

MISSISSIPPI POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD



IHL Executive Offices
3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211

September 23, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board held a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. Members of the Board participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom or teleconference. 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 member(s) participated:

- Ben Burnett, MAICU institutional appointee (remote)
- Barney Daly, Lt. Governor's appointee
- Jason Dean, MAICU association appointee (remote)
- Mark Keenum, IHL institutional appointee
- Dewayne Middleton, MCCB institutional appointee
- Sue Stedman, Governor's appointee
- Jim Turcotte, Governor's appointee and Chairman

The following member(s) did not participate:

- Teresa Hubbard, IHL Board appointee
- Dianne Watson, MCCB Board appointee
- Advisory member Senator Nicole Boyd, Universities and Colleges Committee Chair
- Advisory member Representative Donnie Scoggin, Universities and Colleges Committee Chair

Also in attendance either in person or remotely were:

- Meg Harris, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid
- Beverly Jackson, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid (remote)
- Brandon Johnson, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid (remote)
- Jennifer Rogers, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid and Postsecondary Board
- Adele Russell, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid
- Apryll Washington, Student Financial Aid (remote)
- Frances West, Program Administrator, Student Financial Aid
- Tina Carter, Legislative Budget Office
- Hawley Robertson, Lt. Governor's Office
- Lee Weiskopf, Chief of Staff, Mississippi State University

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- Candice Wilder, Mississippi Today

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Chairman Turcotte.

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On motion by Barney Daly and second by Dewayne Middleton, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the board meeting held on August 19, 2026, as originally drafted.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Item 1: Jennifer Rogers presented a request for the Board to approve changes to APA Part 611 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations to align the rules regarding the MTAG award amount for partial Pell Grant recipients with both the authorizing code and current practice. On motion by Sue Stedman and second by Barney Daly, all Board Members legally present and participating voted unanimously to approve the changes to the MTAG Rules and Regulations, pending completion of the APA process.

1. Approve Updates to APA Part 611 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations

Request

The Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid requests approval of updates to APA Part 611 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations to align the Rules regarding the MTAG award amount for partial Pell Grant recipients with both the authorizing code and current practice.

Summary

The FAFSA Simplification Act, enacted by Congress in 2021, made sweeping changes to federal student aid and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), most of which were not implemented until the 2024-2025 aid year. One change replaced the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) with the Student Aid Index (SAI). In response to the federal changes, the Board updated the MTAG Rules and Regulations to replace references to the EFC with references to the SAI. Upon further review, additional updates to the Rules are needed, because the current Rules do not accurately reflect the MTAG authorizing code or current practice, which is governed by the authorizing code. The authorizing code for MTAG is as follows:

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-106-29

(3) Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grants shall be for Mississippi resident students from any Mississippi family whose prior year adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds the maximum allowed to qualify for full Pell Grant eligibility and campus-based federal aid. Those Mississippi students qualifying for less than the full Pell Grant award shall receive a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant in an amount not to exceed the maximum Pell Grant allowable for that individual student. The award shall be applied to tuition, rooms and meals, books, materials and fees not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for junior and senior students attending state institutions of higher learning in Mississippi or four-year regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit colleges and universities in Mississippi, and Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) for freshmen and sophomores attending state institutions of higher learning

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or public community or junior colleges in Mississippi, or regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit two-year or four-year colleges in Mississippi, which will be prorated per term, semester or quarter of the academic year for costs of attendance, calculated according to the formula specified in subsection (8) of this section.

Maximum Pell recipients are not eligible for an MTAG award.

Partial Pell recipients are eligible for an MTAG award in some amount, but that amount cannot exceed the student's Pell Grant or the \$500/\$1,000 caps established in the code.

The minimum Pell Grant award is equal to 10% of the maximum Pell Grant award, or \$740/year for 2026-27. Because MTAG cannot exceed the Pell Grant amount for that student, MTAG for a minimum Pell Grant recipient cannot exceed \$740. At \$500/year, the MTAG award will never exceed the Pell Grant award for a freshman or sophomore. At \$1,000/year, the MTAG award *could* exceed the Pell award for a junior or senior if the student's Pell award amount is between the minimum \$740 and \$999. Therefore, the MTAG award must be reduced for juniors and seniors receiving a partial Pell Grant award ranging from \$740-\$999.

Currently, the MTAG Rules state that the MTAG award for partial Pell Grant recipients should be an amount equal to the difference between the maximum federal Pell Grant and the amount of Pell Grant the student actually receives. Therefore, SFA requests approval to update the MTAG Rules to align with both the authorizing code and current practice. The proposed change will not impact the budget. The proposed change is as follows:

Title 10: Education Institutions and Agencies

Part 611 Chapter 1: Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations

Rule 1.1 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations. These Rules and Regulations are subject to change by the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board (Postsecondary Board). All eligible students shall receive a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) award; however, the amount of each MTAG award depends upon the availability of funds as authorized by the State Legislature.

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III. LENGTH AND AMOUNT OF AWARD

- A. No student may receive MTAG for longer than the equivalent semesters or trimesters required to complete one (1) certificate, and/or one (1) associate, and/or one (1) bachelor degree per institution, not to exceed eight (8) semesters or twelve (12) trimesters.
- B. For freshman and sophomore students, the award shall not exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per academic year (to be divided equally between each semester/trimester). Classification will be determined by the attending institution.
- C. For junior and senior students, the award shall not exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per academic year (to be divided equally

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between each semester/trimester). Classification will be determined by the attending institution.

- D. Those students eligible for less than the maximum Federal Pell Grant award shall receive an MTAG award in an amount that does not exceed the maximum Federal Pell Grant award amount for which the student is eligible based upon the student's SAI as determined by the FAFSA. In no situation may the MTAG award amount exceed the maximum MTAG amount allowable for students of the same classification.

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Recommendation

Board staff recommends approval, pending completion of the APA Process.

Item 2: Jennifer Rogers led a strategic discussion regarding the FY 2027 budget and FY 2028 budget request. The Board took no action. Rogers will share with the Board the first-year outcomes report on recipients of the FAITH Scholarship.

2. Strategic Planning Discussion

- A. Review of Funding Sources
 - 1. General Funds
 - 2. Education Enhancement Funds
 - 3. Other Special Funds
- B. History of Appropriations and Awards
- C. Review of FY 2027 Budget Deficit and FY 2028 Budget Request
 - 1. FY 2027 Budget Deficit
 - 2. FY 2028 Budget Request
- D. Impact of Recent Changes on Budget
 - 1. FAFSA Simplification
 - 2. HELP Income Threshold Increase
 - 3. Elimination of HELP Curriculum Requirement
 - 4. Full-time Enrollment Requirement
- E. Review of Legislative and Board Authority
- F. Potential Board-Initiated Changes
- G. Potential Legislative Changes

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Item 3: Jennifer Rogers discussed the upcoming Joint Legislative Budget Committee hearing to be held on Friday, October 2, 2026 at 10:40 a.m. Jason Dean and Jim Turcotte will participate in the hearing with Rogers.

3. Joint Legislative Budget Committee Hearings

Item 4: Jennifer Rogers presented updates and announcements. The Board took no action.

4. Updates and Announcements

- A. UPSKILL Awards
- B. New Website
- C. New Video Series
- D. Building Construction
- E. Network Security Incident

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS IF NECESSARY

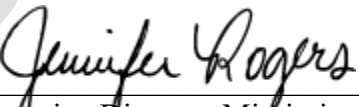
The Board did not consider any additional agenda items.

EXECUTIVE SESSION IF DETERMINED NECESSARY

The Board did not determine the need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Turcotte entertained a motion by Barney Daly and second by Dewayne Middleton to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m.



Executive Director, Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
Assistance Board