

TENNESSEE STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

Minutes of the Fall Meeting

Conference Room E, 3rd Floor, Tennessee Tower

312 Rosa L. Parks Ave.

Nashville, TN

September 26, 2023

Link to recording:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/thec/about-thec-tsac/tennessee-student-assistance-corporation/redirect-tsac/tsac-board-meeting/tsac-board-meeting---september-2023.html>

Chairwoman Freeland called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Member	PRESENT	ABSENT
Chairwoman Chrissy Freeland (for Governor Bill Lee)	X	
Dr. Claude O. Pressnell, TICUA	X	
Rachel Offutt (for Treasurer David Lillard)	X	
Lance Iverson (for Comptroller Jason Mumpower)	X	
Greg Turner (for Commissioner Jim Bryson)	X	
Deborah Knoll (for Commissioner Lizette Reynolds)	X	
Dr. Heidi Leming (for Chancellor Flora Tydings)	X	
Dr. Linda Martin (for President Randy Boyd)	X	
Jennifer Byrd, TSAFAA	X	
Cyrus Vatandoost, TPBSA	X	

At the start of the meeting nine (9) members were physically present and one (1) member was participating electronically, constituting a quorum. Dr. Martin participated electronically. At all times voting occurred, there was a physical quorum present at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt the agenda. Dr. Martin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022, MINUTES

Dr. Leming made a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Pressnell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairwoman Freeland delivered her report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Dr. Steven Gentile, Interim Executive Director, delivered his report.

TASFAA PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Ms. Jennifer Byrd delivered her report.

I. Decision Items**A. Emergency Rule 1640-01-32 – Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship**

Mr. Tim Phelps, Senior Director of Grant and Scholarship Programs, provided information on an Emergency Rule Filing where the proposed rules, once filed with the Secretary of State, will remain in effect for 180 days. This agenda item would adopt a new Rule, Chapter 1640-01-32, Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship, as Emergency Rules and authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to this Rule, including changes required by the Tennessee Attorney General. Recipients of the Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship must be either junior or senior status in an approved educator preparation program, be eligible for the HOPE scholarship, and file a FAFSA annually. Recipients must sign a promissory note indicating their commitment to teach in a Tennessee K-12 public school in a targeted setting for four (4) years. Awards are up to tuition and fees after other gift aid is applied. Recipients will receive forgiveness of twenty-five percent (25%) of the total amount received for each year of teaching, and all administrative provisions are consistent with other TSAC financial aid programs.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to adopt Emergency Rule 1640-01-32 and to authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules, including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General. Ms. Byrd seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

B. Rulemaking Hearing Rule 1640-01-32 – Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship

Mr. Tim Phelps provided information on the Rulemaking Hearing Rules for Rule 1640-01-32, Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship. A public Rulemaking Hearing was held on September 25, 2023, and no public comments were made. These rules are identical to the Emergency Rules and are intended to become effective following expiration of the Emergency Rules.

Mr. Turner made a motion to adopt 1640-01-32 Tennessee Future Teacher Scholarship 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. Iverson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

C. TSAC Employee Policy

Mr. Peter Abernathy, Chief Aid and Compliance Officer, provided information on the Tennessee Higher Education Commission adopting employee policies related to Outside Employment, Conflict of Interest Disclosure, and Code of Conduct at the May 11, 2023, Commission meeting. The adoption of the TSAC Employee Policy will provide for uniform employee policies between both agencies and address the necessary restrictions applicable to all TSAC staff regarding outside employment, conflicts of interest, and code of conduct.

Mr. Vatandoost made a motion to approve the TSAC Employee Policy. Dr. Leming seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

D. Tennessee Promise Scholarship Special Advisory Committee

Mr. James Snider, TSAC Tennessee Promise Director, provided information on Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-4-708(g), which requires the TSAC Board of Directors to “appoint a special advisory committee comprised of representatives from existing college access programs in the state. The committee shall take steps necessary to eliminate barriers to access to scholarships and hold mentoring organizations to the highest standard in serving the student receiving the scholarship. Members of the committee shall serve without compensation.”

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to approve the recommended Tennessee Promise Scholarship Special Advisory Committee members. Ms. Offutt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

E. Tennessee Promise County Assignments

Mr. James Snider provided information on the nine counties transitioning from tnAchieves to the Ayers Foundation Trust, including: Bledsoe, Campbell, Cocke, Houston, Lauderdale, McNairy, Meigs, Scott, and Warren.

Board members asked questions and a discussion was held. Dr. Leming made a motion to approve the Tennessee Promise County Assignments. Mr. Vatandoost seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with nine (9) ayes and one (1) abstention from Dr. Martin.

F. Board Officers for 2023-24

Mr. Abernathy provided information on TSAC bylaws stating that the corporation’s officers shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, each elected by the board of directors from among their own number. The term of the office is one year. The current board officers are as follows: Chairman – Bill Lee, Governor; Vice Chairman – Flora Tydings, Board of Regents; Treasurer – David Lillard Jr., Treasury; and Secretary – Claude Pressnell, TICUA.

Dr. Pressnell made a motion to re-elect all board members. Dr. Martin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with ten (10) ayes.

II. Discussion Items

A. Grants and Scholarships Report

Mr. Tim Phelps summarized the grants and scholarship report, stating that in 2022-23 Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA) year-end expenditures totaled \$119.6 million representing 64,100 students and that the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) provided \$450 million to over 146,000 students.

Board members asked questions, and a discussion was held.

B. Tennessee Promise Scholarship and Tennessee Reconnect Grant Update

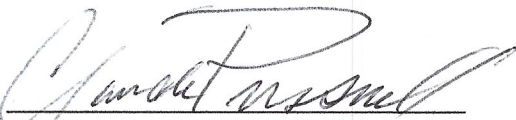
Mr. Snider provided an update on the Tennessee Promise Scholarship and Tennessee Reconnect Grant, including record breaking participation in 2022-23 and that eighty-seven percent (87%) of at-risk coached students retained eligibility within the Tennessee Promise Scholarship.

Board members asked questions, and a discussion was held.

III. Other Business

Board members discussed the affirmative action ruling by the Supreme Court and the implications of scholarship programs with the guidance from the Tennessee Attorney General.

Chairwoman Freeland adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.


TSAC Secretary