPORT CARD

Preparation	C
Participation	D
Affordability	F
Completion	C
Benefits	C
Learning	I

## WHAT DO THE ARROWS MEAN?



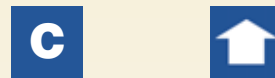
State has increased or remained stable on the key indicator in the category.



State has declined on the key indicator in the category.

See back page for key indicator by category.

## BENEFITS



2008 Grade Change Over Time

A small proportion of residents have a bachelor's degree, and this weakens the state economy.

- Fifteen percent of blacks have a bachelor's degree, compared with 25% of whites.
- If all racial/ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total annual personal income in the state would be about \$5 billion higher.

## LEARNING



2008 Grade

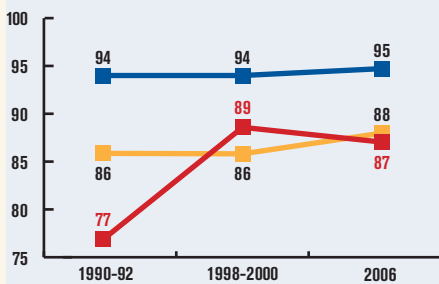
Like all states, Tennessee receives an "Incomplete" in Learning because there is not sufficient data to allow meaningful state-by-state comparisons.

This page reflects Tennessee's performance and progress since the early 1990s on several key indicators.

## PREPARATION

The percentage of young adults in Tennessee who earn a high school diploma has increased substantially since the early 1990s. However, high school completion is slightly below the U.S. average and below the top-performing states.

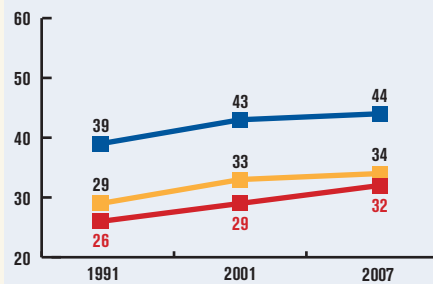
**Percentage of 18-24 Year-Olds with a High School Credential\***



## PARTICIPATION

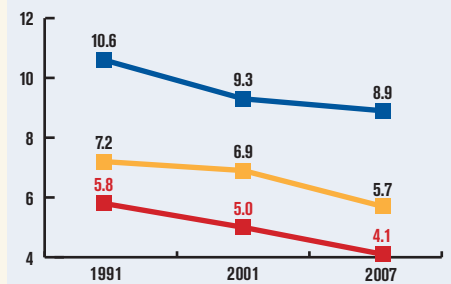
College enrollment of young adults in Tennessee has improved substantially since the early 1990s. The state is slightly below the national average and well below the top states in the percentage of young adults enrolled.

**Percentage of 18-24 Year-Olds Enrolled in College\***



The enrollment of working-age adults, relative to the number of residents without a bachelor's degree, has declined in Tennessee—as it has nationally and in the best-performing states. The percentage attending college in Tennessee is well below the U.S. average and the top states.

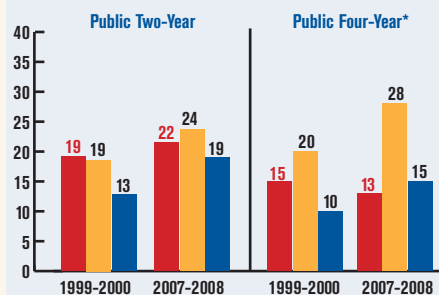
**Percentage of 25-49 Year-Olds Without a Bachelor's Degree Enrolled in College**



## AFFORDABILITY

The share of family income, after financial aid, needed to pay for college has risen at two-year colleges but has declined slightly at four-year institutions. To attend public two-year colleges in Tennessee, students and families pay less than the U.S. average, but more than those in the best-performing states. Tennessee is among the best states in the share of income needed to pay for public four-year colleges.

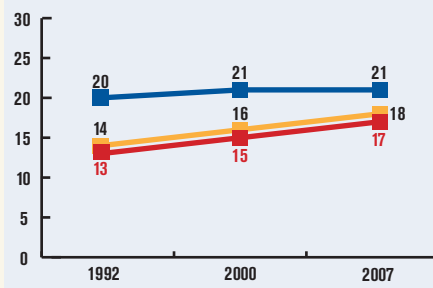
**Percentage of Income Needed to Pay for Public Two- and Four-Year Colleges**



## COMPLETION

The number of undergraduate credentials and degrees awarded in Tennessee, relative to the number of students enrolled, has increased since the early 1990s. Tennessee performs near the U.S. average but below the top states on this measure.

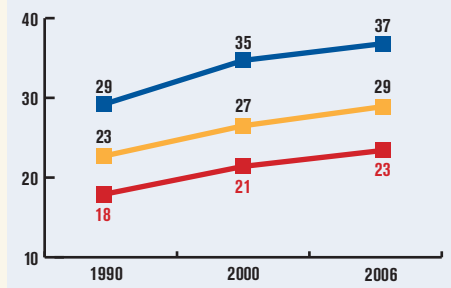
**All Degree Completions per 100 Students\***



## BENEFITS

The percentage of residents who have a bachelor's degree has increased in Tennessee, but remains well below the U.S. average and the top states.

**Percentage of 25-64 Year-Olds with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher\***



\*Key indicator for the category.

## LEGEND:

- & ■ = Tennessee
- & ■ = United States
- & ■ = Median of Top Five States



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