

# TENNESSEE STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

Minutes of the Fall Meeting

Conference Room A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Tennessee Tower

312 Rosa L. Parks Ave.

Nashville, TN

September 27, 2022

Link to recording:

[TSAC Board Meeting 9/27/2022 \(tn.gov\)](#)

Chairman Niknejad called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

<b>Member</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Chairman Tony Niknejad (for Governor Bill Lee)	X	
Ashley Nabors (for Treasurer David Lillard)	X	
Lauren Spires (for Comptroller Jason Mumpower)	X	
Doree Hicks (for Commissioner Jim Bryson)	X	
Commissioner Penny Schwinn		X
President Randy Boyd, University of Tennessee		X
Dr. Heidi Leming (for Chancellor Flora Tydings)	X	
Dr. Claude O. Pressnell, TICUA	X	
Charles Harper	X	
Cyrus Vatandoost, TPBSA	X	

At the start of the meeting five (5) members were physically present: Chairman Tony Niknejad, Ms. Ashley Nabors, Ms. Doree Hicks, Dr. Claude Pressnell, and Mr. Charles Harper. There were three (3) members, Ms. Lauren Spires, Mr. Cyrus Vatandoost, and Dr. Heidi Leming, participating virtually via telephone, for a total of eight (8) members participating in the meeting. There was not a quorum physically present at the meeting.

## **ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION NECESSITY**

Chairman Niknejad recognized Chief Aid and Compliance Officer Peter Abernathy to read the following statement:

As you may have determined from the introductions, we do not have a quorum that is physically present here today. As such, Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-44-108(b)(2), requires that the Board make a determination that a necessity exists in order for a quorum of members to participate by electronic or other means of communication.

A “necessity” means that the matters to be considered by a public body at a meeting require timely action by the body, that physical presence by a quorum of the members is not practical within the period of time requiring action, and that participation by a quorum of the members by electronic or other means of communication is necessary.

In this case, two facts support a determination of necessity:

First, today’s agenda items require timely action by the Board to allow TSAC staff, our institutions of higher education, and other partners and stakeholders to continue to serve students effectively and efficiently.

Second, scheduling conflicts and other commitments prevented a quorum of members from being physically present today.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion that the electronic participation is necessary for this meeting. Ms. Ashley Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

#### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt the agenda. Ms. Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously with eight (8) ayes.

#### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, MINUTES**

Ms. Hicks made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously with eight (8) ayes.

#### **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:**

Chairman Niknejad delivered his report.

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:**

Lou Hanemann, Chief of Staff, provided the Executive Director report on behalf of Dr. House.

### **I. Decision Items**

#### **A. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-09 Ned McWherter Scholars Program**

Brett Gipson, Deputy Chief Aid and Compliance Officer, provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to provide clarity and consistency between statute, rule, and other TSAC programs; the removal of duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, information was provided on the rewording and reorganization of existing provisions to provide better clarity around current concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Ms. Nabors made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-09 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules, including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed with seven (7) ayes and one abstention from Dr. Pressnell.

**B. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-13 Minority Teaching Fellows Program**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to provide clarity and consistency between statute, rule, and other TSAC programs; the removal of duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, information was provided on the rewording and reorganization of existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-13 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules, including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**C. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-14 Dependent Children Scholarship**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to provide clarity and consistency between statute, rule, and other TSAC programs; the removal of duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, information was provided on the rewording and reorganization of existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-14 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules, including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Hicks seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**D. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-19 Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to provide clarity and consistency between statute, rule, and other TSAC programs; the addition

of clarifying provisions to support expansion of eligibility for HOPE Scholarship for Non-Traditional Students enacted by Public Chapter 1116; the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, refund policy, and a and extension process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs; and the rewording and reorganization of existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels to be consistent with other TSAC programs and the removal of DEG Rules. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Board members asked questions and a discussion was held. Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-19 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**E. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-22 Helping Heroes Grant Program**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to provide clarity and consistency between statute, rule, and other TSAC programs; the removal of duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund Policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, information was provided on the rewording and reorganization of existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Board members asked questions and a discussion was held. Tim Phelps, Senior Director for Grant & Scholarship Programs answered questions about the program. Ms. Hicks made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-22 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules, including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**F. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-26 Tennessee Promise Scholarship**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to be consistent with current terminology and practice; the addition of new provisions and definitions to support the changes enacted by Public Chapter 1125 as it relates to early high school graduates; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, the rewording and reorganization to existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following

approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Ms. Hicks made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-26 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Dr. Pressnell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**G. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-28 Tennessee Reconnect Grant**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the addition, revision, or deletion of definitions to be consistent with current terminology and practice; the addition of clarifying provisions to support expansion of eligibility to age 23 enacted by Public Chapter 116; the addition of clarifying provisions to address the application of terminating event limits in situations where a student has yet to receive a TN Reconnect award or changes their major after completing all credential requirements; and the editing of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, leave of absence, refund policy, award made in error, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. Additionally, information was provided on the rewording and reorganization to existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-28 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

**H. Adoption of Rule 1640-01-31 Dual Enrollment Program**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the new rule that was previously a part of the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) Rules. Since eligibility requirements, population served, and award structure are completely distinct from other TELS awards, it is more appropriate for DEG to have its own set of rules. This new rule added provisions to effectuate significant changes to DEG enacted by Public Chapter 116; the removal of duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute; and the inclusion of common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, refund policy, and appeal and exception process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs. These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Board members asked questions and a discussion was held. Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Chapter 1640-01-31 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Nabors seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

## **I. Repeal of Rules:**

- 1) **1640-01-02 Guaranteed Student Loan Program;**
- 2) **1640-01-04 Medical Loan-Scholarship Program;**
- 3) **1640-01-07 Auxiliary Loans to Assist Students Program;**
- 4) **1640-01-08 Teacher Loan/Scholarship;**
- 5) **1640-01-10 Christa McAuliffe Scholarship Program;**
- 6) **1640-01-12 Teacher Loan Program for Disadvantaged Areas of Tennessee;**
- 7) **1640-01-15 Community College Education Recruitment Scholarship for Minorities;**
- 8) **1640-01-16 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program;**
- 9) **1640-01-18 Tennessee Student Employment Incentive Program;**
- 10) **1640-01-23 Procedures Affecting Professional Licenses; and,**
- 11) **1640-01-27 Community College Reconnect Grant**

Mr. Gipson provided information on the eleven (11) individual state aid programs terminated at the state and federal level that are no longer in operation. TSAC is recommending that these rules be repealed following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Board members asked questions and a discussion was held. Ms. Nabors made a motion to repeal these rules for student aid programs no longer in existence. Ms. Hicks seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

## **J. Board Officers for 2022-23**

Chairman Niknejad stated that pursuant to Article V. of TSAC's Bylaws, the Board is to elect officers at its annual meeting to serve one (1) year terms. The officers consist of a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer. The current board officers are as follows:

Chairman: Bill Lee, Governor  
Vice Chairman: Flora Tydings, Board of Regents  
Treasurer: David Lillard, Jr., Treasury  
Secretary: Claude Pressnell, TICUA

Ms. Hicks made a motion to re-elect the current board members for an additional term for 2022-2023. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with eight (8) ayes.

## **II. Discussion Items**

### **A. 2020-21 TELS and 2020-21 Grants and Scholarship Reports: TSAC Profile**

Mr. Tim Phelps summarized the 2020-21 academic year for grants and scholarship spending and awards, including that the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) programs provided over \$372.8 million to over 139,000 students, and almost \$113 million in other state

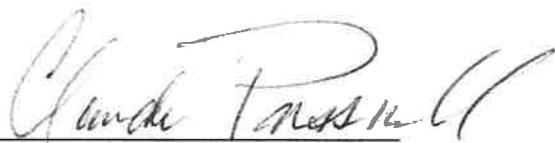
aid was awarded to more than 69,000 students. Board members asked questions and a discussion followed.

**B. Tennessee Promise Scholarship and Tennessee Reconnect Grant Update**

James Snider, TSAC Tennessee Promise Director, provided an update on the Tennessee Promise Scholarship and Tennessee Reconnect Grant, including those participants in cohort one (1) of the Tennessee Reconnect Grant had a 61% participation and success rate and that the Tennessee Promise College Coaching and COMPLETE grant disbursed \$650,000 during fall of 2022.

**III. Other Business**

There were no comments for other business. Chairman Niknejad adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Claude Russell", written in black ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial "C" and "R".

**TSAC Secretary**