INTRO: Hello, I’m (first name) and I’m with a market research firm that’s conducting a survey about some important issues in Tennessee. I am not trying to sell you anything. Would you mind spending about 15 minutes answering some questions? Your answers will remain confidential.

S1. Are you currently employed, meaning you work at least 30 hours a week? (screen out those who answer no)

S2. Do you or does a member of your household currently work for a media outlet? (screen out those who answer yes)

S3. Are you or is a member of your household employed by the Tennessee state government? (screen out those who answer yes)

S4. Do you or does a member of your household work for a university or other institution of higher learning? (screen out those who answer yes)

S5. Are you registered to vote? (screen out those who answer no)

Q1. In general, when thinking about the value of a college education today, would you say that the overall value most college graduates get back over their lifetime is:

1. Worth more than the cost of attending college 36% Worth => costs
2. Worth less than the cost 36% 59%
3. About equal to what they pay for college 23%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 5%

Q2. In general, how important do you think it is for someone to have a college degree or a career-related certificate beyond a high school diploma? Would you say it is:

1. Very important 53% Total important
2. Somewhat important 34% 87%
3. Not very important 9%
4. Not at all important 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 1%

I’m going to read you some statements about education. For each one, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement.
Q3A. A college degree or certification beyond high school is essential for getting a good job.

1. Strongly agree 38% Total agree
2. Somewhat agree 34% 72%
3. Neither agree nor disagree 8%
4. Somewhat disagree 12% Total Disagree
5. Strongly disagree 8% 20%
6. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA -

Q3B. A college degree or certification beyond high school leads to a higher income.

1. Strongly agree 47% Total agree
2. Somewhat agree 32% 79%
3. Neither agree nor disagree 8%
4. Somewhat disagree 7% Total disagree
5. Strongly disagree 5% 12%
6. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA

Q4. How about you? What is the highest level of education that you completed?
[READ CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY]

1. Less than high school 1%
2. High school 14%
3. Some college 19%
4. Associate degree or certificate 14%
5. College degree 33%
6. Postgraduate degree (M.A, LLD, Ph.D.) 18%
7. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA [DON’T READ] 1%

Q4A. [ASK if Q4==3] How many semesters did you complete? [READ CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY]

1. 2 semesters or less 28%
2. 3 to 4 semesters 36%
3. 5 or more semesters 30%
4. DON’T KNOW/CAN’T REMEMBER 6%
Q5. [ASK IF Q4==3|4|5|6] Do you currently have student loan debt?

1. Yes 23%
2. No 77%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA -

Q6. [ASK IF Q4==5|6] How useful would you say your college education has been in preparing you for a job or career? Would you say:

1. Very useful 52%
2. Somewhat useful 32%
3. Not too useful 7%
4. Not at all useful 8%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA -

Q7. [ASK IF Q4<=3] For each of the following, please tell me whether or not it has been an obstacle to you in completing a college degree. [RANDOMIZE Q7A-Q7F]

Q7A. Family responsibilities

1. Yes 63%
2. No 33%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 4%

Q7B. Job or work responsibilities

1. Yes 65%
2. No 30%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 5%

Q7C. The cost of a degree

1. Yes 67%
2. No 29%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 4%

Q7D. The difficulty of finding classes that fit your schedule

1. Yes 46%
2. No 48%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 6%
### Q7E. The time it would take to complete a degree

1. Yes 53%
2. No 42%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 5%

### Q7F. The student loan debt you would have to take on

1. Yes 56%
2. No 39%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 5%

### Q8. Do you think of your current job as a career, as a steppingstone to a career, or do you think of it as just a job to get you by?

1. A career 64%
2. A steppingstone to a career 14%
3. Just a job to get you by 20%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

### Q9. [ASK IF Q8==2|3] In general, do you feel you have the education and training necessary to get the kind of job or career you would like to have, or do you need more education and training?

1. Have necessary education and training 49%
2. Need more 47%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 4%

### Q10. [ASK IF Q8==1] In general, do you feel you have the education and training necessary to get ahead in your job or career, OR do you need more education and training?

1. Have necessary education and training 83%
2. Need more 15%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%
Q11. Do you ever plan to return to school?

1. Yes 16%
2. No 62%
3. Maybe 21%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 1%

Thanks for sharing your opinions about education with us. Now we would like to ask you a few general questions about college education in Tennessee.

Q12. In terms of higher education and workforce development, how would you rate the following in terms of what should be the top priorities of Governor Bill Lee’s administration? Would you say they should be a top priority, a middle priority, a low priority, or not a priority at all?

12A. Affordability of college and technical training

1. Top 58%
2. Middle 30%
3. Low 6%
4. Not at all 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

12B. Access to college and technical training in rural areas

1. Top 57%
2. Middle 31%
3. Low 7%
4. Not at all 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

12C. College readiness

1. Top 53%
2. Middle 33%
3. Low 9%
4. Not at all 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%
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12D. Student debt

1. Top 50%
2. Middle 30%
3. Low 12%
4. Not at all 7%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

12E. Graduation/completion rates

1. Top 49%
2. Middle 35%
3. Low 11%
4. Not at all 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

12F. Ability of graduates to succeed in the workplace

1. Top 57%
2. Middle 28%
3. Low 9%
4. Not at all 4%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%

Q13. Former Governor Haslam devoted a good amount of his time and resources to higher education and workforce development. Do you think Governor Bill Lee’s administration should spend more time and resources, about the same, or less than the Haslam administration on higher education and workforce development?

1. More 36%
2. About the same 50%
3. Less than 8%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 6%

Q14A. How familiar are you with the Drive to 55 initiative? Would you say you are:

1. Very familiar 7%
2. Somewhat familiar 17%
3. Have heard of it but are not familiar 22%
4. Not familiar at all 52%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 2%
Q14B. Governor Bill Lee’s predecessor, Bill Haslam, started the Drive to 55, which seeks to equip 55% of Tennesseans with a postsecondary certificate by 2025, primarily through free community college for all Tennesseans who do not hold degrees.

How should Governor Bill Lee’s administration proceed with the initiative? Would you say he should:

1. Keep it intact as is 30%
2. Strengthen it by allocating more resources 43%
3. Replace it with a new approach 12%
4. End it entirely 6%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 9%

Q14C. Since taking office, Governor Bill Lee has focused on increasing higher education opportunities in rural areas. Do you agree or disagree with Gov. Lee’s emphasis on increasing higher education opportunities in rural areas?

1. Strongly agree 53%  Total agree 81%
2. Somewhat agree 28% 77%
3. Neither agree nor disagree 8%
4. Somewhat disagree 4%
5. Strongly disagree 3%
6. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 4%

Q15. How would you rate the options most people have for attending college in Tennessee? Would you say they are excellent, good, not very good, or poor?

1. Excellent 19%  Total positive 77%
2. Good 58%
3. Not very good 15%
4. Poor 3%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 5%

Q16. Do you think Tennessee’s state government should increase its funding for college education, keep it about the same, or decrease the amount it spends?

1. Increase 48%
2. Keep it same 39%
3. Decrease 10%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 4%
Q17. When it comes to ensuring that public schools prepare students for college-level work, would you say the Tennessee state government:

1. Should do more to ensure students are prepared 61%
2. Is doing a good job at its current level 26%
3. Or, is already devoting too much money and resources 8%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 6%

Q18. If you were giving advice to a student entering their senior year of high school today on whether they should pursue a college degree, would you tell them:

1. They should definitely pursue a degree 43%
2. Probably should pursue a degree 39%
3. Doesn’t really matter one way or the other 10%
4. Definitely no need to pursue a degree 2%
5. Don’t know/no opinion (Do Not Read) 6%

Q19. From what you know or understand, do you think Tennessee’s colleges and universities provide adequate financial aid for students who want to obtain a college degree? If you don’t have an opinion, just say so.

1. Yes 33%
2. No 28%
3. No opinion 32%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 7%

Q20. Do you personally view the problem of student loan debt for people in the United States to be a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?

1. Major problem 66%
2. Minor problem 23%
3. Not a problem 9%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 3%

Q21. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: For Tennessee’s economy to compete with other states, it is essential to have an educated workforce. Would you say you:

1. Strongly agree 66% Total agree
2. Somewhat agree 26% 91%
3. Somewhat disagree 5%
4. Strongly disagree 1%
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 3%
Now I’d like to ask you about online college education.

**Q22.** Generally speaking, do you think that online college degree programs are better, about the same, or worse than traditional, in-person degree programs?

1. Better 10%
2. About the same 53%
3. Worse 30%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 8%

**Q23.** Generally speaking, do you think that employers rate an employee who has received their college degree from an online degree program the same, better, or worse than a similar applicant who has received their degree from a traditional, in-person degree program?

1. The same 43%
2. Better 9%
3. Worse 38%
4. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 10%

**Q24.** The nontraditional HOPE scholarship program, funded by our state lottery, provides tuition assistance for qualifying Tennesseans age 25 and older who are returning to college or enrolling for the first time. It is available for those attending two- and four-year colleges in Tennessee, and can be used to pursue degrees through online programs at those schools.

Some people argue that these HOPE scholarships should be available for students enrolled at other state-approved online universities. Would you say you:

1. Strongly agree 29% Total agree
2. Somewhat agree 39% 68%
3. Somewhat disagree 16%
4. Strongly disagree 9% Total disagree
5. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA 7% 25%

*We’re almost done. The final questions are for statistical purposes.*

**GENDER. (BY OBSERVATION)**

1. Male 49%
2. Female 51%
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D1. REGION

Do you live in East, Middle or West Tennessee?

1. West Tennessee 25%
2. Middle Tennessee 35%
3. East Tennessee 40%
4. Don’t know (Terminate) -

D2. AGE

1. 18–34 21%
2. 35–44 20%
3. 45–64 46%
4. 65+ 13%

D3. RACE

What is your race or ethnic group?

1. White/Anglo 82%
2. African-American 11%
3. Hispanic/Other 5%
4. Declined 2%

D4. Do you have children living in your residence?

1. Yes 44%
2. No 56%
3. REFUSED -

D5. Do either of your parents have a degree or certificate beyond high school?

1. Yes 48%
2. No 51%
3. Don’t know 1%

D6. What was your total household income for 2018? Would you say: [READ CATEGORIES]

1. Under $40,000 22%
2. $40,000 to $75,000 28%
3. More than $75,000 45%
4. Declined/Don’t Know 5%

D7. These days, many colleges and universities offer courses online. Have you ever taken a course online?

1. Yes 41%
2. No 59%
3. DON’T KNOW/REFUSED/NA -