



IN THIS ISSUE

- ♦ WELCOME BACK!
- ♦ The Importance of e*GRandS (DEG Report)
- ♦ TSAC Student Portal (DEG Deadline Reminder)
- ♦ Fall College/Financial Aid and FAFSA Workshops
- ♦ TSAC Financial Aid Information Brochure
- ♦ Upcoming Events
- ♦ Questions and Answers
- ♦ We Want To Hear From You

TN High School Counselor Update

Helping Tennessee Students Achieve Their Goals Since 1974

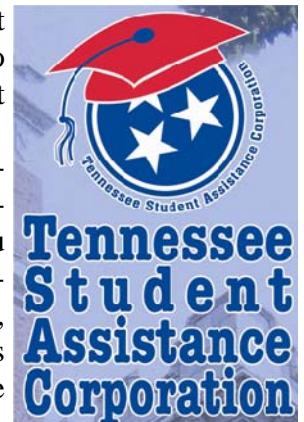
September 2011

Vol. 4

WELCOME BACK!

With Labor Day a week away, the unofficial end of summer is upon us. However, for most of you reading this newsletter, summer ended a month ago when you returned to school to prepare for the 2011-12 academic year and all its changes. Wait a minute, changes?!? What changes!?!

TSAC's Outreach Division has purposefully delayed this month's "welcome back" newsletter as the legislative changes impacting the Dual Enrollment Grant (DEG) and HOPE Scholarship programs (first reported in the summer edition) are implemented and ironed out. As you read the following pages regarding the changes, please keep one phrase in mind: AS OF TODAY. Most of the wrinkles have been ironed out, but a stubborn wrinkle or two may remain, so keep in mind this information is as of today. With that, to new and returning counselors alike, the Outreach Division would like to welcome you back and hope you enjoy reading the fourth edition of the High School Counselor Update.



The Importance Of e*GRandS (DEG Report)



This is a recycled article from the inaugural edition of the High School Counselor Update; however, many school counselors have forgotten the importance of e*GRandS. For those who are unfamiliar, historically, e*GRandS is the program school counselors have accessed via www.tn.gov/collegepays and used to manually enter GPAs for graduating seniors to determine eligibility for the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) Program.

In recent years, per clamor from the school counseling community, TSAC added a downloadable report in e*GRandS to assist school counselors in determining who has applied for the Dual Enrollment Grant. The individual responsible for Dual Enrollment at your high school needs access to this report; if you do not have access to e*GRandS, please contact Jason Seay (jason.seay@tn.gov or 615.253.7459) for access. If you have access but need a refresher, please contact Jason or your Outreach Specialist to schedule a brief training in person or via phone.

TSAC Student Portal (DEG Deadline Reminder)

Students have to access TSAC's Student Portal via www.tn.gov/collegepays to apply for the Dual Enrollment Grant, Ned McWherter Scholarship, etc. due to TSAC's paperless application initiative. As a reminder, for DEG purposes, a student must complete a new grant application each semester he or she is dual enrolled. September 15 is the fall DEG deadline for students dual enrolling at two- or four-year institutions and November 1 for students dual enrolling at Tennessee Technology Centers. Unfortunately, if a student does not have an application submitted by the appropriate date, he or she will not be eligible for the grant! If students are having trouble with their student portal accounts, please have them contact TSAC's call center at 800.342.1663.

Fall College/Financial Aid & FAFSA Workshops

In Tennessee, as colleges and scholarships become more competitive and increasingly more selective, we have observed a shift in deadlines. Once upon a time, students could wait until well after Christmas to begin the process, but today, students should be encouraged to apply for college admissions and many scholarships prior to Halloween. Please contact your TSAC Outreach Specialist to schedule a college/financial aid workshop this fall. In addition, the Outreach Specialists are now conducting FAFSA workshops at high schools in January and February to assist high school seniors and their parents with the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Please refer to the map to identify your Outreach Specialist. Calendars are quickly filling up, so the sooner you contact your Outreach Specialist the better.



Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation Outreach Division

Carol Stephenson
731.571.7888
carol.stephenson@tn.gov

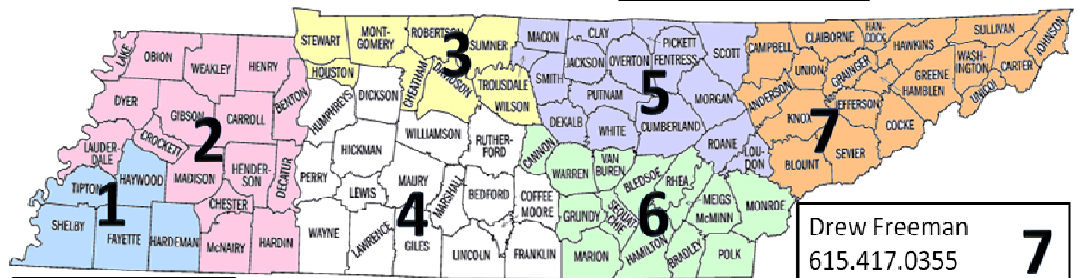
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James Snider
615.517.1033
james.snider@tn.gov

3

Sam Mullins
931.303.3296
sam.mullins@tn.gov

5



Felicia Orr
615.390.4461
felicia.orr@tn.gov

1

Annie Trout
615.604.0119
annie.trout@tn.gov

4

Eric Farmer
423.326.7198
eric.farmer@tn.gov

Drew Freeman
615.417.0355
drew.freeman@tn.gov

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TSAC Financial Aid Information Brochure



The updated TSAC Financial Aid Information brochure is available now and reflects the recent changes to the Dual Enrollment Grant and HOPE Scholarship programs. The Outreach Specialists have begun delivering the brochure based on your "preorders." If you did not preorder and need brochures by a certain date, please contact your Outreach Specialist. As in previous years, a box contains 600 brochures banded in fifties. Any size order (i.e. 10 brochures or 10 boxes of brochures) can be accommodated.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 8, 2011

College Board Fall Counselor Workshop
Rhodes College

<http://counselorworkshops.collegeboard.org/>

Friday, September 9, 2011

College Board Fall Counselor Workshop
Nashville State Community College

<http://counselorworkshops.collegeboard.org/>

Monday, September 12, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Tuesday, September 13, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Lee University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Thursday, September 15, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
East Tennessee State University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Tennessee Technological University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Lipscomb University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Thursday, September 22, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Lipscomb University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Friday, September 23, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Austin Peay State University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
University of Memphis

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
University of Memphis

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

College Board Fall Counselor Workshop
Pellissippi State Community College

<http://counselorworkshops.collegeboard.org/>

Thursday, September 29, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Union University

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>

Friday, September 30, 2011

ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop
Columbia State Community College

<http://act.org/ccrw/register.html>



Monday, October 24 - Friday, October 28, 2011

Tennessee College Application Week
College For TN

<http://www.collegefortn.org>

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH (Legislative Changes)

What changed with the Dual Enrolment Grant (DEG)?

A high school junior or senior may receive one additional DEG each semester for one additional dual enrollment course if the student has met HOPE Scholarship eligibility requirements. If HOPE eligible, the student can receive up to \$600 per semester (two courses) or \$1,200 per academic year (four courses).



I know this, but just in case, run the HOPE Scholarship eligibility requirements by me.

To receive one additional grant per semester, a student attending a Tennessee public high school or category 1, 2, or 3 private school must have attained a 21 ACT/980 SAT on any single test taken on a national or state test date **or** at least a 3.0 cumulative weighted high school GPA for all high school work completed prior to the semester of enrollment as a dual enrollment student. If the student is attending a category 4 private school or Tennessee-based home school program, the student can only qualify for the additional DEG based on the ACT/SAT composite score on any single test taken on a national or state test date.

Does the school counselor play a role in HOPE verification for DEG purposes?

As of today, the school counselor is not manually verifying ACT/SAT/GPA for DEG purposes via e*GRandS or XAP like you do for HOPE. The GPA will be verified by the institution via the cumulative transcript provided by the high school. The ACT/SAT will also be verified by the college assuming the student indicated the institution on the score report.

Sounds great, is there a catch to receiving the additional DEGs students should be aware of?

The initial four DEGs are without penalty. Funds received from the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth DEGs will be deducted from the student's initial HOPE Scholarship on a dollar for dollar basis. For example, I am a HOPE eligible senior who received two DEGs last year. I have enrolled in two dual enrollment courses this fall and have received two more DEGs. This student has now received her initial four DEGs. Funds from one or both DEGs received in the spring would be deducted dollar for dollar from her initial HOPE Scholarship.

Alright, I believe I understand, so what are the deductions?

If a fifth award is received, then \$300 will be deducted from the initial HOPE Scholarship award; if a sixth, then \$600; if a seventh, then \$900; and if an eighth, then \$1,200 will be deducted. Again, the deduction will occur from the initial semester's award or any subsequent semester's award until funds have been recouped.

Does a student planning to go out-of-state for college have to repay funds from using the fifth, sixth, seventh, and/or eighth DEGs?

No, she would not have to repay funds because per statute, they can only be deducted from the HOPE Scholarship (including Aspire or General Assembly Merit Scholarship supplements) and the HOPE Access Grant. If the student ever transferred back to Tennessee to finish college and if the student was still HOPE eligible, then at that time, the initial HOPE Scholarship award would be deducted appropriately.

What about students attending Tennessee Technology Centers after high school, will funds be deducted from the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant too?

No, again per statute, deductions may only occur from the HOPE Scholarship (including Aspire or General Assembly Merit Scholarship supplements) and the HOPE Access Grant.

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH (cont.)

Please clarify, does dual enrollment impact a student's HOPE eligibility in college!?!

Based on the rules for the DEG and the HOPE Scholarship, hours attempted at a postsecondary institution prior to high school graduation do not count against the student's HOPE Scholarship "clock" and grades earned are not calculated into the student's lottery college GPA.

To receive the additional DEG, does a student have to complete an additional DEG application?

Students who qualify for the additional grant will still only need to complete one application each semester for both DEGs via TSAC's Student Portal.

Is there anything else from a DEG perspective which needs to be completed?

Beginning next semester and thereafter, prior to receiving a fifth DEG, a student will need to complete the Additional Courses Agreement (ACA) form available for download via TSAC's website. Once signed, the student should take the ACA form to the institution in which she is dual enrolled.

Finally, what changed with the HOPE Scholarship?

Students, including nontraditional students, who initially received the HOPE Scholarship in the Fall 2009 semester and thereafter will be eligible to use the HOPE Scholarship for the summer term (beginning with Summer 2012). To be eligible for a summer award, a college student must first receive the HOPE Scholarship during the fall and/or spring semesters. The terminating events for these students also changed reverting back to what they were when the program began. Eligibility will be terminated upon reaching the first of the following events:

- earn a baccalaureate degree, or
- attempt a total of 120 semester hours, or
- if the program of study requires more than 120 hours, attempt the number of semester hours required to earn the undergraduate degree or 136 semester hours, whichever is less, or
- 5 years have passed from date of initial enrollment at any postsecondary institution (exceptions may be available to students with documented medical disabilities)

We Want to Hear From You

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) needs your help to learn more about how high school counselors are counseling students about going to college. The information obtained will be used to apply resources, as appropriate, if gaps exist and provide training opportunities where necessary.



In recent months, several of you were contacted to pilot this research, but this fall, the survey will be disseminated to all public school counselors statewide. The questions should take about ten minutes to complete. Again, a link to the survey will be emailed this fall, so thank you ahead of time for your participation.