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STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**From:** Mike Krause, Executive Director  
Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation

**Date:** July 17, 2020

**Re:** Qualifying ACT Exam Scores for Fall 2020

In response to widespread ACT exam cancellations across the state in June and July, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation ("TSAC") is suspending requirements that limit when a student must earn a qualifying score, as well as what kind of ACT examinations a student may take to qualify for the HOPE Scholarship, the General Assembly Merit Scholarship ("GAMS"), the HOPE Access Grant, and the Dual Enrollment Grant. The purpose of this action is to provide additional opportunities for students to take the exam and attain the necessary minimum ACT composite score required for eligibility. This suspension of TSAC policy will be effective for the Fall 2020 term and will be evaluated later this year to determine if an extension for the Spring 2021 term is necessary.

### **HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Scholarship with GAMS, and HOPE Access Grant**

Existing policy for these programs requires students to earn the minimum qualifying ACT composite score on a scheduled national or state exam taken prior to beginning classes in their freshman year. TSAC is suspending this policy to allow incoming freshman students to qualify for these programs using a score on a national or state ACT exam taken anytime during the Fall 2020 term.

Additionally, TSAC is suspending its current policy which prohibits the use of ACT "residual" exam scores for the purpose of qualifying for these programs. By arrangement with ACT, Inc., a participating institution may offer an on-campus or "residual" ACT exam to students who were unable to qualify on an ACT national or state testing date. Consistent with ACT policy, a student who qualifies for these programs using an ACT residual exam score may only receive program funding

toward attendance at the institution that administered the exam. TSAC will accept qualifying scores on residual exams taken from March 19, 2020 through the last day of the institution's Fall 2020 term.

These temporary policy changes apply to 2020 high school and homeschool graduates, as well as 2019 high school and home school graduates enrolling for the first time in the Fall 2020 term within 16 months of graduation.

### **Dual Enrollment Grant**

A student qualifies to receive the Dual Enrollment Grant for one course per semester by meeting the admission requirements of the institution the student plans to attend. A student may become eligible to receive Dual Enrollment Grant funding for more than one course in the same semester by attaining a minimum composite ACT score of 21.

TSAC is suspending its current policy to allow high school juniors and seniors, including homeschool students, to qualify for Dual Enrollment Grant funding for up to two (2) additional courses in the Fall 2020 term if they attain a composite score of 21 on a residual ACT exam, as described above.

We will continue to monitor the impact from COVID-19 on our state to determine whether the suspension of these policies should continue beyond the Fall term of 2020.