

**A RESOLUTION OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE
SUPPORTING GOVERNOR
BILL HASLAM'S
"DRIVE TO 55" INITIATIVE**

**REQUESTED BY:
LYNNE FUGATE
BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIR**

**PREPARED BY:
THE STAFF OF THE
KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this body offer its unwavering support of Governor Bill Haslam's "Drive to 55" initiative, which has as its noble goal to increase in the number of Tennesseans with college degrees or certifications to 55% by the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, at present, only 32% of Tennesseans possess a degree or certificate beyond the high school level, and Governor Haslam's initiative is necessary to ensure that Tennessee will be able to meet future job demands; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that Tennessee embark upon this mission for higher education and workforce and economic development, a mission which will ultimately reduce unemployment and improve the quality of life for many Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, the State currently ranks forty-second in the nation for working adults with a two-year degree or higher, nearly 70% of Tennessee's students entering community college require remedial classes, more than 20,000 of our high school graduates choose not to continue their education each year, and approximately 940,000 adult Tennesseans who have some college credit haven't earned an associate's or four-year degree; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's initiative has made a number of improvements to Tennessee's educational system thus far, including budgeting \$16.5 million for equipment and technology related to workforce development programs, the launch of WGU Tennessee, an online, competency-based university aimed at the adults with some college credit but no degree, an endowment of \$47 million from the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation to provide nearly \$2 million each year for scholarships for "last dollar" scholarship programs, the launch of the Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support program, which gives support to students in need of attention in the subject of math during their senior year in high school, the sponsoring of legislation creating the Labor Education Alignment program, which will coordinate stakeholders on the state and local levels to address workforce readiness, and the creation of new online learning programs in Tennessee through partnerships with edX and Coursera; and

WHEREAS, "Drive to 55" is an important and necessary endeavor for the future of this State, and it is wholly fitting that Governor Haslam receive the full support of this body for this challenging and forward-thinking program;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knox County Board of Education does hereby endorse and support Governor Bill Haslam’s “Drive to 55” initiative and the mission of equipping more Tennesseans with the post-secondary education, skills and training they need for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Board Chair **Date**

Approved as to form and correctness:

Director of Law **Date**

Witness:

Notary Public **Date**

Commission Expiration: _____