

MISSISSIPPI POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD



IHL Executive Offices, Room 218
3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211

September 17, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board held a regular meeting on Monday, September 17, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. Members of the media and public were invited to attend the meeting in Room 218 of the Education and Research Center, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, Mississippi, 39211.

The following members were in attendance:

- Ben Burnett, MAICU appointee
- Mack Grubbs, Lt. Governor's appointee
- Mark Keenum, IHL Institutional appointee
- Ann Lamar, IHL Board appointee
- Louanne Langston, MCCB Institutional appointee
- Sharon Ross, Governor's appointee
- Jim Turcotte, Governor's appointee and Chairman

The following members participated via teleconference:

- Lee Bush, MCCB appointee
- Cynthia Melvin, MAICU appointee

Also in attendance were:

- Kim Gallaspy, IHL Director of Legislative Services
- Stephanie Ganuchau, Special Assistant Attorney General Universities Division (teleconference)
- Josh Harkins, Senator, Advisory Board Member
- Meg Harris, Assistant Director of Operations, Student Financial Aid
- Audra Love Kimble, Mississippi Community College Board
- Nolan Mettetal, Representative, Advisory Board Member
- Jennifer Rogers, Director of Student Financial Aid and Postsecondary Director
- Apryll Washington, Assistant Director Policy and Planning, Student Financial Aid
- Lee Weiskopf, Mississippi State University

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Grubbs, seconded by Dr. Burnett, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the board meeting held on July 9, 2018.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approve Legislative Requests for 2019 Legislative Session

Summary: The Office seeks approval to seek sponsorship for four requests for General Legislation during the 2019 Legislative Session.

A. Reference Title: Align HELP Core Curriculum with IHL CPC

Purpose:

To align the HELP Core Curriculum with the required IHL College Preparatory Curriculum, beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year.

Reason for Request:

In 2013, the Legislature simplified the HELP Core Curriculum by partially aligning the curriculum with the required IHL College Preparatory Curriculum (CPC). The updated HELP Core Curriculum included the required IHL CPC at the time plus two additional credits, a unit of art and an additional advanced elective, for a total of 17-1/2 credits. The IHL Board updated the current required CPC in 2015 and has recently approved additional changes to better align the CPC with the new public education graduation requirements. The updated IHL CPC going into effect for the 2021-2022 academic year will require 18-1/2 credits, which is two more than the current 16-1/2 credits required for the IHL CPC and one more than the current 17-1/2 credits required for the HELP Core. Aligning the HELP Core Curriculum with the required IHL CPC will simplify requirements for students while maintaining the rigor of the curriculum to ensure HELP-eligible students are college-ready.

Suggested Legislation:

§ 37-106-75. Higher Education Legislative Plan Grant Program

[From and after July 1, 2016, this section shall read as follows:]

...

(3) Subject to the availability of funds, the state may pay the tuition of students who enroll at any state institution of higher education to pursue an academic undergraduate degree who apply for the assistance under the program and who meet all of the following qualifications:

...

(c) Successfully complete, as certified by the high school counselor or other school official, ~~seventeen and one-half (17 1/2) units of~~ high school course work which includes the College Preparatory Curriculum (CPC) approved by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and required for admission into a state university, ~~plus one (1) unit of art which may include one (1) unit or two (2) one-half (1/2) units from the approved Mississippi Department of Education Arts-Visual and Performing series, and one (1) additional advanced elective unit, which may include Foreign Language II~~

Fiscal Note:

MINUTES

The changes would not carry any additional cost.

Legislator Involvement/Interest:

Chairman Nolan Mettetal, House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee

Chairman Josh Harkins, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee

Chairman Richard Bennett, House of Representatives Education Committee

Chairman Gray Tollison, Senate Education Committee

Subject Matter Experts:

State Director of Student Financial Aid; high school counselors; K-12 teachers and administrators

B. Reference Title: Mississippi Teacher Loan Repayment Program; integrate with William Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan Program

Purpose:

To remove the authorizing code for the Mississippi Teacher Loan Repayment Program from the authorizing code for the Teacher Education Scholars Alternate Route Certification Forgivable Loan program (TESA) and insert it into the authorizing code section for the William Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan Program to ensure MTLR is funded annually in the same manner as William Winter.

Reason for Request:

In 2014, the Legislature discontinued the Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program, authorized in Section 37-106-55. The Mississippi Teacher Loan Repayment program (MTLR) was originally authorized as part of the Critical Needs program. The Legislature recognized the value of MTLR and did not wish to discontinue it, so the MTLR authorizing language was inserted into the code section for the Teacher Education Scholars Alternate Route Certification Forgivable Loan program (TESA) in Section 37-106-79. The Critical Needs program did not require specific annual appropriation by the Legislature, but TESA does. TESA has never been funded, so MTLR has not been funded. Moving MTLR from the code section authorizing TESA to the code section authorizing the William Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan program would ensure that MTLR is funded when all other forgivable loans are funded. Human resource managers in critical shortage districts have expressed the importance of MTLR in recruiting new teachers into districts with critical shortages.

Suggested Legislation:

§ 37-106-57. William F. Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan Program

...

(7) Awards granted under the William F. Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan Program shall be made available to nontraditional licensed teachers showing a documented need for student loan repayment and employed in those school districts designated by the State Board of Education as a geographical area of the state or in a subject area of the curriculum in which there is a critical shortage of teachers. Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as outlined in Section 37-106-53 except that the maximum annual amount of this repayment should not exceed Three Thousand Dollars (\$ 3,000.00) and the maximum time period for repayment shall be no more than four (4) years.

~~(7)~~ Failure to repay any loan and interest that becomes due shall be cause for the revocation of a person's teaching license by the State Department of Education.

~~(8)~~ The board shall promulgate regulations necessary for the proper administration of this section.

MINUTES

§ 37-106-79. Teacher Education Alternate Route Certification Scholars Program

...

~~(5) Awards granted under the Teacher Education Alternate Route Certification Scholars Program shall be made available to nontraditional licensed teachers showing a documented need for student loan repayment and employed in those school districts designated by the State Board of Education as a geographical area of the state or in a subject area of the curriculum in which there is a critical shortage of teachers. Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as outlined in Section 37-106-53 except that the maximum annual amount of this repayment should not exceed Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) and the maximum time period for repayment shall be no more than four (4) years.~~

(6) The provisions of this section shall be subject to appropriation by the Legislature.

Fiscal Note:

The changes would not carry any additional cost.

Legislator Involvement/Interest:

Chairman Nolan Mettetal, House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee

Chairman Josh Harkins, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee

Vice-Chairman Briggs Hopson, Senate Appropriations Committee

Vice-Chairman Jim Beckett, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee

Subject Matter Experts:

State Director of Student Financial Aid; Postsecondary Board members; human resource managers in K-12 school districts

C. Reference Title: Restrict Stacking and the Receipt of Undergraduate Grant Aid to Eight Terms

Purpose:

Restrict the stacking of undergraduate grant aid and restrict the receipt of undergraduate grant aid to eight terms for any combination of aid.

Reason for Request:

The Legislature has eliminated the stacking of aid in the annual appropriation bill. This change would codify the legislative intent. The Legislature has also expressed the intent to restrict awards for MTAG, MESH, and HELP to only eight terms in the individual code sections for each program. Now that students can no longer stack aid, students that exhaust MESH are attempting to apply for MTAG, because they have not yet exhausted the eight terms allowed for MTAG. This change would restrict students to eight terms of state-supported grant aid.

Suggested Legislation:

§ 37-106-14. Use of funds appropriated for implementing forgivable loan programs

(1) The Legislature may appropriate funds annually to implement, administer and make awards under the programs provided for in this chapter. The board may seek, accept and expend funds from any source, including private business, industry, foundations and other groups as well as any federal or other governmental funding available for this purpose.

(2) Subject to the availability of funds, it is the intent of the Legislature to first fund grant

MINUTES

awards to eligible students. If funds are insufficient to fully fund grant awards to eligible students, grant awards shall be prorated among all eligible students. No student shall receive any combination of student financial aid in excess of the cost of attendance. No student should receive undergraduate grant aid through more than one state-supported undergraduate grant program in the same term of enrollment. If a student is eligible for aid through multiple grant programs, the student shall be awarded from the program that awards the larger sum. No student shall receive undergraduate grant aid from any program or any combination of programs for more than eight semesters or twelve trimesters. After grant awards are made, it is the intent of the Legislature to fund forgivable loan awards to eligible renewal students and then to eligible new students on a first-come, first-served basis.

Fiscal Note:

The changes would not carry any additional cost.

Legislator Involvement/Interest:

Chairman Nolan Mettetal, House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee

Chairman Josh Harkins, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee

Vice-Chairman Briggs Hopson, Senate Appropriations Committee

Vice-Chairman Jim Beckett, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee

Subject Matter Experts:

State Director of Student Financial Aid

D. Reference Title: Establish Mechanism to Forward Fund Student Financial Aid

Purpose:

Establish a mechanism to fund state student financial aid programs at least one year in advance to allow awards to be made in a timely manner.

Reason for Request:

Students and families of graduating high school seniors need to make college choices in early spring, because decision deadlines occur between February and May. Because the appropriation for Student Financial Aid isn't received until mid-April most years, state aid award offers are typically made no earlier than June after budgets have been crafted and approved. An allowance to hold the SFA appropriation in trust until the subsequent fiscal year would allow the Office to set budgets in advance and extend award offers to students as soon as eligibility is established. The resulting award process timeline would benefit students as they make financial decisions regarding college selection. Such a change would require two years of funding for SFA during the first year of implementation, but only one year of funding in subsequent years.

Suggested Legislation:

§ 37-106-12. Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Trust Fund created; components of fund; investment of principal

(1) There is hereby created in the State Treasury a special trust fund to be known as the Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Trust Fund. The trust fund shall consist of all monies designated by the Legislature for deposit therein and any gift, donation, bequest, trust, grant, endowment, transfer of money or securities, or any other monies from any source whatsoever, designated for deposit in the trust fund.

(2) The Legislature may make an appropriation for Student Financial Aid for the subsequent fiscal year. The subsequent year appropriation will be held in trust until July

MINUTES

1 of the fiscal year for which the appropriation is intended.

~~(2)~~ (3) The principal of the trust fund shall ~~remain inviolate and shall~~ be invested by the State Treasurer in the same manner as provided by Section 27-105-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, for the investment of excess state funds. Interest and income derived from investment of the principal of the trust fund shall be appropriated by the Legislature for expenditure as provided in this chapter.

Fiscal Note:

The changes would require two years of funding during the first year of implementation to fund the current year and establish the trust for the subsequent year but would require only one year of funding in subsequent years.

Legislator Involvement/Interest:

Chairman Nolan Mettetal, House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee

Chairman Josh Harkins, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee

Vice-Chairman Briggs Hopson, Senate Appropriations Committee

Vice-Chairman Jim Beckett, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee

Senator David Blount

Subject Matter Experts:

State Director of Student Financial Aid; Institutional Financial Aid Directors;

Postsecondary Board members; college access service providers

On motion by Ms. Lamar, seconded by Dr. Keenum, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to support requests 1. A. and 1. B. for the 2019 Legislative Session. After discussion, the Board chose not to support request 1. C., because the intended outcome could be achieved through Postsecondary Board policy without the need for legislative change. The Board chose not to support request 1. D., because the request is not viable in the current economic environment.

2. Approve Updates to Program Rules to Reference New SAT Concordance Scores

Summary:

Many state aid programs carry ACT requirements. Students may submit equivalent SAT scores in lieu of ACT scores. Periodically, ACT and SAT will release updated concordance tables to assist score users in determining the equivalencies. Rather than update the program rules each time new concordance tables are published, the Office requests approval to update the rules listed in A through F below:

In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question.

A. APA Part 611 – Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations, Sections I.C.1-4 and II.A.3.a)-d).

The Board previously approved updates to APA Part 611 in April 2018. APA Part 611 is included as Appendix 1, beginning on page 14.

MINUTES

Appendix 1 - APA Part 611 – Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations

B. APA Part 613 – Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant (MESG) Rules and Regulations, Section I.C.1.-2. and II.A.3.a),b),d).

The Board previously approved updates to APA Part 613 in April 2018. APA Part 613 is included as Appendix 2, beginning on page 20.

Appendix 2 - APA Part 613 – Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant (MESG) Rules and Regulations

C. APA Part 615 – Higher Education Legislative Plan for Needy Students Grant (HELP) Rules and Regulations, Section I.F.3. and II.A.2.c).

The Board previously approved updates to APA Part 615 in April 2018. APA Part 615 is included as Appendix 3, beginning on page 25.

Appendix 3 - APA Part 615 – Higher Education Legislative Plan for Needy Students Grant (HELP) Rules and Regulations

D. APA Part 619 – Nissan Scholarship (NISS) Rules and Regulations, Section II.D.

The Board previously approved APA Part 619 in April 2018. APA Part 619 is included as Appendix 4, beginning on page 30.

Appendix 4 - APA Part 619 – Nissan Scholarship (NISS) Rules and Regulations

E. APA Part 635 – Teacher Education Scholars Forgivable Loan (TES) Rules and Regulations, Sections I.D. and II.A.2.

The Board previously approved updates to APA Part 635 in April 2017. APA Part 635 is included as Appendix 5, beginning on page 34.

Appendix 5 - APA Part 635 – Teacher Education Scholars Forgivable Loan (TES) Rules and Regulations

F. APA Part 639 – William Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan (WWTS) Rules and Regulations, Sections I.D. and II.A.3.

The Board previously approved updates to APA Part 639 in April 2018. APA Part 639 is included as Appendix 6, beginning on page 44.

Appendix 6 - APA Part 639 – William Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan (WWTS) Rules and Regulations

Recommendation:

The recommended changes have been reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General. Board approval is recommended, contingent upon completion of the Administrative Procedures Act process.

On motion by Dr. Burnett, seconded by Ms. Ross, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to approve the updates to program rules requested in agenda items 2. A – F.

MINUTES

3. Selection of Chairperson for 2018-19

Summary:

According to APA Part 601, Chapter 2, Rule 2.1, Section III, the board shall elect from its membership a chairman. Dr. Jim Turcotte was elected as chairman in June 2017. The Board should elect a new chairperson to serve for fiscal/aid year that began July 1, 2018 and ends June 30, 2019.

On motion by Dr. Burnett, seconded by Ms. Ross, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to re-elect Dr. Jim Turcotte to serve as the Board Chairman for the 2018-19 academic year.

INFORMATION AGENDA ITEMS

4. Update on Visual Identity and Website

Ms. Rogers revealed two of the new promotional items, an undergraduate grant flier and a counselor flier. She shared with the Board the new website address, www.msfinancialaid.org, and reported the website is expected to be launched during the week of September 24, 2018. A press conference will be scheduled in the near future to announce the launch of the new My Way Mississippi website and the new SFA website.

5. Update on Online Application Rewrite

Ms. Rogers reminded the Board of the history of the project to rewrite the online application. About a year ago, ITS notified SFA that it could no longer host the application it has hosted since its creation in 2003. ITS recommended another vendor operating on the state contract that could provide the service, but the vendor quoted a first-year cost of \$300,000 for the application rewrite and \$65,000 per year for maintenance. Instead, the office entered into an agreement with MSU's nSPARC for hosting the application going forward. Phase 1 of the agreement is nearly complete. The application has been moved from ITS to nSPARC, and nSPARC has updated the 2019-20 application for release on October 1. Phase 2 of the agreement will include a complete rewrite of the application and the development of a student account dashboard. The cost of Phase 2 will be \$145,000.

6. Update on Student Financial Aid Redesign Project

Ms. Rogers updated the Board on the Student Financial Aid Redesign project. The state aid data study conducted by Lifetracks, the state longitudinal data system, will be released in the very near future. The report will be shared with the Board along with the press release and a summary sheet as soon as it is published. In general, the report shows the following:

- First-year retention rates and six-year graduation rates are higher for state aid recipients in every program (MTAG, MESH, and HELP) than for SIMILAR (racially, socio-economically, academically, etc.) non-recipients. The study addresses questions of academic success and suggests that each program promotes improved outcomes for enrolled students.

MINUTES

- The study does not address questions related to access for MTAG and HELP. For example, the study cannot tell us whether low-income students are more likely to pursue a college degree because of state grant availability.
- The forgivable loan data show that forgivable loan recipients remain employed in the appropriate field at high rates up to five years after completion of the service obligation. The results are particularly important and encouraging for fields like education that have experienced high turnover. The results are less meaningful in fields, like nursing, that experience lower rates of attrition.

A State Aid Redesign Study Committee has been created by Sen. Briggs Hopson to review the report and consider possible changes to state aid. A general schedule of three meetings has been approved for the study committee, however no dates have been set for any of the meetings. Ms. Rogers will share the meeting dates with the Board as soon as they are set.

During the first meeting, Ms. Rogers will present a brief history of state aid programs and funding and frame the challenges currently faced. The Lifetracks report will be presented, and a representative from ECS will provide an overview of the national landscape of state aid. During the second meeting, the committee will invite testimony from interest groups, including the financial aid directors, representatives of teacher and nursing education, and the Woodward-Hines Education Foundation. The third meeting will present an opportunity to offer recommendations for changes. SFA has been working on projection models for various changes that have been discussed.

7. Proposed Dates for Upcoming Meetings

The following weeks were tentatively approved for upcoming meetings. Ms. Rogers will circulate a Doodle Poll to identify the best dates for all Board members.

Weeks of:

- December 17th to approve the 2018 Annual Report
- April 15th to approve the 2020 Annual Operating and Program Budgets
- June 17th to approve the 2021 MBR, 5-year Plan, and Performance Measures and to elect a chairman
- September 16th to approve the 2020 legislative requests
- December 16th to approve the 2019 Annual Report

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS IF NECESSARY

The Board did not consider any additional agenda items.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board did not consider any other business or make any announcements.

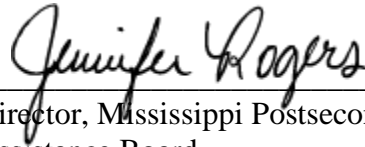
MINUTES

EXECUTIVE SESSION IF DETERMINED NECESSARY

The Board did not determine a need to enter Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Turcotte declared the meeting adjourned.



Director, Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
Assistance Board