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Executive Director

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STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION
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MEMORANDUM

To: Tennessee Promise Eligible Postsecondary Institutions
From: Dr. Emily House, Executive Director
Date: March 22, 2021
Re: Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect Enrollment Levels

We hope that you and your families remain safe and healthy. We also express our sincere appreciation for all that you continue to do to serve your students in spite of the many current, extraordinary challenges.

On April 6, 2020, TSAC provided guidance regarding changes in enrollment (COE) and leaves of absence (LOA) taken during the spring and summer terms of the 2019- 20 academic year. This guidance stated that schools should consider COVID-19 an extenuating circumstance as it relates to a student's LOA or COE for those terms. Under this guidance, an appeal was not required of Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect students whose enrollment in the beginning of the summer term was less than the required minimum number of credit hours.

On July 15, 2020, TSAC extended that guidance to include the fall term of the 2020-21 academic year. On October 14, 2020, this guidance was extended to include the spring term of 2021. Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on student enrollment, TSAC is now extending that guidance to the summer term of 2021 as it relates to Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect students who start a semester enrolled less than the required minimum number of credit hours.

TSAC considers the COVID-19 crisis to constitute extraordinary circumstances beyond a student's control, providing sufficient grounds for relief from these enrollment requirements. TSAC also considers the Executive Orders of Governor Lee, and official guidance from the Tennessee Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to be sufficient evidence to constitute a documented medical or personal leave of absence for such students. These students may receive payment for the summer semester, and remain eligible for the program in the fall of 2021, even though they are enrolled in less than the required minimum number of credit hours at the beginning of the semester. Again, these students should not be required to submit an appeal or additional documentation or justification for failure to enroll in

the required minimum number of credit hours at the beginning of the summer 2021 semester.

However, this does not apply in situations where Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect students change enrollment status from full-time to less than full-time or from part-time to less than part-time during the semester. Under these circumstances, a student should be required to submit an appeal.

This guidance supersedes any previous guidance issued by TSAC on the topic.

Please contact James Snider at James.Snider@tn.gov if you have questions regarding this guidance.

Signature: emily house
emily house (Mar 22, 2021 13:50 CDT)

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