

Tennessee



Tennessee has a large rural high school student population; these students make up the strong majority of the state's total high school population.

While the majority of TN's rural high schools students is white (75.6%), there is a sizable minority population, the largest part of which is black (13.0%).

TN's rural median family income (\$40,800) is below the overall state median income (\$51,300). Furthermore, rural TN falls in the bottom quintile for economic mobility, meaning the current generation is very unlikely to out earn their parents.

High school graduation as well as AP and SAT/ACT participation rates are a useful college preparedness gauge. The rural population has a very strong graduation rate compared to the rest of the country and is slightly stronger than the rest of TN.

Rural students participate in AP exams at rates similar to their peers across the state, but they take the ACT/SAT at rates a fair bit lower.


The unemployment rate in rural TN is lower than the national average, and only slightly behind the overall state rate, showing a strong job market.

Looking at the top industries in rural parts of the state, none of the categories necessarily require a college degree, at least for the majority of reported roles held. Select roles in other categories (i.e., accounting) may require a degree.

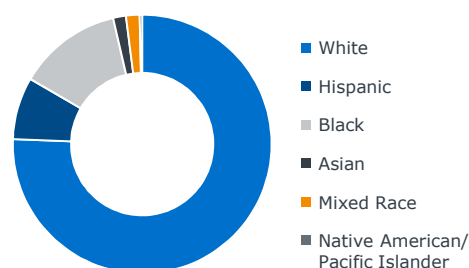
Size of the Rural Market

206,000+
rural students in grades 9-12¹
throughout the state

up to
70.3%
of the state's public high school students attend schools in rural areas



Statewide Rural Diversity Measures



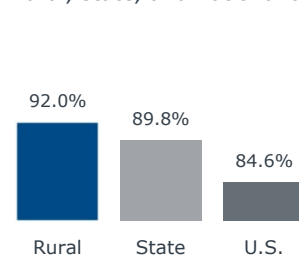
\$40,800
median family income in rural parts of the state

42 of 50
economic mobility ranking
(bottom quintile) ● ● ● ● ●

Academic Preparedness

High School Graduation Rates

Rural, state, and national averages



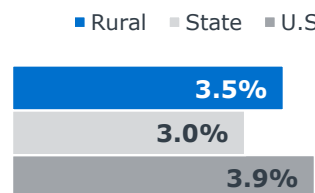
College Readiness Indicators

	Rural	State
Share of junior and senior students who take ACT/SAT per year	51.2%	59.5%
Share of rural HS students taking 1+ AP exams per year	8.1%	8.5%

Employment and Industry Context

Unemployment Rates[†]

Unemployment in rural Tennessee is slightly better than the national rate.



[†] Data as of December 2018

Main Industries in Rural TN

The main industries in the nonmetro areas of the state, excluding retail and food service occupations, are:

- **Office and administrative**
Secretaries; office assistants; bookkeeping and accounting; store clerks; order fillers
- **Production occupations**
Assemblers and fabricators; meat, fish and poultry processors; general production
- **Transportation/material moving**
Truck and tractor trailer drivers; hand freight and stock movers; packing workers

1) 2015-16 NCES private school data shows about 7,000 additional rural students in private schools in the state.

Source: See "Data and Methodology" for a full explanation of resources accessed and analyses conducted.