



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETING**

Thursday, September 18, 2025 Friday, September 19, 2025 9:00 a.m. CT	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209
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**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

AUDIT COMMITTEE	
Thursday, September 18, 2025 9:00 a.m. CT	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merrit Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call/Declaration of a Quorum
- III. Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Approval of Minutes: June 12, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting (Action)
- V. Report on Internal and External Audit Items
- VI. Report on Internal and External Assessment Review
- VII. Review of Outstanding Audit Issues
- VIII. Internal Audit Plan Update
- IX. Adjournment of Public Session
- X. Non-Public Executive Session

Discussion of matters deemed not subject to public inspection under state law, confidential or privileged matters, litigation, audits, investigations, and other matters deemed not subject to public inspection pursuant to T.C.A. § 4-35-108(b)(1)-(3)).

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of June 12, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Committee Chair

Background Information

The committee conducted the meeting(s) referenced below. The document reflecting the minutes from the meeting(s) are included in the Board materials:

June 12, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Action

The Committee Chair will call for a motion recommending the approval of the meeting minutes.

MOTION: I move to approve the June 12, 2025, Audit Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, Board meeting.

Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Audit Committee Meeting
June 12, 2025
Tennessee State University – The Farrell Westbrook Complex (the “Barn”)

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Trustees Dimeta Smith Knight, Marquita Qualls and Charles Traugher. Other Board members present: Jeffery Norfleet (virtual), Dakasha Winton, Trevia Chatman, Terica Smith, and Artenzia Young-Seigler

University Staff Present: Interim President Dwayne Tucker; Ginette Garza Brown, Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Robbie Melton, Acting Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Bradley White, Interim VP of Business and Finance; Sterlin Sanders, Chief Information Officer; LoLita Toney, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement; Jim Grady, Alvarez & Marsal

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Smith Knight called the meeting to order at 1:23 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Committee Chair Smith Knight declared that all members were present, constituting a quorum. Committee Secretary conducted the roll call. The following committee members were present: Trustees Dimeta Smith Knight, Marquita Qualls and Charles Traugher.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 13, 2025, AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the March 13, 2025, meeting of the Audit Committee were approved as submitted, with Committee Chair Smith Knight making the motion and Trustee Qualls seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE AUDIT OFFICE’S AUDIT ACTIVITIES

Trustee Smith Knight introduced the first agenda item, the annual report on the internal audit office’s activities, noting that the materials for this item were included in the committee’s meeting materials. Committee Chair Smith Knight asked Dr. Forbes-Williams to present information to the Board on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Dr. Forbes-Williams began by presenting the year-end report on annual audit activities for FY 2024–2025. She reviewed the following completed audits and reports:

- NCAA Student Assistance Fund – Report dated July 9, 2024.
- Highest Outstanding Student Account Balances – Report dated August 1, 2024 (at the President’s request).

- Student Account Balances – Report dated August 6, 2024 (at the President’s request).
- Follow-Up Report on Single Audit Findings related to HEERF Funds (2022) – Report dated August 7, 2024.
- Financial and Compliance Audit, FY 2022 – Report dated September 27, 2024.
- Single Audit, FY 2023 – Report dated September 27, 2024.
- Conflict of Interest Forms – Report dated October 31, 2024, with an 83% submission rate.
- Comprehensive Assessment of Austin Peay vs. TSU Indirect Cost Policy – Report dated November 14, 2024 (at the President’s request).
- NCAA FY 2024 Review – Report completed by General Accounting, dated December 5, 2024 (at the President’s request).
- Financial Integrity Report – Completed by the Office of Risk and Financial Compliance, dated December 16, 2024.
- Audit of the President’s Expense Schedules, FY 2024 – Report dated January 14, 2025.
- Audit of University Laptop Inventory – Report dated May 19, 2025.
- Audit of Travel and Open Purchase Orders – Ongoing since January 2025; in May 2025, the State Department of Audit assigned a state auditor to assist.

Turning to investigations, Dr. Forbes-Williams reported that the office reviewed twenty-seven allegations with possible merit during calendar year 2024—more than a fifty percent increase over the prior year—with fifteen matters either closed or submitted to the State for management review. She stated that the uptick reflects both heightened reporting and continued emphasis on addressing control concerns as they arise.

In discussion, Chair Winton asked whether the University employs a prioritization framework to distinguish corrective actions that can be addressed quickly—the “low-hanging fruit”—from those that will require additional staff, technology, or cross-unit coordination. Dr. Forbes-Williams responded that while a number of items can be resolved in the near term, many issues stem from instances where established policies and procedures are not consistently followed due to resource and staffing constraints. She confirmed that management, working with the Audit Committee, maintains a corrective action tracking list that is monitored and reported to the State. She emphasized that the current deadline for completing corrective actions associated with recent findings is November 7, 2025.

Committee Chair Smith Knight underscored the importance of clear accountability and asked that responsible offices be identified for each finding so that expectations for remediation are unambiguous. Dr. Forbes-Williams confirmed that responsibility assignments exist and can be shared with the Board to facilitate oversight, adding that responsibility for implementing corrective actions rests with management rather than Internal Audit.

Trustee Traugher asked about the broader control environment and the role of risk assessment—specifically, whether the issues observed are concentrated in the first line of defense (staff and administration) or reflect gaps within the compliance framework. Dr. Forbes-Williams explained that upon receipt of state audit findings, management drafts responses and proposed corrective actions that the State reviews and either accepts or returns for additional detail. Internal Audit then conducts follow-up procedures to confirm implementation. She noted that Risk Management has primary responsibility for risk assessments, with Internal Audit supporting those efforts, including

through the University's annual integrity report; work on the upcoming report, she said, is already underway.

Concluding the first agenda item, Chair Winton reiterated the expectation that the fifteen external-audit findings be resolved by November 7, 2025, and requested periodic progress updates to the Board to ensure timely completion and sustained accountability.

V. REPORT ON INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT ITEMS

Trustee Smith Knight introduced the next agenda item, the report on internal and external audit items, noting that the materials for this item were included in the committee's meeting materials. Committee Chair Smith Knight asked Dr. Forbes-Williams to present information to the Board on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Dr. Renée Forbes-Williams presented the report on internal and external audit items, noting that the related materials were included in the Board's materials on pages 10 through 28. She explained that these materials detailed the auditors' recommendations along with management's responses.

Dr. Forbes-Williams reported that three external audits had been completed:

- State of Tennessee Single Audit (year-end June 30, 2024; released March 6, 2025) – clean opinion.
- State of Tennessee FY23 Financial and Compliance Audit (released May 8, 2025) – clean opinion.
- EEE FY23 Audit (released May 8, 2025) – clean opinion.

She emphasized that while the financial statements were presented fairly in all material respects, the combined audits identified 15 findings. These findings were as follows:

1. TSU management lacks appropriate oversight (noted in the prior audit).
2. Bank reconciliations (noted in the prior six audits).
3. Management allowed controls to break down (noted in the prior eight audits).
4. Inadequate controls over ledgers, grants, and sub-ledgers.
5. Student fees (noted in the prior audit).
6. Student withdrawal dates and types (noted in the prior audits).
7. Collection procedures for accounts receivable (noted in the prior six audits).
8. Asset allocation requirements and limits (EEE audit).
9. Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF).
10. Reconciliation of direct loan records (Single Audit; noted in the prior audit).
11. Title IV credits not refunded timely (Single Audit; noted in the prior audit).
12. Direct Loan and Pell Grant programs – reporting timely and accurate enrollment status (Single Audit; noted in the prior audit).
13. Return of Title IV funds – compliance issues with federal regulations, including calculation and timing errors (Single Audit).
14. The Office of Financial Aid granted Title IV funds to ineligible students.
15. TSU did not provide adequate internal controls in two confidential areas.

She noted that management responses to these findings were also included in the Board materials for further review.

Turning to internal audits, Dr. Forbes-Williams highlighted the recent Laptop Inventory Audit, which found that the University did not adhere to its established policies and procedures regarding technology assets. The Office of Technology Services (OTS) has developed a corrective action plan that includes a comprehensive assessment of technology assets, launched on May 13, 2025, with an anticipated completion date of April 17, 2026.

She further noted that in addition to OTS, the General Accounting Office had a role in this process, but no response had yet been received from that office. She emphasized that critical leadership positions within the Division of Business and Finance—including the Controller, Director of Accounting, and Assistant Director of Accounting—remain vacant. Dr. Forbes-Williams stressed that filling these roles is essential to ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of the University's financial operations.

VI. REPORT ON INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Trustee Smith Knight introduced the next agenda item, the report on internal and external assessment review, noting that the materials for this item were included in the committee's meeting materials. Committee Chair Smith Knight asked Dr. Forbes-Williams to present information to the Board on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Dr. Renée Forbes-Williams presented the report on the internal and external assessment review. She explained that, to comply with the requirements of the Institute of Internal Auditors, the Office of Internal Audit, in close collaboration with the Audit Committee, conducted interviews with three firms on October 4, 2025. The purpose of these interviews was to assist with both the gap and readiness assessments and to complete the external assessment.

Following these interviews, the University decided to partner with Eminere Group to conduct the gap and readiness assessment. Dr. Forbes-Williams noted that for the external assessment, the plan is to engage one of the other firms to maintain independence in the process. She further reported that the President approved moving forward with this approach on May 7, 2025.

VII. REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING AUDIT ISSUES

Trustee Smith Knight introduced the next agenda item, the outstanding audit issues, noting that the materials for this item were included in the committee's meeting materials. Committee Chair Smith Knight asked Dr. Forbes-Williams to present information to the Board on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Dr. Renée Forbes-Williams provided a comprehensive overview of outstanding audit issues, highlighting several critical focus areas in her presentation. These included key internal follow-up reviews, external audits, and important deadlines related to audit reporting. The internal outstanding audit issues included foundation gifts, work-study timesheets, grant management, procurement cards, vaccine compliance, human resources performance evaluations, and university

laptop inventory. The external outstanding audit issues included the FY24 Single Audit, FY23 Financial Statement and Compliance Audit, EEE FY23 Audit, and the Report of Action due on November 7, 2025.

A trustee asked about the feasibility of meeting the November deadline. Dr. Forbes-Williams expressed cautious optimism but acknowledged concerns regarding the completion of all outstanding commitments on time. She cited particular difficulties with the university laptop inventory process, noting that the accounting department had not been responsive and that a comprehensive campus-wide inventory listing was still unavailable. These delays were largely attributed to ongoing staffing shortages in key departments, which have placed additional strain on audit follow-up efforts.

Delays in bank reconciliations were also raised as a significant concern. Dr. Forbes-Williams explained that the December 2024 reconciliation was finalized only in April 2025, and the January 2025 reconciliation was submitted for approval on June 3, 2025, both exceeding the university's 30-day policy requirement. She indicated that these delays stemmed primarily from insufficient staffing within the finance department.

Trustee Smith Knight asked why communications regarding reconciliations were not more timely. Dr. Forbes-Williams explained that although additional personnel had been assigned to assist, the reconciliation timelines provided by external auditors were considered unrealistic by current staff. She assured the committee that revised and more achievable timelines would be shared soon.

Dr. Forbes-Williams also addressed recurring issues with accounts receivable collection procedures, a frequent audit finding despite management's commitment to address them. She reported that during the FY23 summer term, out of 1,629 enrolled students, 969 carried outstanding balances exceeding \$200, including 41 students with balances from previous terms. The largest balance recorded was \$33,401, resulting from management's decision not to purge delinquent accounts. Trustee Qualls requested more information about the student with the highest balance, and Dr. Forbes-Williams promised to provide further details.

President Tucker stressed the critical need for accountability and expressed hope that robust procedures and processes would be implemented to prevent similar issues moving forward. While acknowledging documented resource shortages in the finance department, he also recognized ongoing mitigation efforts.

In response to the unresolved laptop inventory challenges, Dr. Forbes-Williams reported that responsibility for managing this process had been transferred to Jerome Oglesby, the University's Strategic Advisor for IT. Mr. Oglesby and his team have already begun establishing a comprehensive and reliable process for maintaining accurate asset inventories.

Bradley White updated the committee on bank reconciliations, confirming that a new staff member had been hired and was making positive progress. He noted that the University was collaborating with Flowcast, a software provider, to implement an AI-driven component designed to streamline and improve the reconciliation process. As of the meeting, reconciliations for December 2024 and January 2025 were complete, with work underway for February and March 2025. Although the

initial goal had been to eliminate the backlog by July 31, 2025, Bradley acknowledged that this timeline might be extended by a few weeks.

Staffing challenges were identified as a significant factor affecting audit and reconciliation work. Critical vacancies remain in several key positions, including Controller, Director of Accounting, and Assistant Director. The recent departure of the Assistant Director, who had been primarily responsible for managing reconciliations, exacerbated the staffing gap and highlighted limited succession planning within the department.

President Tucker shared additional organizational changes, including the reassignment of payroll functions to the Human Resources department, now reporting directly to him, and IT reporting to Jerome Oglesby. These changes aim to allocate resources more effectively and enable finance staff to focus on audits and financial closings.

Bradley White also discussed ongoing difficulty in recruiting qualified candidates despite offering competitive packages. For example, a highly qualified comptroller candidate declined an offer due to concerns over job security at competing institutions. To supplement internal efforts, the University has begun collaborating with Austin Peay State University, which uses the same financial system, providing opportunities for shared expertise and support.

Trustee Smith Knight engaged in a broader discussion, examining recent changes in responsibilities, particularly the separation of payroll and HR functions, to ensure risks were adequately managed. Bradley White confirmed that payroll operations remain segregated, with approvals and processing conducted by different individuals. However, the involvement of internal audit in these changes was limited, and concerns persisted that due to limited staffing and overlapping roles, issues related to segregation of duties might remain unresolved in some accounting functions.

Regarding the reconciliation process, it was explained that the University uses electronic banking combined with AI-enabled software to assist in matching bank transactions with internal records. While much of the process remains manual, recent enhancements have improved efficiency. A team of staff and consultants supports this work, which is complicated by a high volume and diversity of transactions requiring thorough verification.

Bradley White confirmed that historical transactions (prior to the current fiscal year) are no longer being corrected, but reconciliations are still behind. As of June, the University was still working on February reconciliations, well outside the 30-day completion policy. Leadership emphasized that while work is focused on the current fiscal year, the institution remains non-compliant with its timeliness standards. Success is defined as completing each month's reconciliation by the end of the following month consistently, rather than sporadically.

Trustee Young-Seigler raised concerns that miscommunication regarding the term "current" had led to misunderstandings. Dr. Forbes-Williams clarified that prior reconciliations are not considered current, while Trustee Smith Knight noted that Mr. White's use of the term implied within the current fiscal year. Leadership acknowledged this gap and stressed the importance of aligning expectations with official policy definitions.

Trustee Traugher highlighted the risks associated with ongoing delays, including exposure to financial misstatements, audit findings, and potential fraud. Chair Winton emphasized that failing to promptly address repeated audit findings could jeopardize the University's credibility and long-term sustainability, stressing that resolving audit issues must become a top priority for all departments.

Dr. Forbes-Williams noted that inadequate internal controls, inconsistent adherence to procedures, and insufficient staffing are root causes of many audit findings. Leadership confirmed that key accounting positions remain vacant, significantly impairing the University's ability to resolve financial discrepancies in a timely and compliant manner. She also noted that a previously committed purge of student accounts with outstanding balances was not executed, and President Tucker confirmed that the cabinet had not discussed a summer semester purge.

Dr. Forbes-Williams inquired whether cabinet meetings consistently reviewed audit findings. Leadership acknowledged this had not been done consistently, although recent efforts have been made to improve oversight. President Tucker agreed that more structured oversight and project management of audit response plans are necessary at the executive level, which is why Dr. Forbes-Williams has been invited to cabinet meetings.

President Tucker further noted that while policies and procedures exist, they are often not followed—not due to a lack of guidance, but rather insufficient enforcement and accountability.

In response to these challenges, a new performance evaluation system is being implemented. This system requires all direct reports to cabinet members to identify 5 to 7 deliverables that will form the basis of their annual performance reviews. Accountability measures, including potential terminations, have already begun. Leadership acknowledged that more personnel actions have taken place in the last 30 days than in recent years.

Trustee Smith Knight asked whether temporary external contractors could be used to address staffing gaps. President Tucker responded that this option, including collaboration with firms like Robert Half, has been considered. However, the complexities of TSU's systems and the steep learning curve for external contractors have made quick results challenging. Despite these difficulties, the University will continue exploring these solutions due to the urgency of audit deadlines and the staffing crisis.

Trustee Smith Knight inquired about the status of job postings for key accounting positions. Bradley White noted that while these positions had been posted previously, they were no longer active. Despite multiple recruitment efforts, the University has faced difficulty attracting qualified candidates, with at least one strong applicant withdrawing after reviewing the University's financial challenges.

Communication between management and the cabinet was also discussed. It was noted that some management responses to audit findings, such as planned data purges, had not been fully communicated or implemented at the cabinet level, suggesting a need for improved coordination and regular review of audit findings and corrective actions by senior leadership.

Trustee Traugher expressed concerns regarding ongoing policy compliance issues, noting that audit findings have continued even when staffing levels were sufficient. He emphasized that, in addition to adequate staffing, cultivating a culture of accountability and adherence to policies and procedures is vital. He mentioned that linking key performance indicators (KPIs) to policy compliance had been discussed as a potential strategy to enhance accountability and tie it directly to compensation and institutional sustainability.

President Tucker emphasized the importance of embedding accountability into the University's culture. He noted that past failures in enforcement significantly contributed to audit challenges and called for a cultural reset that includes consistent policy enforcement and clear consequences for non-compliance, including termination when necessary.

Trustee Traugher asked when the process to update policies and procedures would begin. Secretary Brown explained that the University has established a policy committee, co-led by her, responsible for updating policies and ensuring compliance. The committee is implementing Policy Tech software, widely used by the Tennessee Board of Regents and other universities, to centralize, update, and make policies easily searchable. The target go-live date is August, with July dedicated to reviewing existing policies and staff training. Legacy policies from the TBR era have been identified as "low-hanging fruit" for quick improvements. The committee emphasized the importance of ongoing training, communication, and reminders to maintain awareness and ensure compliance.

Trustee Smith Knight emphasized that outdated or incomplete policies significantly hinder effective audit testing and pose a serious risk. She noted that policies are only valuable if staff are aware of them and properly trained. Ginette Brown added that plans are being developed to ensure ongoing dissemination of policies, adequate training, and accountability tracking.

VIII. APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AUDIT PLAN

Dr. Forbes-Williams presented the proposed fiscal year 2025-2026 internal audit plan for the committee's review. The detailed audit plan was referenced on page 37 of the provided materials. She highlighted that the plan included:

- Required audits:
 - NCAA Student Assistance Fund
 - FY24 Single Audit state follow-up
 - FY23 State Financial Compliance Audit follow-up
 - FY23 State Audit Triple E follow-up
 - Conflict of interest assessments
 - Internal and external assessments
 - Management risk assessment audits

Dr. Forbes-Williams explained that during the past period, her completed work had focused mainly on the required audits. She noted that these audits were projected to take 1,290 hours, roughly 35 weeks, not including time spent on investigations. She emphasized that investigations had more than doubled from the prior year, with 17 completed investigations and 15 ongoing as of June. She

stated that, without additional audit staff or an external firm contract, risk-based audits could not be fully addressed this year.

President Tucker engaged in discussion regarding staffing. Dr. Forbes-Williams confirmed that additional audit resources had been approved in the budget for the next year, but positions for internal auditors had been advertised with no successful applicants. She highlighted that using an external firm would address resource gaps, allowing the audit team to meet the plan's requirements.

Trustee Smith-Knight asked whether the external firm would also assist with the backlog of investigations. Dr. Forbes-Williams clarified that the first assignment would be the required quality review assessment, which had not been completed in several years. Additional support for other items, including risk-based audits, would depend on available funding.

Further discussion took place regarding time spent on investigations this past year and Dr. Forbes-Williams prioritization of investigations.

President Tucker noted that a portion of the increase in investigations stemmed from cultural and organizational issues. He discussed HR issues as the source of some complaints.

Trustee Traughber returned to the question of the sharp increase in investigations, observing that under the prior audit director, the office reportedly received only one investigation per year, compared to 15 last year and 27 this year. Dr. Forbes-Williams agreed the contrast was striking, though she could not fully explain the surge. She confirmed that investigations increased by 50% from her first year to her second and reiterated that state and fraud-related cases receive immediate attention, while frivolous or meritless complaints are dismissed.

President Tucker added further context, explaining that some of the uptick relates to corrective actions in staffing and hiring.

Returning to the audit plan itself, Dr. Forbes-Williams reiterated that the proposal was flexible and could be adjusted during the year. She emphasized that despite the workload, all required audits had been completed last year, and she was confident the same could be achieved again, particularly with external support.

Trustee Smith Knight presented a motion regarding the approval of the 2025-2026 audit plan, with Trustee Traughber seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Smith Knight moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by Trustee Traughber. A roll call vote was taken, with Trustees Smith Knight, Traughber, and Qualls voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Report on Internal and External Audit Items

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No Action

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Audit Committee Chair
Dr. Renée Forbes, Director, Internal Audit

Background Information

The Tennessee State University Board of Trustees Audit Committee Charter requires the Audit Committee to review the results of the University's Internal Audits and the Examinations of the Tennessee Comptroller Auditors.

The Director of Internal Audit will review the completed Internal and External Audits Year-End Report for the fiscal year 2024-2025.



Report on Internal and External Audits

Since the last Audit Committee meeting, there have been no external audits finalized. We anticipate that the 2025 Single Audit will be issued in March 2026. Furthermore, the completion of the 2024 Financial and Compliance Audit is projected for the end of 2025.

In addition, the Internal Audit Review of the NCAA Student Assistance Fund has been diligently conducted, with the report officially submitted on July 25, 2025.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Report on Internal and External Assessment Review

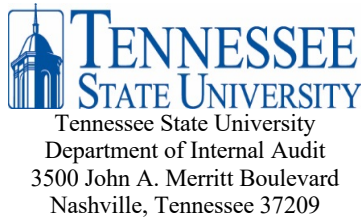
RECOMMENDED ACTION: None

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Audit Committee Chair
Dr. Renée Forbes, Director, Internal Audit

Background Information

The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) requires the Office of Internal Audit to conduct both Internal and External Quality Assessments. Universities need to perform gap and readiness assessments to prepare for the implementation of new standards regarding these quality assessments. Additionally, the IIA's guidelines state that the “chief audit executive” is responsible for ensuring that the internal audit activity conducts an internal assessment. This assessment must include ongoing monitoring and periodic self-assessments. According to Standard 1320, titled “Reporting on the Quality Assurance and Improvement Program,” the results of the ongoing monitoring must be reported to the Audit Committee at least once a year. The Office of Internal Audit is collaborating with the Eminere Group to complete the necessary assessments.

The Director of Internal Audit will discuss the status of the Internal and External Assessment Review.



The Office of Internal Audit Internal and External Assessments

The QAR GAP Assessment, conducted by the Eminere Group, began on July 8, 2025, and is expected to be completed later this month. The Gap Assessment will provide executive leadership, the Audit Committee members, and the Office of Internal Audit with insights into any gaps, improvement opportunities, and specific actions needed to ensure that Internal Audit conforms to the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) Global Internal Audit Standards, which went into effect in January 2025.

The results of this assessment will also support our readiness efforts for the required Quality Assurance External Review, which is mandated by the IIA Global Internal Audit Standards every five years.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Review of Outstanding Audit Issues

RECOMMENDED ACTION: None

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Audit Committee Chair
Dr. Renée Forbes, Director, Internal Audit

Background Information

Tennessee State University is subject to audits by its internal audit department and external entities. The audits, reviews, etc., can result in findings that require corrective actions by university management. The Tennessee State University Audit Committee is diligent in its commitment and responsibility to ensure University compliance. The Audit Committee requests quarterly updates on management's progress toward correcting issues cited in audit reports. The status of management's progress towards correcting outstanding issues will be discussed.

The Director of Internal Audit will present a report on the Outstanding Audit Issues for 2025-26.

Tennessee State University
Internal Audit
Audit Issues Outstanding as of June 2025
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITS

REPORT DATE	AUDIT ISSUES
INTERNAL	
Release Date: February 21, 2022	Foundation Gifts Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For 3 of 18 (16.7%) daily deposits tested, daily gifts were not deposited within one business day. The funds were deposited from one to four business days late. For 9 of 22 (41%) bank statement credit transactions selected for testing, the transaction was not recorded within 10 days of the receipt of the donated funds. For 3 of 56 (5%) scholarship recipients selected for testing, the awarded students did not meet the documented awarding criteria as determined by the donor. For 1 of 20 (5%) non-scholarship disbursements, \$24,000 in consulting fees were erroneously paid from a fund where funds were solicited to provide scholarships to university students. 	
Release Date: May 26, 2022	Grants Management Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For 14 of 30 (47%) timesheets selected for detailed review, we found where the students performed FWS duties during scheduled class hours for at least one day during the months under review. For 15 of the 50 (30%) timesheets reviewed, the students worked more than 20 hours a week for at least one week while classes were in session. For 3 of the 20 (15%) timesheets reviewed where the student worked in excess of 6 hours for at least one day in the month, we found where the student did not take the required minimum 30-minute unpaid rest/meal break. 	
Release Date: February 16, 2022	Work Study Student Timesheet Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A net underpayment of \$262.00 was paid to 5 of the students included in our sample. In addition, an over award of \$340 was also identified. Management did not ensure that financial and performance reports were always submitted in a timely manner during the period under review. We found where 1 of 19 project/progress reports, and 11 of 16 financial reports were not submitted timely. We were not provided with 2 of 16 financial reports and were unable to determine if the reports were timely submitted. Management did not ensure that the effort reporting system accurately supported the work performed. Management did not always ensure that time and effort was timely certified or that there was evidence to support timely certification Management did not ensure that time and effort certifications were supported by the underlying payroll charges to the project. 	

Release Date: August 23, 2022	Procurement Card Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardholders did not always obtain approval to exceed the single transaction limit of \$1,000. • Cardholders did not always ensure adequate supporting documentation was provided for procurement card transactions. 	
Release Date: October 28, 2022	Vaccine Requirements Compliance Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennessee Immunization Requirements Compliance • Vaccination information in the university's student information system found that the university did not obtain adequate proof of the student's receipt of mandated vaccinations for 279 of the 3,738 (7.5%) students included in our test work. 	
Release Date: February 5, 2024	Department of Human Resources Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management did not ensure that all staff performance evaluations were submitted to the Tennessee State University Department of Human Resources. • Details of noncompliance in this area were determined to be confidential per Section 10-7-504(i), Tennessee Code Annotated. 	
Release Date: May 21, 2025	Inventory Laptops Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Technology Services does not have adequate controls in place to safeguard university laptops. • General Accounting fails to record the purchase of laptops that exceed the established purchase price threshold. 	
EXTERNAL	
External Audits	Report of Action Due: November 7, 2025, Follow-Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Released: March 21, 2025, State of Tennessee Single Audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2024 • Released: May 8, 2025, State of Tennessee FY23 Financial Statement and Compliance for the Year Ended June 30, 2023 • Released: May 8, 2025, EEE - Endowment for Educational Excellence (managed by the TSU Foundation) for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023 	

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Internal Audit Plan Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action.

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Audit Committee Chair
Dr. Renée Forbes, Director, Internal Audit

Background Information

Dr. Forbes will present an Internal Audit Plan Update.

**Tennessee State University
Office of Internal Audit
Audit Plan Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026**

Revised August 2025

Rank/Status	Type	Area	Audit	Budget (Hours)	Estimated Start	Estimated Completion
Required/Completed/Reviewed	R	AT	NCAA Student Assistance Fund FY 2025	125	July 2025	July 2025
Required	R	FM	State Audit (Single Audit FY 2024) Follow-up	100	July 2025	October 2025
Required/In Process	R	IS	Quality Assessment Review- Internal	150	July 2025	September 2025
Required/In Process	R	FM	State Audit (Financial Audit 2023) Follow-up	150	July 2025	October 2025
Required/ In Process	R	FM	State Audit (EEE Audit FY 2023) Follow-up	30	July 2025	October 2025
Required	R	FM	President's Expenses FY 2025	125	September 2025	December 2025
Follow-Up Review	F	IS	Follow-Up Reviews of Internal Audit Findings	600	July 2025	June 2026
Follow-Up Review	F	SS	(A) Admissions - Immunizations Compliance			
Follow-Up Review	F	FM	(B) Federal Work-Study			
Follow-Up Review	F	IS	(C) Department of Human Resources			
Follow-Up Review	F	AD	(D) Foundation Gifts			
Follow-Up Review	F	RS	(E) Grants Management			
Follow-Up Review	F	FM	(F) Procurement Card Review			
Follow-Up Review	F	FM/IT	(G) Inventory/Laptops			
Required	A/M	IS	Review Management's Risk Assessments	75	September 2025	December 2025
Risk-Based*	A	FM	Internal Controls Review – Accounts Payable Internal Controls Review – Payroll Internal Controls Review – Procurement Internal Controls Review – Travel Internal Controls Review – Cash Collection	600	September 2025	June 2026
Required/In Process	R	IS	Review of Conflict-of-Interest Forms	300	September 2025	January 2026
Investigation/Ongoing	I	IS	Unscheduled Audits/Projects/Investigations	650	Ongoing	Ongoing
Consultation/Ongoing	C	IS	Unscheduled Consultations	150	Ongoing	Ongoing
Risk-Based	A	FM	Student Housing Assignment Review	150	February 2026	March 2026
Risk-Based	A	FM	Accounts Payable/ Disbursements	225	February 2026	April 2026
Risk-Based	A	AX	Bookstore and Food Services Revenue Review	225	March 2026	May 2026
Required	R	FM	Cash Counts	10	June 2026	June 2026
Required	R	IS	Quality Assessment Review- External	225	January 2026	June 2026
			Required	1290		
			Total	3890		
Risk-Based*	A	FM	External Firm	731	September 2025	June 2026

	Audit Types		Functional Area
R	Required	AD	Advancement
A	Risk-Based (Assessed)	AT	Athletics
S	Special Request	AX	Auxiliary
I	Investigation	FM	Financial Management
M	Management's Risk Assessment	IA	Instruction & Academic Support
C	Consultation	IS	Institutional Support
F	Follow-Up Review	IT	Information Technology
RS	Research	PP	Physical Plant
		SS	Student Services

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Executive Session

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dimeta Smith Knight, Audit Committee Chair
Dr. Renée Forbes, Director, Internal Audit

Background Information

Audit Committee Report - Executive Session - Discussion of Items Deemed Confidential under State Law

Adjournment of Open Session and Call to Order of Non-Public Executive Session to Discuss Audits, Investigations, Litigations, and Matters Deemed Not Subject to Public Inspection Pursuant to T.C.A. § 4-35-108(b)(1)-(3) (if necessary)



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

STUDENT AND ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE	
Thursday, September 18, 2025 11:15 a.m. CT	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call/Declaration of a Quorum
- III. Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Approval of Committee Meeting Minutes
 - A. Approval of June 13, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes (Action)
 - B. Approval of July 1, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes (Action)
- V. Consideration of 2024-2025 Tenure and Promotion Recommendations (Action)
- VI. Approval of Post-Tenure Review Policy (Action)
- VII. Student Affairs Report
- VIII. Report on Student Housing
- IX. Discussion Regarding Admission Standards
- X. Approval of Modification to Admission Testing Scores (Action)
- XI. Adjournment

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Jeffery Norfleet, Committee Chair

Background Information

The committee conducted the meeting(s) referenced below. The document reflecting the minutes from the meeting(s) are included in the Board materials:

June 13, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

July 1, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Action

The Committee Chair will call for a motion recommending the approval of the meeting minutes.

MOTION: I move to approve the June 13, 2025, and July 1, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, Board meeting.

**Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
June 13, 2025
Tennessee State University – The Farrell Westbrook Complex (the “Barn”)**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Trustees Jeffery Norfleet, Terica Smith, and Artenzia Young-Seigler. Other Board members present: Dakasha Winton, Dimeta Smith Knight, Marquita Qualls, Charles Traugher, and Trevia Chatman

University Staff Present: Interim President Dwayne Tucker; Ginette Garza Brown, Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Robbie Melton, Acting Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Bradley White, Interim VP of Business and Finance; Sterlin Sanders, Chief Information Officer; LoLita Toney, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement; Jim Grady, Alvarez & Marsal

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Norfleet called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Committee Chair Norfleet declared that all members were present, constituting a quorum. Secretary Brown conducted the roll call. The following committee members were present: Trustees Jeffery Norfleet, Terica Smith, and Artenzia Young-Seigler.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 13, 2025, STUDENT AND ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the March 13, 2025, meeting of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee were approved as submitted, with Trustee Smith making the motion and Trustee Young-Seigler seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF APRIL 28, 2025, STUDENT AND ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the April 28, 2025, meeting of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee were approved as submitted, with Trustee Smith making the motion and Trustee Young-Seigler seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. STUDENT AFFAIRS REPORT

Committee Chair Norfleet announced the next agenda item, which was the Student Affairs Report. Committee Chair Norfleet introduced Dr. Bridget Goldman to provide the Board with a summary

on behalf of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee.

Dr. Goldman provided an update on residential life and housing, reporting that resident students collectively achieved an average GPA of **3.16** over the past year. She emphasized that, despite the negative media attention surrounding housing challenges, this achievement reflected the determination and academic strength of Tennessee State University students. Residential life, she explained, is structured not only to provide housing but also to support students' holistic development and sense of belonging on campus.

Dr. Goldman then highlighted the programming efforts of Student Affairs, which sponsored **122 events** across cultural, health and wellness, educational, social, and service-learning categories. She explained that each of these programs was designed to enrich the student experience and to foster engagement beyond the classroom.

In reviewing notable student achievements, Dr. Goldman reported that the TSU Cheerleaders, under new director Dwight Polk, earned fifth place at the 2025 NCAA College Nationals in Daytona, Florida—the highest placement in university history. She also noted that the New Directions Choir received the HBCU Choir of the Year People's Choice Award, and that James Sexton had been appointed Interim Director of the Aristocratic Bands.

Turning to international student enrollment, Dr. Goldman expressed concern about the downward trend in issued I-20s. In fall 2024, TSU had issued 138 I-20s to admitted students, of which only 42 were completed. By contrast, as of spring 2025 only 10 I-20s had been issued. She explained that international students face increasingly long delays in securing embassy interviews and approvals, which significantly complicates enrollment projections and reduces certainty for both students and the university.

Dr. Goldman also touched on orientation participation as an early enrollment indicator, reporting that **461 students**—a mix of freshmen and transfers—had registered for upcoming sessions.

Her remarks also highlighted investments in student health and wellness. She announced the grand reopening of the Wellness Center on April 9, 2025, which now offers new equipment and expanded access. In addition, she detailed the implementation of TimelyCare, a virtual health platform launched in January. Since its rollout, 657 students had registered for the service, with 134 students accessing counseling sessions and 17 utilizing psychiatric services. The on-campus Health Center had also experienced increased student visits, reflecting an overall rise in engagement with health and wellness resources.

At this point, Dr. Goldman opened the floor for questions. Trustee Qualls inquired specifically about the impact of declining I-20 issuances on graduate student enrollment and how this reduction might affect the university's research capacity. Dr. Goldman explained that her office manages the admissions process and issues I-20s for incoming international students but that graduate enrollment is overseen primarily by Academic Affairs and the Graduate School. She provided additional context, noting that in fall 2024 TSU admitted 96 graduate students, with 42 I-20s issued, compared to 98 admitted the prior year, resulting in a decline of 54 students. She further explained that graduate student recruitment often relies on faculty-driven efforts, including MOUs

and established international partnerships, which help students navigate embassy requirements and secure placements.

In response to the portion of Trustee Qualls' question regarding research implications, Dr. Goldman acknowledged the concern, stressing that international graduate students often play a vital role in faculty research projects. However, she noted that the full impact of reduced enrollment on research output and funding would need to be addressed in greater detail by the Academic Affairs division. She committed to coordinating with her colleagues to provide additional information.

With no further questions, Dr. Goldman concluded her Student Affairs update and transitioned into the enrollment discussion.

VI. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

After her report on Student Affairs, Committee Chair Norfleet announced the next item on the agenda, the Enrollment Update. He invited Dr. Bridget Goldman to continue with her summary and provide the Board with an update on behalf of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee.

Dr. Goldman introduced Mr. Ken Anselment, Vice President for Enrollment Management with RHB, a division of Strata Information Group (SIG), who has been assisting TSU in its strategic enrollment efforts. Mr. Anselment introduced himself and described RHB's role. He explained that his team had been engaged to provide technical support with admissions systems, data integrity, and Banner, which had accumulated significant deferred maintenance. He emphasized that TSU's challenges must also be viewed within the context of a shifting national landscape, marked by demographic decline, new policy proposals, and heightened financial pressures—including discussions in Congress about institutions potentially bearing costs associated with student loan defaults. Despite these challenges, he noted, TSU retains a resilient core of students who continue to choose the institution, a strength that can be leveraged moving forward.

Turning to enrollment data, Mr. Anselment reported that as of two days prior, TSU had received 1,094 freshman confirmations. Because the University does not require enrollment deposits, he clarified that these confirmations remain "soft." Historically, only 50–65 percent of confirmed students ultimately matriculate, which suggested a likely yield between 525 and 860 freshmen—falling short of the 968 goal embedded in the university's five-year pro forma. He added that three weeks earlier, the projection range had been 971–1,261, indicating some improvement, though the trend remained below expectations.

Trustee Traugher asked whether the enrollment target of 968 first-time freshmen aligned with assumptions in the university's financial planning. Jim Grady clarified that while the long-term pro forma assumed 968 freshmen, the FY 2026 proposed budget was constructed more conservatively at 700, given current uncertainties. Trustee Qualls then asked if the student "purge" process, where unpaid students are dropped from course rolls, would affect enrollment numbers. Jim Grady explained that incoming freshmen are not subject to the same purge process, though other fluctuations in enrollment are still possible.

Mr. Anselment then noted encouraging results in transfer enrollment. More than 250 confirmations had already been received, a number lower than in 2024 but higher than in 2023, suggesting modest positive momentum in that category.

Dr. Goldman addressed barriers in communication with prospective students. She reported that admitted students frequently expressed frustration at limited follow-up, despite campaigns such as “You Belong Here” reaching over 2,000 prospective students in Memphis. These campaigns had achieved strong open rates exceeding 70% but did not produce event attendance until alumni actively promoted the materials. Conversely, when student ambassadors initiated personalized outreach via their own social media accounts and email addresses rather than generic university channels, engagement was immediate, with registrations for orientation surging within thirty minutes. Dr. Goldman highlighted the University’s inability to send text messages under the current system as a key obstacle, noting that most prospective students do not answer calls from unknown numbers.

Both Dr. Goldman and Mr. Anselment then outlined forward-looking strategies, including:

- The launch of Slate CRM, which went live the previous day. This system will integrate undergraduate and graduate recruitment, enable text messaging, and provide granular tracking of student engagement.
- Simplification of scholarship structures, supported by Alvarez & Marsal, to ensure programs are competitive and sustainable.
- Marketing and storytelling efforts, beginning with “circles of influence” research, in which consultants will interview current students to refine TSU’s value proposition.
- Restructuring enrollment management functions into a single, unified division encompassing undergraduate and graduate admissions, financial aid, and communications.
- Development of a comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to assess institutional capacity, pipelines, and long-term growth.
- Early lead-generation campaigns targeting high school freshmen and sophomores in Tennessee, Georgia, and Chicago to strengthen TSU’s presence in key markets.

Mr. Anselment concluded this portion by reiterating that despite current challenges, TSU’s story resonates when told directly to students and families. With better systems, clearer messaging, and intentional pipelines, she expressed confidence that the university could gradually improve enrollment outcomes.

Trustee Norfleet then engaged in a broader discussion regarding specific initiatives to bolster the Fall 2025 entering class. Dr. Goldman responded that TSU was taking a proactive stance, launching targeted initiatives rather than “allowing things to happen to us.” She described the “You Belong at TSU” campaign in greater detail, highlighting that it involved coordinated outreach across social media, video production, and student-generated content. A scholarship contest was introduced, offering \$2,500 awards to students whose videos achieved at least 10,000 likes, thereby encouraging engagement and visibility. She also described meet-and-greet events being held in Memphis, Atlanta, and Chicago, and explained that she would be traveling to Atlanta immediately after the meeting to meet with confirmed students.

As of that week, she reported, TSU had 1,102 confirmations. To stabilize the budget, the University would need at least 900 freshmen enrolled, meaning conversion of confirmed students to seated students was the central focus. Nearly every division of student services had been mobilized to this end. For example, the Dean of Student Conduct and the Director of Disability Services were leading FAFSA completion campaigns, hosting twice-weekly sessions, sending letters, and working late evenings to ensure financial aid files were completed. Many admitted students, she explained, mistakenly believed confirmation alone secured their enrollment, when unresolved financial aid paperwork could still create barriers.

Trustee Qualls then asked about the 1,102 confirmations, specifically whether they represented students applying directly to TSU or via the Black Common App. She cautioned that if the majority of confirmations came through the common application, TSU would face increased competition in converting them into actual enrollees, since those students likely had multiple options. Dr. Goldman responded with a breakdown: over 25,000 applications had been initiated through the Black Common App, but only 1,180 were completed. Of those admitted, 1,304 were in-state students and 4,685 were out-of-state. She acknowledged that most applications flowed through the Black Common App but assured the Board that the implementation of Slate CRM would soon provide much more detailed reporting on application sources and engagement trends.

Trustee Smith Knight asked about partnerships with community colleges and whether TSU was actively pursuing transfer pipelines. Dr. Goldman conceded that the university's reputation in this area had been uneven but noted that rebuilding relationships and strengthening articulation agreements were high priorities. Transfer scholarships had once been as high as \$10,000, though they had since been reduced. Even so, she noted that transfer enrollment showed promising resilience. Trustee Chatman further asked if paid, geo-targeted advertising was being utilized. Goldman acknowledged that most outreach to date had been grassroots but agreed that professional digital advertising was necessary to strengthen visibility.

Trustee Smith Knight raised a question about leveraging TSU's numerous summer camps and dual-enrollment programs as recruitment pipelines. Dr. Goldman admitted this had been a missed opportunity, largely due to understaffing in admissions. With new hires recently approved, the office now had the capacity to intentionally integrate these programs into recruitment strategies.

Trustee Smith Knight emphasized alumni engagement as a cost-effective recruitment tool. Dr. Goldman agreed, noting that alumni trainings had already been conducted and that the TSU Foundation was working with her team to secure scholarship matches for legacy students. She called alumni the University's "biggest recruiters."

As the discussion closed, Dr. Goldman shared the full-length "You Belong" video, which emphasized TSU's identity as a family of "showstoppers and change makers." President Tucker followed by affirming that TSU had a tremendous opportunity to improve upon current enrollment practices. He committed to presenting the Board with a more comprehensive enrollment strategy in the coming months, one that would begin earlier in the recruitment cycle and incorporate the lessons learned from this year's efforts.

VII. APPROVAL OF LOW PRODUCING PROGRAMS ACTION

Committee Chair Norfleet announced the next agenda item, which was the approval of the low producing programs. Committee Chair Norfleet introduced Dr. **Robbie Melton**, Interim Provost, to present action items regarding the review, closure, and modification of low-producing academic programs on behalf of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee.

Dr. Melton began by expressing her appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Interim Provost and recognized the contributions of the University's academic leadership team, including deans, department chairs, associate vice presidents, faculty, and staff. She emphasized that the recommendations presented were the product of a **collaborative and data-driven process**, guided by enrollment trends, program outcomes, cost analyses, and alignment with TSU's strategic mission.

Dr. Melton explained that the review spanned all degree levels—bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctorate—over a five-year period, and included analyses of enrollment patterns, retention and graduation rates, operational costs, and programmatic relevance. She further noted that recommendations had been reviewed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) as well as internal school committees, ensuring regulatory compliance and adherence to institutional policies.

She identified several programs as low-producing, based on a benchmark of ten students or fewer, and presented specific recommendations:

1. Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene – Recommended for sunset. Dr. Melton emphasized that the associate degree program remains active and is being enhanced, as it is the primary source of TSU-trained dental hygienists. A formal teach-out plan ensures that current students can complete their degrees without disruption.
2. Master of Science in Computer Information Systems Engineering – Recommended for formal closure, with a subsequent merger into the Master of Engineering program. Dr. Melton clarified that THEC regulations require formal closure before a program can be modified or merged into another concentration.
3. Specialist in Instructional Leadership (College of Education) – Recommended for closure, also with an established teach-out plan. Closure was based on persistently low enrollment and program overlap within the College of Education.

Trustee Traugher inquired about the financial considerations that were addressed. Dr. Melton explained that the combined effect of program sunsets, modifications, and restructuring is projected to yield approximately \$1.2 million in annual cost savings, which will be realized in the upcoming fiscal cycle. These savings reflect efficiencies gained through faculty vacancies, program consolidation, and streamlined operations.

In reference to the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, Trustee Smith Knight requested that Dr. Melton provide more details about the program. Dr. Melton explained that enrollment had consistently remained low, producing only one to three graduates per year. She reassured the Board

that the associate degree program remains robust and continues to serve as the primary pipeline for dental hygienists, and that the closure of the bachelor's program allows TSU to strategically reallocate resources without compromising workforce preparation.

Trustee Qualls raised regarding the process of modifying or merging a program following closure. Dr. Melton clarified that THEC's State Authorization Council (SAC) has advised that formal closure followed by program modification is the appropriate procedure, and additional guidance from SAC personnel is available if needed. She also reiterated that all program closures and sunsets include formal teach-out plans to minimize any disruption for students and ensure degree completion.

Through these explanations, Dr. Melton conveyed that the decisions regarding low-producing programs were not taken lightly, but were grounded in data, regulatory guidance, and a commitment to maintain student success while enhancing institutional efficiency.

Trustee Norfleet called for a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the action on Low Producing Programs, as contained in the Board materials for the June 13, 2025, Board materials. Trustee Smith made the motion, and Trustee Young-Seigler seconding it. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS

Committee Chair Norfleet announced the next agenda item, the approval of modifications to academic programs. He introduced Dr. Robbie Melton to discuss these modifications on behalf of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee.

Dr. Melton mentioned that the proposals included program modifications across multiple colleges, specifically the College of Business, the College of Education, the College of Engineering, the College of Health Sciences, the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Life and Physical Sciences. Background materials had been provided in advance, including detailed program changes and supporting documentation on page 80 of the board materials.

Dr. Melton began with the College of Business, outlining a comprehensive departmental reorganization that consolidated four departments into three. This restructuring involved the inactivation of one department chair position and the realignment of faculty responsibilities. Dr. Melton emphasized that the process included formal faculty consultations, town halls, and internal reviews to ensure transparency and alignment with institutional goals. The reorganization was designed to strengthen curriculum delivery, maintain accreditation requirements, and optimize faculty workload. Trustee Young-Seigler asked about employment of faculty, and Dr. Melton clarified that faculty positions would be retained and reassigned as needed to align with strategic priorities. She also addressed the inactivation of the e-business technology concentration, explaining that it would merge into the Department of Business Information without affecting current student coursework.

For the College of Health Sciences, Dr. Melton described the movement of cardio-respiratory care sciences under the School of Nursing. The reorganization aimed to consolidate patient-facing

programs to enhance efficiency, improve administrative oversight, and maintain compliance with accreditation standards. Dr. Melton confirmed that business-facing programs would remain separate and fully accredited.

Within the College of Life and Physical Sciences, Dr. Melton presented the inactivation of the Master of Science in Chemistry, explaining that this was a program realignment rather than an elimination. She clarified that students currently enrolled would be accommodated through completion plans, ensuring that academic progress would not be disrupted.

Dr. Melton then reviewed the broader impact of the College of Business restructuring, noting that senior faculty would serve as coordinators within remaining departments to maintain accountability, oversight of curriculum, and compliance with accreditation requirements, including the CPA pathway in accounting. She also addressed questions regarding the ongoing dean search for the College of Business, explaining that the interim dean and search committee were reviewing candidates to ensure leadership continuity and alignment with the restructuring plan.

Discussion included clarification on the distinction between academic unit modifications and academic program modifications. Dr. Melton explained that the proposed changes, including departmental consolidations and concentration inactivations, qualified as modifications to existing academic units. Certain changes, such as elevation of concentrations or program inactivations, would require Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) review, but all modifications maintained the integrity of curricula and accreditation compliance.

Following discussion, the committee agreed that final approval would be taken separately by college to ensure proper documentation and categorization of academic unit modifications, program modifications, and required notifications to THEC. Dr. Melton confirmed that all necessary support materials would be included with the motions for clarity.

Committee Chair Norfleet announced that Dr. Melton had a surprise to present to the Board. Dr. Melton introduced the segment, expressing excitement over the recent approval of Tennessee State University's AI policy. Dr. Melton noted that the policy had elevated TSU's visibility not only nationally but globally.

Dr. Melton then introduced a special guest representing TSU's artificial intelligence initiatives, coding, creativity, and STEM programs, including robotics, engineering, computer science, and health sciences. She highlighted that TSU had pioneered the use of AI robotic dogs on campus and invited "Blue," the AI robotic dog, to approach the board. Trustees were given the opportunity to view Blue, and Dr. Melton emphasized that this demonstration exemplified the university's leadership in innovation and technology.

Dr. Melton continued, noting that TSU is establishing itself as a center for AI research through its AI for All Research Center, engaging all colleges and departments in interdisciplinary AI initiatives. She then introduced another AI entity, "Humanoid," describing it as a recently arrived robot programmed by TSU's smart team. Trustees observed as Humanoid interacted, stating:

“Hello, Tennessee State University Board of Trustees. It's a pleasure to greet you all. If there's anything I can do for you, just let me know.”

Dr. Melton highlighted that Humanoid is a first-of-its-kind presence at a regional university and that TSU students will have the opportunity to name the robot. She recognized the contributions of Dr. Lin Li from the College of Engineering and Dr. Ali Sekmen, who are leading the university's AI initiatives, and invited Humanoid to demonstrate interactive capabilities.

Dr. Melton further showcased additional AI innovations, including the AI Healthcare Ring and AI-enabled glasses, noting that such technology is uniquely available at TSU. She concluded the demonstration by thanking the trustees for their attention and support for the university's AI programs.

After a short break, the committee again turned to the discussion on the requested action on low-producing programs. Trustee Norfleet made a motion to table the action item to allow the administration to provide additional information to the committee the following week and provide some more clarity. Trustee Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Norfleet moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by Trustee Young-Siegler. A roll call vote was taken, with Trustees Smith Norfleet, Smith, and Young-Siegler voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
July 1, 2025
Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Trustees Jeffery Norfleet, Terica Smith, and Artenzia Young-Seigler. Other Board members present: Dakasha Winton, Dimeta Smith Knight, Marquita Qualls, Charles Traughber, and Trevia Chatman.

X. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Norfleet called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

XI. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Trustee Norfleet declared that a physical quorum was not present and moved that electronic participation by a quorum was necessary, which was approved. Board Secretary conducted the roll call. The following Board members were present: Trustees Dakasha Winton, Charles Traughber, Trevia Chatman, Jeffery Norfleet, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, and Artenzia Young-Seigler.

XII. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC ACTIONS: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC UNITS

Trustee Norfleet presented one agenda item regarding the approval of certain academic actions, which consisted of two parts: low-producing programs and academic program modifications.

Trustee Norfleet introduced the low-producing programs, noting that materials for this item were included in the July 1, 2025, committee meeting materials and had also been discussed during the committee's June 13, 2025, meeting. Dr. Robbie Melton and Dr. Charlise Anderson provided information related to the low-producing programs. After discussion, Trustee Norfleet asked if there was any further discussion before moving forward.

Trustee Norfleet then introduced the approval of academic program modifications, with materials provided in the July 1, 2025, committee meeting materials. Dr. Anderson presented information regarding this item. Following discussion, Trustee Norfleet inquired if there was any additional discussion.

The Chair called for a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Academic Actions for academic programs and academic units as outlined in Table 1 of the July 1, 2025, committee meeting materials. Supplemental information supporting these actions was noted to be in the June 12–13, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting materials. The motion included authorization for the proper officers of the University to take necessary actions and to work with THEC and SACSCOC to implement the academic actions.

Trustee Young-Seigler moved the recommendation, and Trustee Smith seconded the motion. Committee Chair Norfleet called the question, and Secretary Brown called the roll. The motion was approved unanimously.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Norfleet moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by a trustee. A roll call vote was taken, with Trustees Smith Norfleet, Smith, and Young-Siegler voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Consideration of 2024-2025 Tenure and Promotion Recommendations

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs -
Robbie Melton and
Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs -
Erik Schmeller

Background Information

Per University policy, the President recommends the granting of tenure and/or promotion to eligible faculty members in accordance with the requirements set forth in the TSU policy on tenure and promotion.

Tenure

Pursuant to the TSU tenure policy, tenure eligible faculty members must apply for tenure in their sixth year. A faculty member is required to submit a portfolio of materials in support of their tenure application. The criteria TSU uses to evaluate applicants include quality instruction, research and creative activities, public service and professional activities, and potential for professional growth.

The University reviews the tenure candidate's portfolio at several levels, including at the departmental, college, and University levels. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President must ultimately approve the applications. The comprehensive tenure review and approval process, as well as the list of those recommended for tenure, are included in your Board materials.

Pursuant to the FOCUS Act, the Board's Bylaws and the Board's Delegation of Authority to the President Policy, the Board must approve the awarding of tenure based on recommendations from the President.

Promotion

With respect to faculty promotions at TSU, individual faculty members may apply for promotion upon completion of the required years in rank. A tenured or tenure-track faculty member becomes

eligible to apply for promotion when he or she has achieved the required years in rank and meets the defined qualifications for the various faculty ranks, which are assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

To apply for promotion, a faculty member must prepare a portfolio containing evidence of the faculty member's teaching, research, and service since his or her last promotion at TSU. The specific evidence requested includes quality instruction, research and creative activities, public service and professional activities, and potential for professional growth.

The University reviews the candidate's portfolio at several levels, including at the departmental, college, and University level. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President must ultimately approve the applications. The comprehensive promotion review and approval process, as well as the list of those recommended for promotion, are included in your Board materials.

Pursuant to the FOCUS Act, the Board's Bylaws, and the Board's Delegation of Authority to the President Policy, the Board must approve promotions based on recommendations from the President.

In summary, of the 29 total applications, through the tenure and/or promotion process, the President is recommending four (4) candidates for tenure only, nine (9) candidates for promotion only, and twelve (12) candidates for tenure and promotion, all of whom meet the conditions for tenure and/or promotion.

Committee Action

The Division of Academic Affairs is requesting approval of four (4) candidates recommended for tenure only, nine (9) candidates recommended for promotion only, and twelve (12) candidates recommended for tenure and promotion. The Committee Chair will call for a motion on the requested action.

MOTION: To approve the four (4) candidates recommended for tenure only, nine (9) candidates recommended for promotion only, and twelve (12) candidates recommended for tenure and promotion as contained in the Board materials for the Board of Trustees' September 19, 2025, meeting.

Date: September 19, 2025
Subject: Tenure Only Recommendations

Background Information: Per university policy, the President recommends the granting of tenure to eligible faculty members. The recommendations are based upon the requirements of TSU policy on tenure.

Proposed Implementation Date: September 2025

Item Details: Of the 29 applicants, a total of 4 faculty members are recommended for tenure only. The list of faculty members recommended is provided below.

	Name	Department	Current Academic Rank
1.	Allen, Sean	Communications	Assistant Professor
2.	Davis, LaPorchia	Human Sciences	Associate Professor
3.	Johnson, Elizabeth	Libraries and Media Centers	Associate Professor
4.	Massey, Krystal	Health Information Management	Assistant Professor

Date: September 19, 2025
Subject: Tenure and Promotion Recommendations

Background Information: Per university policy, the President recommends the granting of tenure and promotion to eligible faculty members. The recommendations are based upon the requirements of TSU policy on tenure and promotion.

Proposed Implementation Date: September 2025

Item Details: Of the 29 applicants, a total of 12 faculty members are recommended for tenure and promotion. The list of faculty members recommended is provided below.

	Name	Department	Current Rank	Proposed Rank
1	Abel, Karen	Sociology	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
2	Cathey, Shameka	History, Political Science, Geography & Africana Studies	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
3	Franzen, Eric	Communications	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
4	Ghosh, Sagnika	Electrical Engineering	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
5	Heaston, Alexis	Public Health, Health Administration Information & Health Sciences	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
6	McNeil, Terrance	Education Practice & Leadership	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
7	Mendez, Esther	Psychological Sciences & Counseling	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
8	Parthasarathy, Ranganathan	Civil & Architectural Engineering	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
9	Russell, Karen	Communications	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
10	Sanford-Terry, Miranda	Public Health, Health Administration Information & Health Sciences	Associate Professor	Professor
11	Shahbazz, Zeba	Languages, Literature & Philosophy	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
12	Wayu, Mulugeta	Chemistry	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor

Date: September 19, 2025

Subject: Promotion Only Recommendations

Background Information: Per university policy, the President recommends the granting of promotion to eligible faculty members. The recommendations are based upon the requirements of TSU policy on promotion.

Proposed Implementation Date: September 2025

Item Details: Of the 29 applicants, a total of 9 faculty members are recommended for promotion only. The list of faculty members recommended is provided below.

	Name	Department	Current Rank	Proposed Rank
1	Charles, Derek	Physical Therapy	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
2	Patras, Ankit	Agricultural Sciences and Engineering	Associate Professor	Professor
3	Patrick, Andrew	History, Political Science, Geography & Africana Studies	Associate Professor	Professor
4	Pokharel, Bharat	Environmental Science	Associate Professor	Professor
5	Robinson, Cara	Social Work and Urban Studies	Associate Professor	Professor
6	Tiriveedhi, Venkataswarup	Biological Sciences	Associate Professor	Professor
7	Todd, Richard	Music	Associate Professor	Professor
8	Vercruysse, Koen	Chemistry	Associate Professor	Professor
9	Young, De'Etra	Environmental Science	Associate Professor	Professor

Overview of Tenure and Promotion Process at TSU

At the start of the academic year, faculty receive resources outlining expectations and deadlines, available on the Academic Affairs website. These documents will be updated for the 2025-2026 academic year.

University guidelines were revised in 2013 and 2016 when TSU transitioned to the eLearn system for faculty portfolios and electronic reviews.

New tenure-track faculty learn about these resources during orientation, typically one week before classes begin in the Fall.

Department Chairs evaluate tenure-track faculty on teaching, research, and service during annual reviews. These evaluations are documented in year-end reports and must be included in the faculty portfolio, along with student evaluations. The Chair also tracks faculty progress toward tenure and submits an eligibility form in August of the sixth probationary year to notify that the faculty member will seek review by mid-October.

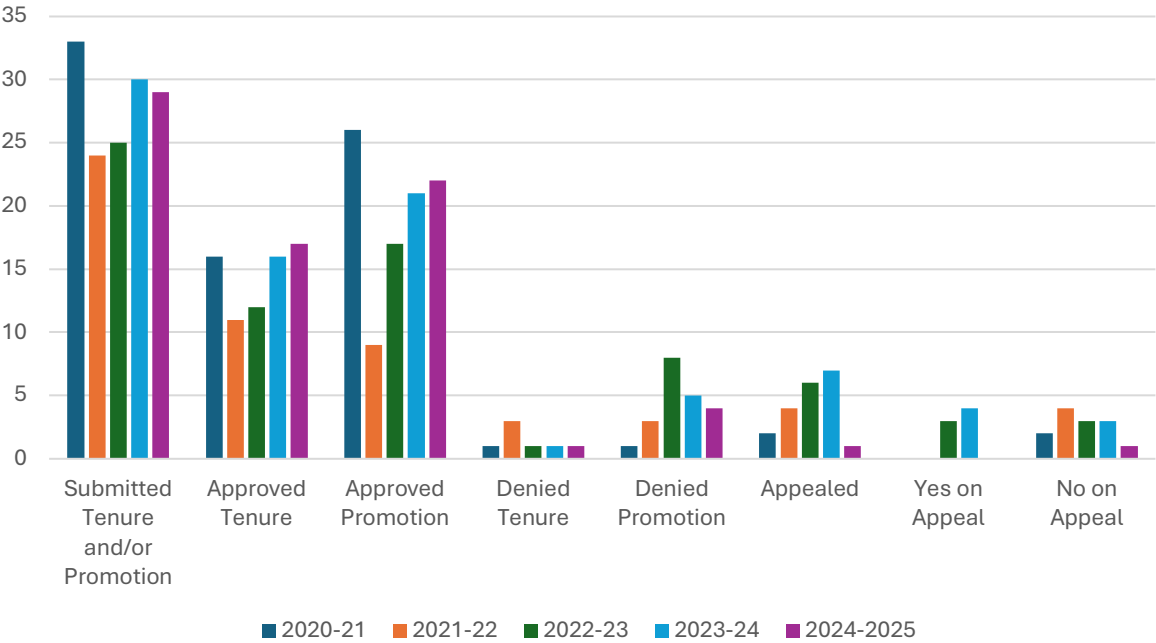
Colleges and Departments are encouraged to create specific tenure and promotion guidelines, which must be approved and accessible to faculty. If they do not create their own, faculty must follow the Faculty Handbook guidelines.

There are six levels of independent review, from the departmental committee to the appeals committee. Most applicants do not reach the sixth level. Those who do appeal often have issues with documenting their achievements in teaching, research, and service.

If a tenure-track faculty member is not granted tenure, they receive a "teach-out year," allowing one more academic year of employment.

Faculty who receive tenure and are promoted to Associate Professor can apply for further promotion after five years. The same applies for promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor.

Tenure and Promotion Comparison 2020-2025



Tennessee State University Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty

Full Time Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty—375

Assistant Professor—152 **40% (most are tenure-track)**

Associate Professor—119 **32%**

Full Professor—104 **28%**

Tennessee Tech University

Full Time Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty—318

Assistant Professor—84 26%

Associate Professor—92 28%

Full Professor—142 44%

Middle Tennessee State University

Full Time Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty—686

Assistant Professor—148 22%

Associate Professor—199 29%

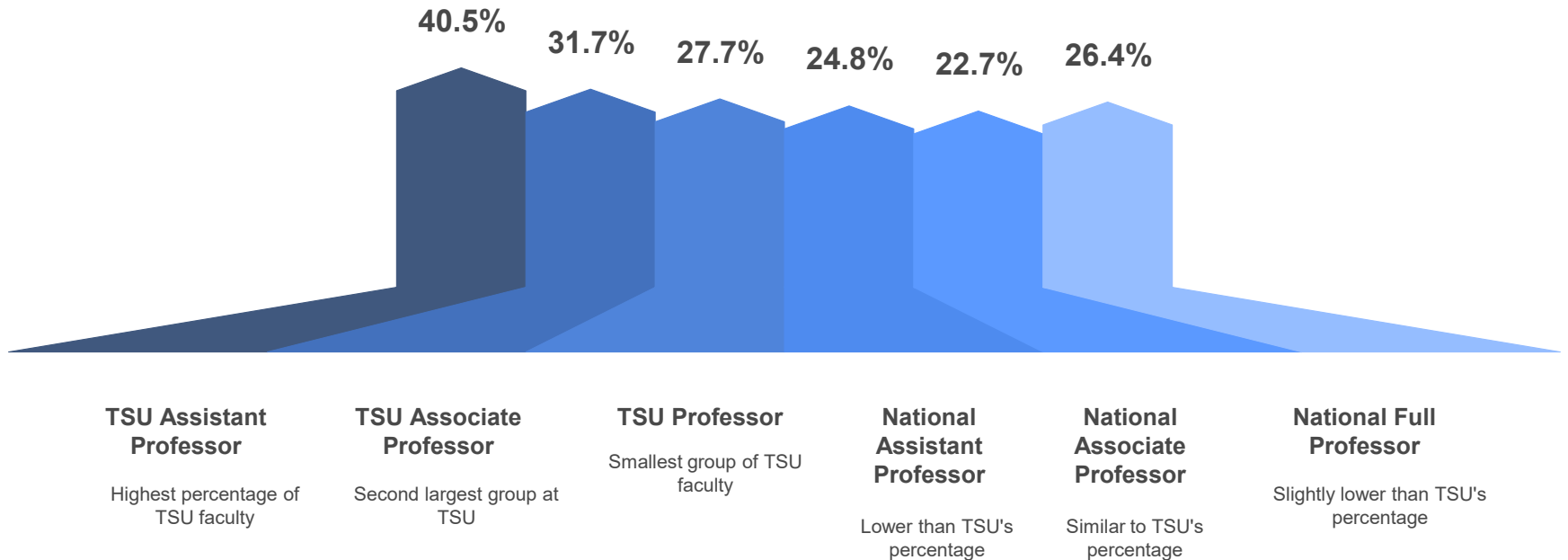
Full Professor—339 49%

The average percentages of faculty ranks at public universities in the United States are as follows:

- **Assistant Professors:** 24.8%
- **Associate Professors:** 22.7%
- **Full Professors:** 26.4%

For more detailed information, the data is sourced from the U.S. Department of Education, specifically the National Center for Education Statistics, which compiles this information through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) [\[2\]](#).

TSU Faculty Rank Distribution Compared to the National Average



Data sourced from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. This information compiled through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).



**Meeting
of the
TSU Board of Trustees**

Thursday September 18 , 2025

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Academic Affairs

I. Call to Order

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Academic Affairs

Action Item

II. Approval of Tenure and Promotion

At TSU, the largest group of faculty is **Assistant Professors**, followed by **Associate Professors**, with **Professors** being the smallest group. Specifically, **31.7% of TSU faculty are Assistant Professors**, which is slightly higher than the national average. **27.7% are Associate Professors**, which is close to the national percentage, and **24.8% are Professors**, which is lower than the national average. The data is sourced from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

3. TENURE AND PROMOTION FLOWCHART

The following chart represents the flow of reviewers of an application for retention, tenure, and/or promotion.



29 FACULTY APPLICATIONS

Category	Approved	Denied	Total
Tenure Only	4	0	4
Promotion Only	9	2	11
Tenure and Promotion	12	2*	14
Total	25	4	29

*One tenure and promotion approved candidate, recently resigned.

Action Item

The Division of Academic Affairs is requesting approval of four (4) candidates recommended for tenure only, nine (9) candidates recommended for promotion only, and twelve (12) candidates recommended for tenure and promotion. The Committee Chair will call for a motion on the requested action.

MOTION: To approve the four (4) candidates recommended for tenure only, nine (9) candidates recommended for promotion only, and, twelve (12) candidates recommended for tenure and promotion as contained in the Board materials for the Board of Trustees' September 19, 2025, meeting.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Academic Affairs

Action Item

III. Approval of Post Tenure and Promotion Review Policy



Post-Tenure Performance Review (PPR) Policy

Faculty Senate Post-Tenure Review
Committee

Office of Academic Affairs – Faculty Senate

◆ Purpose of the Policy

- Ensures **tenured faculty** maintain high standards in **teaching, research, and service**.
- Aims to promote **faculty development, student success, and institutional accountability**.
- Not intended as a **re-tenure process**, but rather as a **supportive and evaluative mechanism**.

◆ Core Principles

- **Fairness, Transparency, Peer Evaluation**
- **Faculty development** is prioritized before disciplinary action
- Policy is aligned with **TSU Faculty Handbook** and **Board of Trustees policies**

Action Item

The Division of Academic Affairs is requesting approval of the Post-Tenure Review policy. The Committee Chair will call for a motion on the requested action.

MOTION: To approve the Post-Tenure Review policy as contained in the Board materials for the Board of Trustees' September 19, 2025, meeting.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Friday, September 19, 2025

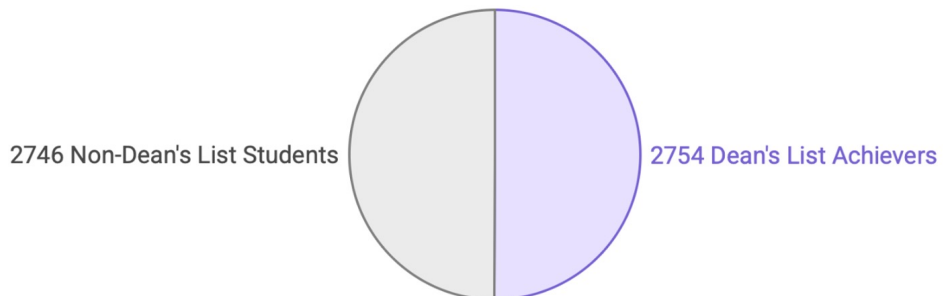
Academic Affairs
Informational Update Item
Retention & Progression
Graduation Rate



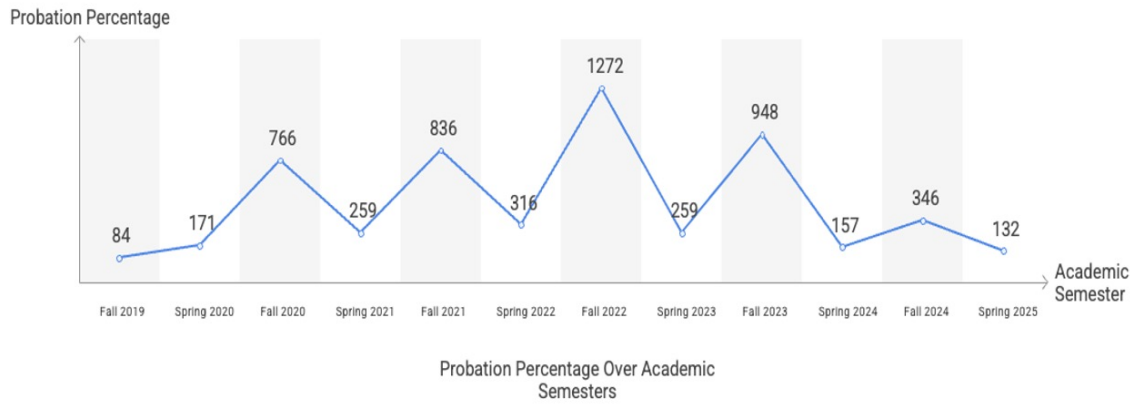
Tennessee State University
Office of Academic Affairs
RETENTION, PROGRESSION &
GRADUATION PLAN
2024-2027

Spring 2025 Dean's List (GPA 3.0)
Total Student Enrollment 5500

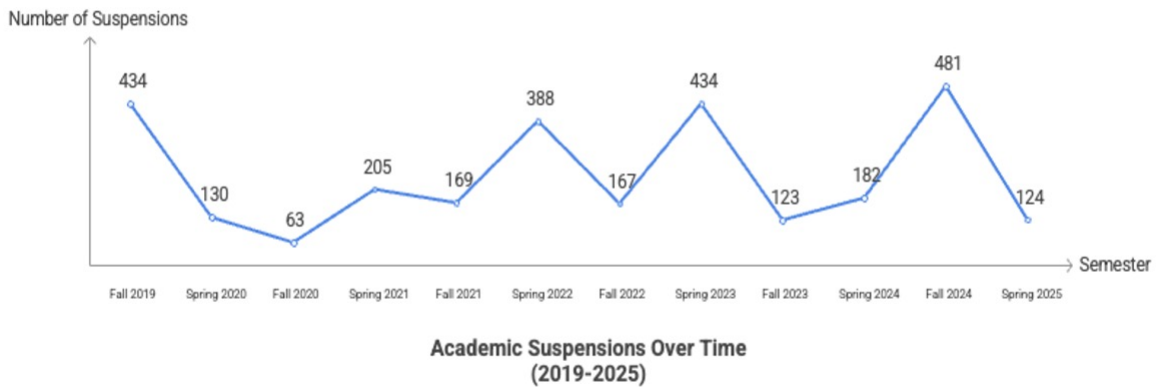
Student Enrollment Distribution (students)



Five Year Probation Data



Five Year Suspension Data

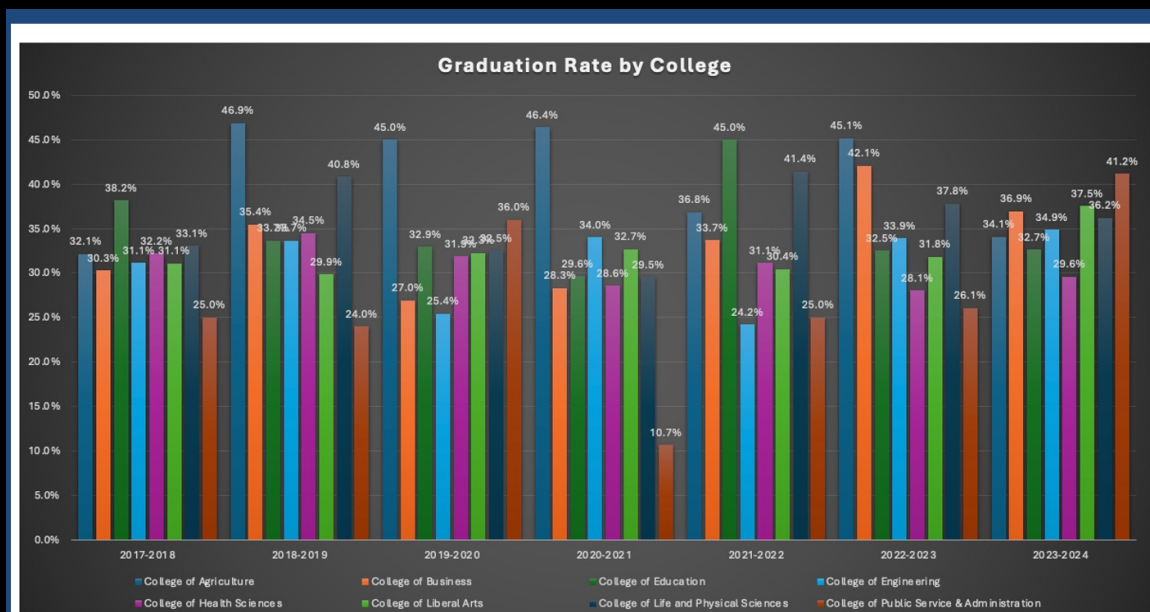
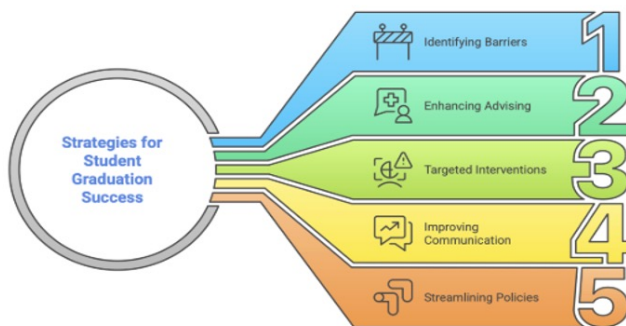


Graduation Completion Task Force (75 stakeholders)

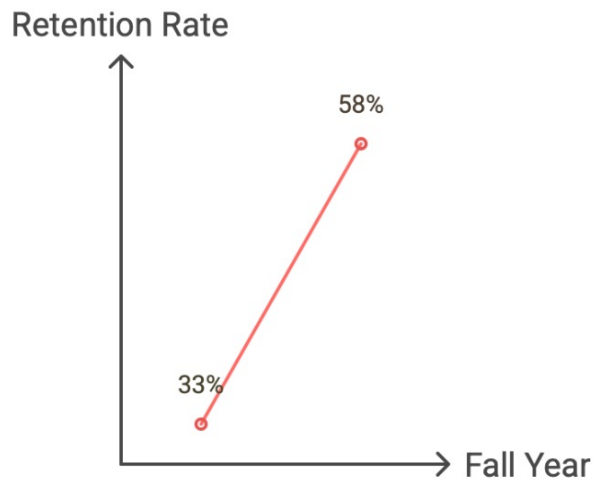
Goal 5% overall Increase 2025 - 2026

- Identifying barriers to student retention and completion.
- Enhancing academic advising and support services.
- Developing targeted interventions for at-risk students.
- Improving communication and engagement with students regarding degree completion requirements.
- Reviewing and developing policies to streamline the path to **graduation**.

Strategies for Student Graduation Success



Fall Retention Rate Growth 1st Time Freshmen



Year One Progression



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

VI. Adjournment



**TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY**

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of the Post-Tenure Review Policy

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Provost, Robbie Melton
Faculty Trustee, Artenzia Young-Seigler
Faculty Senate Chair, Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi

Background Information

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that tenured faculty members maintain high standards of academic performance and continue contributing meaningfully to the university's mission. The post-tenure review process evaluates tenured faculty to support faculty development and improve teaching, research, and service.

A motivating factor in the development of this policy is to ensure high quality student instruction that results in student growth, retention, and degree completion. Each college at TSU has different expectations based on research and service. Those activities are currently accounted for in annual reviews and should be the basis for future faculty reviews using this policy.

This policy draws heavily from the policy implemented at the University of Memphis. It provides a clear framework for post-tenure reviews, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability in faculty performance assessment.

The Division of Academic Affairs is grateful to the following individuals who served on the 2025 PTR Ad Hoc Committee that developed these guidelines.

PPR Ad Hoc Committee:

Dr. Ken Chilton, Chair Professor, College of Public Service	Dr. Elaine Martin Professor, College of Life and Physical Sciences
Dr. Muhammad Akbar Professor, College of Engineering	Dr. Reynard McMillian Associate Professor, College of Business

Dr. Rebecca Dixon Professor, College of Liberal Arts	Dr. Jason Oliver Research Professor, College of Agriculture
Dr. Retta Guy Professor, College of Education	Dr. Karen Smith Assistant Professor, College of Health Sciences

Committee Action

The Division of Academic Affairs is requesting approval of the Post-Tenure Review policy. The Committee Chair will call for a motion on the requested action.

MOTION: To approve the Post-Tenure Review policy as contained in the Board Materials for the Board of Trustees' September 19, 2025, meeting.



Post-Tenure Performance Review (PPR) Policy

Faculty Senate Post-Tenure Review
Committee

August 28, 2025

The TSU Policy on the evaluation of tenured faculty members describes Post-tenure Performance Review (PPR) as follows:

The Board of Trustees recognizes and affirms the importance of tenure in protecting academic freedom and thus promoting the University's principal mission of discovery and dissemination of truth through teaching, research, and service. The Board also recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to students, parents, and all citizens of Tennessee to ensure that faculty members effectively serve the needs of students and the University throughout their careers.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that tenured faculty members maintain high standards of academic performance and continue contributing meaningfully to the university's mission. The post-tenure review process evaluates tenured faculty to support faculty development and improve teaching, research, and service.

A motivating factor in the development of this draft is to ensure high quality student instruction that results in student growth, retention, and degree completion. Each college at TSU has different expectations based on research and service. Those activities are currently accounted for in annual reviews and should be the basis for future faculty reviews using this policy.

This policy draft draws heavily from the policy implemented at the University of Memphis. It provides a clear framework for post-tenure reviews, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability in faculty performance assessment.

The Division of Academic Affairs is grateful to the following individuals who served on the 2025 PTR Ad Hoc Committee that developed these guidelines.

PPR Ad Hoc Committee:

Dr. Ken Chilton, Chair Professor, College of Public Service	Dr. Elaine Martin Professor, College of Life and Physical Sciences
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Dr. Rebecca Dixon Professor, College of Liberal Arts	Dr. Jason Oliver Research Professor, College of Agriculture
Dr. Retta Guy Professor, College of Education	Dr. Karen Smith Assistant Professor, College of Health Sciences

Post-Tenure Review

Post-tenure Review (PTR) is an expanded and in-depth performance evaluation conducted by a committee of tenured peers and administered by the provost. Procedures for conducting PTR are set forth in the Appendix.

This policy recognizes that the work of a faculty member is not neatly separated into academic or calendar years. To ensure that performance is evaluated in the context of ongoing work, the period of performance subject to Post-tenure Review is the five most recent Annual Performance Review cycles. Furthermore, PTR is not a process of re-tenure. The goal is to facilitate faculty growth throughout an academic career in accordance with College and Department norms. The university is responsible for providing resources, pedagogical training, and ongoing support to assist faculty growth.

PTR will be initiated by the provost when a faculty member has received, during any four (4) consecutive Annual Performance Review cycles, any two (2) of the following:

- overall annual performance rating of “**Failure to Meet Responsibilities**”; or
- annual performance rating of “**Failure to Meet Responsibilities**” in teaching, research, service, or disposition sub scores; or
- overall annual performance ratings of “**Improvement Needed**”; or
- annual performance ratings of “**Improvement Needed**” in the sub score of “**Faculty Teaching**”.

A five member peer review committee is charged to review the information relevant to the faculty member’s performance and to conclude whether that performance has satisfied the expectations for the faculty member’s discipline and academic rank. The expectations for faculty performance may differ by campus, academic unit, department, and even among sub-disciplines within a department or program. Those expectations may be commonly held standards in the discipline or sub-discipline. Those expectations may be stated explicitly in the faculty member’s own past Annual Performance Reviews, work assignments, goals, or other planning tools (however identified), as well as department or academic unit guidelines, this handbook, Board policies, and in other generally applicable policies and procedures.

The peer review committee must reach a conclusion as to whether the performance has satisfied expectations for the faculty member’s discipline and academic rank. If the peer review committee concludes that the faculty member’s performance has not met the expectations for the discipline and academic rank, the committee must recommend to the provost that a post-tenure improvement plan be developed or that tenure be terminated for Adequate Cause, in accordance with TSU’s Faculty Handbook. The committee must report its conclusions and recommendations in writing, including an explanation for each conclusion or recommendation, and enumerating the

anonymously cast vote and a dissenting explanation for any conclusion or recommendation that is not adopted unanimously. **The faculty member must have an opportunity to review and respond to the committee's report and recommendations. All written conclusions, the reasoning upon which they are based, and the recommendations of the peer review committee must be reviewed and considered by the provost.**

The provost may accept the conclusions and recommendations of the peer review committee or make different conclusions in a written explanation provided to the faculty member with copies to the dean, department chair, president, and members of the peer review committee. If the provost concludes that a post-tenure improvement plan is warranted, the provost will direct the department chair to develop and implement a post-tenure improvement plan in accordance with the procedures described in [the appendix](#). If the provost concludes that the faculty member's tenure be terminated for Adequate Cause, then the Termination Procedures for Adequate Cause for Unsatisfactory Performance, described in TSU's faculty handbook (Procedures for Termination, Adequate Cause), shall be followed.

In the case where a Post-tenure Review process is concurrent with annual review process, the department chair will coordinate with post-tenure peer review committee. Coordination will take one of the following forms:

- a. In the case where a faculty member is undergoing a Post-tenure Review during the time that an annual faculty evaluation is due, when possible, the department chair will postpone the annual faculty evaluation until the post tenure review committee has issued its report and the report has been accepted by the president. The report will be advisory to the department chair in preparing the annual faculty evaluation. The faculty member has the right to respond to the report. If it is not possible to postpone the annual faculty review until the post-tenure committee's report has been accepted, then the department chair will perform annual faculty review without input from the committee.
- b. In the case where a faculty member is required to follow a post-tenure improvement plan, the peer review committee will provide a written interim report at the mid-point of the improvement plan to the faculty member and the department chair on the faculty member's progress in satisfying the expectations established in the post-tenure improvement plan. The report will be advisory to the department chair, and the faculty member has the right to respond to the report. Any Annual Performance Review materials produced while a faculty member is undergoing Post-tenure Review or under a Post-tenure Review improvement plan will be made available to the post-tenure peer review committee

Appendix 1 | Objectives of Post-Tenure Review

The Post-tenure Review policy and procedures provide a thorough, fair, and transparent process for:

- coordinating peer evaluation of a tenured faculty member's performance for years immediately preceding PTR;
- facilitating cooperation between a tenured faculty member and administrators in identifying effective strategies to assist the faculty member in meeting the expectations for the relevant discipline and academic rank; and
- distinguishing those unusual situations in which (despite efforts to facilitate improvement) the faculty member's performance fails to satisfy expectations for the discipline and academic rank, and which may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including proceedings to consider termination of tenure.

Appendix 2 | Initiation of Post-Tenure Review by the Provost

As stated above, PTR will be initiated by the provost when a faculty member has received, during any four (4) consecutive Annual Performance Review cycles, any two (2) of the following:

- overall annual performance rating of “**Failure to Meet Responsibilities**”; or
- annual performance rating of “**Failure to Meet Responsibilities**” in teaching, research, service, or disposition sub scores; or
- overall annual performance ratings of “**Improvement Needed**”; or
- annual performance ratings of “**Improvement Needed**” in the sub score of “**Faculty Teaching**”.

The provost must first review any annual performance review that resulted in triggering Post-tenure Review. If the provost overrules the performance rating given during the annual performance review and determines that Post-tenure Review is not warranted, then the Post-tenure Review process ends. If the provost determines there is an issue with an annual review by a department head, then a formal review process of the department head that involves the Dean and Provost must be initiated by the provost. The review process will evaluate departmental review procedures and policies, fairness of the process, and potential issues with the department head that may require replacement of the position.

If the provost determines that Post-tenure Review is warranted, then the provost shall meet with the faculty member no later than 21 days after the determination to explain the decision and review the procedures for the Post-tenure Review process. The provost must also provide written notice of this decision within 30 days to the faculty member with copies to the department chair, dean, president, and Faculty Senate President that Post-tenure Review will be initiated.

Use the following links to navigate to a specific section of **Appendix 3**.

- A. **Appointment of the Peer Review Committee**
 - B. **Collection of Records**
 - C. **Review and Recommendations by the Peer Review Committee**
 - D. **Conclusions Regarding Performance and Recommended Action(s)**
 - E. **Review and Response to the Peer Review Committee's Report**
 - F. **Review and Action by the Provost**
-

A. Appointment of the Peer Review Committee

Within 45 days of the written notice that Post-tenure Review will be initiated, the provost must appoint the peer review committee in the manner described below and meet with the committee to review its charge.

Criteria: every member of the peer review committee must be:

- tenured;
- hold the same or higher academic rank as the faculty member undergoing review; and
- have some familiarity with the relevant performance expectations for faculty in that discipline and academic rank.

If an appropriate peer review committee cannot be assembled using these criteria, the provost must provide to the faculty member a written explanation for the deviation from the prescribed criteria.

Nomination Process:

- Consistent with the criteria for service stated above, the provost must appoint the peer review committee of five (5) faculty using the following nomination process:
- the **dean** nominates one (1) faculty member to serve both as chair and as a voting member of the peer review committee; when a faculty member has a split appointment across academic units, the dean of the academic unit in which the faculty member holds a majority appointment (that is, the faculty member's tenure unit) will provide the nomination;
- the **department chair** nominates two (2) faculty members from the department who meet the criteria above, from whom one committee member is appointed; If the department

does not have faculty who meet the criteria for service as stated above, the department chair may nominate two (2) faculty external to the department who meet the criteria. For academic units without departments, the dean will nominate two (2) additional faculty members from the academic unit who meet the criteria for service as stated above. If the academic unit does not have faculty who meet the criteria for service as stated above, the dean may nominate two (2) faculty external to the academic unit who meet the criteria;

- the **faculty member undergoing review** nominates two (2) faculty members who meet the criteria above, from whom one committee member is appointed;
- the **Faculty Senate president or designee** nominates two (2) faculty members who meet the criteria above, from whom one (1) committee member is appointed; and
- the **academic unit tenure and promotion committee** nominates two (2) actively serving members who meet the criteria above, from whom one (1) committee member is appointed. If the academic unit tenure and promotion committee does not have faculty who meet the criteria for service as stated above, the academic tenure and promotion committee may nominate two (2) faculty external to the committee who meet the criteria.

B. Collection of Records

The provost is responsible for collecting the following records with respect to the faculty member under review:

- all annual performance reviews for the past five (5) annual performance review cycles, including materials submitted by the faculty member (or an administrator) or developed as part of the evaluation process;
- written performance expectations, which may have been established in the past five (5) annual performance reviews, in department or academic unit guidelines, in the Faculty Handbook, and/or in Board of Trustees policies.

The faculty member undergoing review may submit additional written materials relevant to the review period for the committee's consideration. Such materials must be submitted to the provost for distribution to the committee. The peer review committee may also request that the provost collect and provide additional written materials. Reasonable requests for relevant records will be honored when permitted by law and university policy.

External reviews may be deemed necessary by the PTR Committee, or the dean of the faculty member's majority appointment, or when requested by the faculty member undergoing PTR.

- Letters from no more than three external reviewers may be considered by the PTR committee;
- Requests for external letters by faculty undergoing PTR must be made in writing to the committee chair at the time their materials are submitted to the PTR committee;
- The Provost, or their designee, shall request the external reviews, in conformity with the following requirements:

- o One reviewer will be chosen from a list provided by the faculty member undergoing PTR;
- o One or more reviewers will be chosen from a list provided by the tenured faculty in the department of the faculty member undergoing PTR.
- Each member of the PTR committees will record the time devoted to the review process.

C. Review and Recommendations by the Peer Review Committee

The peer review committee is charged to review the available performance information and to conclude, based on that information, whether performance during the review period has satisfied the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank. This review and a written report of the committee's conclusions and recommendations should be **completed within 75 days** from the provost's charge to the peer review committee.

Interviews:

- The peer review committee may conduct a reasonable number of interviews in person or electronically. If the committee chooses to conduct interviews, both the faculty member undergoing review and the administrator who assigned the negative rating(s) must be given the opportunity to be interviewed.
- All interviews must be conducted separately. Unavailability of the faculty member or administrator for an interview does not constitute grounds for an extension of time to complete the Post-tenure Review.

Voting:

- Voting must be conducted by anonymous ballots. No member of the committee may abstain or recuse himself or herself from voting.
- All conclusions and recommendations are adopted upon the vote of at least three members of the peer review committee.

D. Conclusions Regarding Performance and Recommended Action(s)

All conclusions and recommendations of the peer review committee must be made in writing, with copies to the faculty member, department chair, dean, and provost. Minority reports may be attached. While the committee is not permitted to share written materials directly with the Faculty Senate, the faculty member under review remains free to do so.

Based on the judgment of its members, the peer review committee must conclude either:

1. That the performance satisfies the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank; or
2. That the performance does not satisfy the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank. In such a case, the committee must recommend either:
 - a. that a post-tenure improvement plan be developed and implemented; or
 - b. by a vote of at least three (3) committee members, that the provost should initiate proceedings to consider termination of tenure based on Adequate Cause for Unsatisfactory Performance as defined in the Faculty Handbook.

E. Review and Response to the Peer Review Committee's Report

The faculty member must submit a written response to the committee's report to the provost **within 14 days** of receiving the report.

F. Review and Action by the Provost

The provost will make an independent evaluation of the faculty member's performance and must provide to the faculty member, department chair, dean, president, and members of the peer review committee a written explanation of the rationale for any conclusions, decisions, or further actions to be taken. If the provost concludes that the performance under review has satisfied the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank, the Post-tenure Review process is concluded.

If the Provost concludes that the performance under review does not satisfy the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank, the provost may take the following further actions:

- Require that a post-tenure improvement plan be implemented for a period of up to 18 months, as further described below in Appendix 4; and/or
- Impose disciplinary sanctions other than Termination for Adequate Cause in accordance with the Faculty Handbook or consider tenure termination based on Adequate Cause for Unsatisfactory Performance as defined in the Policy on Academic Tenure, 5:02:03:60.

Use the following links to navigate to a specific section in Appendix 4.

- A. **Plan Contents Notification**
 - B. **Development of the Post-Tenure Improvement Plan**
 - C. **Post-Tenure Development**
 - D. **Committee Review After Post-Tenure Review**
 - E. **Review and Action by the Provost**
-

4.A Notification

If the provost concludes that a post-tenure improvement plan should be developed, the provost must promptly notify in writing the faculty member under review that a post-tenure improvement plan must be implemented with copies sent to the department chair, dean, president, and peer review committee.

Only one improvement plan may be offered to a faculty member during a given Post-tenure Review process; however, the Post-tenure Review process may be implemented more than once during a faculty member's career. A Post-tenure Review improvement plan may extend no more than 24 months from the time it is implemented by the provost.

4.B Development of the Post-Tenure Improvement Plan

The **department chair** is responsible for drafting the post-tenure improvement plan in close collaboration with the peer review committee, dean, and provost. In drafting the improvement plan, the department chair should attempt to address any written concerns raised by the faculty member during the relevant annual review cycles.

Within 30 days of notice that an improvement plan must be developed, the department chair is expected to produce a plan approved by the dean, provost, and at least three (3) members of the peer review committee. Once such an improvement plan is developed, the provost shall forward the proposed plan to the faculty member. If the department chair fails to produce within 30 days an improvement plan approved by the provost, dean, and at least three (3) members of the peer review committee, then the peer review committee must assume responsibility for drafting an improvement plan. In such a case, the committee must complete the plan within **14 additional days**. Upon approval by at least three (3) members of the peer review committee, the proposed plan must be provided to the dean and provost for review and approval. In either case, the provost must ensure that an improvement plan is approved by the dean, and at least (3) members of the peer review committee. The provost will send the approved improvement plan to the faculty member for review and response.

The faculty member under review must be given an opportunity to review and respond to the proposed improvement plan **within 14 days**. The peer review committee must review and consider

the faculty member's response, including any modifications requested by the faculty member **within another 14 days**. At its discretion, the peer review committee may revise the proposed plan after considering the faculty member's response. The committee must then forward the proposed improvement plan to the provost for review and approval. The approved improvement plan will be sent to the **department chair, dean, and faculty member** for implementation.

In the case where a faculty member is required to follow a post-tenure improvement plan, the peer review committee will provide a written interim report at the mid-point of the improvement plan to the faculty member and the department chair on the faculty member's progress in satisfying the expectations established in the post-tenure improvement plan. The report will be advisory to the department chair, and the faculty member has the right to respond to the report.

Any Annual Performance Review materials produced while a faculty member is undergoing Post-tenure Review or under a Post-tenure Review Improvement Plan will be made available to the post-tenure peer review committee.

4.C. The Post-tenure Improvement Plan

The Post-tenure Improvement Plan must indicate how specific deficiencies in a faculty member's performance (as measured against stated college/department criteria developed under the provision of this rule) will be remedied. The plan will be developed and agreed upon by the faculty member, the review committee, the department head, and the dean. It is the faculty member's obligation to assist in the development of a meaningful and effective plan and to make a good-faith effort to implement the plan adopted. If the faculty member, department head, and review committee fail to agree on a Post-tenure Improvement Plan acceptable to the dean, the plan will be determined through mediation directed by the provost or provost's designee. Should mediation fail, the plan will be determined by the provost or provost's designee. Although each Post-tenure Improvement Plan is tailored to individual circumstances, the plan must:

1. List specific deficiencies to be addressed;
2. Define specific goals or outcomes necessary to remedy the deficiencies;
3. Outline the activities to be undertaken to achieve the necessary outcomes;
4. Identify institutional resources to be committed in support of the plan;
5. Set timelines for achieving goals and outcomes; and
6. Indicate the criteria for assessment in annual reviews of progress in the plan.

The faculty member and department head will meet regularly to review the faculty member's progress toward remedying deficiencies. The faculty member provides an annual progress report to the review committee and to the department head. Further evaluation of the faculty member's performance within the regular faculty performance evaluation process (e.g., annual review) may draw upon the faculty member's progress in achieving the goals set forth in the Post-tenure Improvement Plan. If a faculty member does not make sufficient progress on the Post-tenure Improvement Plan yearly, this may constitute adequate cause for dismissal or other academic discipline deemed appropriate by Academic Affairs.

When the objectives of the plan have been met or the agreed timeline exceeded, or in any case, no later than two years after the start of the Post-tenure Improvement Plan, the department head must submit a final report to the faculty member and dean, with a copy to Academic Affairs. The re-engagement of faculty talents and energies reflect a success for the entire university community.

If, after consulting with the review committee, both the department head and dean agree that the faculty member has failed to meet the goals of the Post-tenure Improvement Plan and that the deficiencies in the completion of the plan separately constitute adequate cause for dismissal under applicable tenure policies, dismissal proceedings may be initiated under applicable policies governing tenure, academic freedom, and academic responsibility.

4.D Committee Review After Post-Tenure Review

At the end of the time allotted for the Post-tenure Improvement Plan, the peer review committee must reconvene to review performance under the plan, and to determine whether such performance during the review period has satisfied expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank.

The peer review committee must vote anonymously and provide a written report of its conclusions and recommendations, including majority and minority reports (if applicable), to the **faculty member, department chair, and dean, and provost**. The faculty member may submit a written response to the peer review committee's report to the provost **within 14 days** of receiving the report.

4.E Review and Action by the Provost

The **provost** will make an independent evaluation of the performance under the improvement plan during the review period. The provost will provide a written explanation of the rationale for any conclusions, decisions, or further actions to be taken to the faculty member with copies sent to the **department chair, dean, president, and members of the peer review committee**. If the provost concludes that the performance under review has satisfied the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank, the Post-tenure Review process is concluded. In doing so, the provost may overrule previous performance ratings.

If the provost concludes that the performance under review does not satisfy the expectations for the faculty member's discipline and academic rank, the provost shall impose disciplinary actions, in accordance with this policy, or consider tenure termination based on Adequate Cause for Unsatisfactory Performance as defined in the Faculty Handbook

Appendix 5 | Timeline for Conducting Post-Tenure Review

All post-tenure deadlines are counted in **calendar days rather than business days**, except when the last day of the time period falls during a holiday or administrative closure lasting five business days or longer (such as the administrative closure between fall and spring semesters or an extended weather-related closure).

On a case-by-case basis, the provost may approve a written request from the peer review committee for an extension of time to complete the initial review. Only one extension may be granted to the peer review committee during a single Post-tenure Review period, and the provost will determine the length of the extension.

Concurrent Appeals – While a general appeal of an annual performance review or other procedure may overlap in time with the five (5) year review period, Post-tenure Review is purposefully different from the annual performance review process. To the extent provided under this handbook, the faculty member may choose to initiate or maintain an appeal of the most recent annual performance review while Post-tenure Review is underway. Any appeal or other process must be conducted without interference or influence from the Post-tenure Review, and vice versa. Faculty leaders should take care to ensure the integrity of all procedures by confirming that no person serves in multiple proceedings related to the same faculty member. Except as may be required by law any such appeal or other university process must proceed simultaneously with the Post-tenure Review and must have no impact on the timing or procedures described in this policy.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Student Affairs Report and Report on Student Housing

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No Action

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Bridgett Elliott Golman, Vice President for Student Affairs

Background Information

Dr. Golman will provide reports on Student Affairs and Student Housing.

Division of Student Affairs, Board Report
September 2025

The Division of Student Affairs is comprised of 11 units, Career Development Center, Floyd Payne Student Center, Student Conduct, Student Counseling Center, Health Services, Residential Life, (Housing), Student Activities, Cheerleading, Aristocrat of Bands, Ralph Boston Wellness Center, and our newest unit, the Navigation 1Stop Center.

Office of Student Affairs Division Highlights

Admissions/Enrollment Services

Fall 2025 Enrollment Report

**as of August 28, 2025*

Comparative Enrollment by Student Level

Term	Total Headcount	Undergraduate	Graduate
Fall 2025	5293	4156	1137
Fall 2024	6518	5256	1262
Difference	-1225	-1100	-125

Undergraduate Students

Term	Count
Continuing	3200
First Time High School	130
New First Time Freshman	431
New Special/Non-Degree	26
New Transfer	213
New Transient	21
Readmitted	114
Summer First Time Freshman Returning Fall	21
Total	4156

Graduate Students

Term	Count
Continuing	792
New Inst / First Time Grad/Prof	267
New Special/Non-Degree	31
Readmitted	47
Total	1137

Headcount and FTE

Level	Headcount	FTE
Graduate	1137	735.25
Undergraduate	4156	4033.87
Total (1-SEPT-25)	5293	4769.12

Fall 2025 Enrollment Report

**as of August 28, 2025*

First-Time Freshmen

Student Type	Count
First-Time Freshmen	431

First-Time Freshmen with Prior Dual Enrollment Credit

Classification	Count
Undergraduate Special (Former TSU DE Students)	7
Sophomore (Transferred DE Credits to TSU)	3
Juniors (Transferred DE Credits to TSU)	3
Grand Total	13

Additional Freshman Student Types

Student Type	Count
Continuing	142
First Time High School	3
New Special/Non-Degree	6
New Transfer	63
New Transient	25
Readmitted	21
Summer First Time Freshman Returning Fall	22
Grand Total	282

Office of Student Engagement and Leadership

The Office of Student Engagement and Leadership mission aligns with academic outcomes by encouraging student engagement through clubs and organizations, providing leadership development, and fostering collaboration with the campus community—ensuring students are prepared for success both in and beyond the classroom. OSE plans all activities through a *developmental framework* that supports the holistic growth of students. Each initiative is designed to help students develop competence, manage emotions, grow in autonomy while fostering interdependence, build mature relationships, establish identity, find purpose, and demonstrate integrity.

1. Developing Competence
2. Managing Emotions
3. Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence
4. Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships
5. Establishing Identity
6. Developing Purpose
7. Developing Integrity

Some programs and events planned to enhance student life and support leadership development for the Fall Semester include:

- “Future in Focus” Student Leadership Retreat
- Fall Elections Week - **August 24th – August 29th**
- JMC Classic Week – **August 24th – August 30th**
- Meet Your Student Leaders (OSE Open House) - **August 20th**
- Student Government Inauguration – **September 3rd**
- McDonald’s Scholarship Launch & Activation – **McDonald's will donate \$70k**
- Planned to A.T. Financial Literacy Activation
- Leader to Leader Development workshop

Please see the attached calendar of events for more details. Note that our calendar is ever-evolving, as our newly elected student leaders began their term with the July fiscal year and will begin shaping more class focused events during the upcoming Student Leadership Retreat.

First Year Students

In addition, we are planning targeted programs specifically for First-Year/Freshman students to support their transition to campus life, such as:

- Welcome Week “BUNKD”
 - Movie Night
 - Bonfire
 - Freshmen Elections Informational
 - Grill-n-Thrill
 - Foam Party
- Financial Literacy Series Sponsored by Bank of America
- Beyond the Business Card series – teaching first year students how and the importance of networking

We will also be working closely with Residence Life to coordinate additional first-year initiatives

Student Organizations

- Student Organization Registration began July 15th
- Advisor and E-Board Orientation
- Advisor/E-Board Orientation September 2nd, 4th, and 9th

Student Leadership Development

The T.I.G.E.R. Leadership model for student leaders and organizations, emphasizing the qualities and goals that guide their work. It reflects a commitment to making a transformative and lasting impact, fostering both personal and organizational growth, empowering students to lead with confidence and purpose, and promoting resourcefulness in navigating challenges and opportunities. By embodying these principles, student leaders and organizations can create meaningful change, strengthen their communities, and model excellence in leadership.

OSEL seeks to cultivate student leaders who embody the core values of Transformation, Impact, Growth, Empowerment, and Resourcefulness. Through intentional training, experiential learning, and mentorship, the initiative equips students to lead with integrity, foster inclusive communities, and create meaningful change on campus and beyond.

Leadership Development Series (September, October, November)

- Personal Growth
- Interpersonal Skills
- Strategic Thinking

Residence Life and Housing

Readiness: Fall 2025 – Residence Life

Statistics: We are excited to share that for the Fall 2025 semester, we have a total of 3,431 beds available on campus, achieving an occupancy rate of 85% as of August 26th. We have successfully placed 2,916 students in housing. Among these students, we have welcomed 417 First-Time Freshmen this Fall, 91 transfers, and 2,408 returning student applicants.

Revenue: Although overall housing enrollment declined for Fall 2025, revenue remained relatively stable due to three key factors: an overall 4% rent increase, tiered pricing proposal for the New Housing Facility and the introduction of private room options for seniors. As a result, Fall 2025 revenue is estimated at **\$9,357,378**, compared to **\$9,933,776** in Fall 2024 at semester close.

Residence Hall	Capacity	Students Assigned	Occupancy %	Revenue
Fall 2025				
Wilson Hall	540	405	75%	\$875,205.00
Watson Hall	150	146	97%	\$648,300.00
Boyd Hall	352	291	83%	\$628,851.00
Eppse Hall	223	174	78%	\$445,166.00
Hale Hall	316	242	77%	\$619,130.00
Rudolph Hall	420	372	89%	\$944,039.00
New Housing Facility	700	574	82%	\$2,653,423.00
Ford Residential Complex	442	442	100%	\$1,578,824.00
New Residence Center	288	270	94%	\$964,440.00
Totals	3431	2916	Projected Rev. for Fall 2025	\$9,357,378.00
Occupancy Totals		84.99%		

Highlights: This year, the Department of Housing successfully navigated two complex challenges. First, with the Fall 2022 freshman class now entering their senior year, demand for apartment-style living reached unprecedented levels. For this Fall, we had 1,252 seniors apply for only 744 available apartment spaces—a supply that, by policy, must also accommodate qualifying special interest groups, as well as juniors on a first-come, first-served basis. At the same time, overall housing applications declined by 21.5% compared to the previous year.

To address these dual pressures, the department implemented a strategic pivot in July, offering private rooms in Watson Hall to juniors and seniors. This solution both honored the desire for privacy among upper-division students and maximized departmental revenue. The initiative generated **\$356,565 in additional revenue for Fall 2025 alone**, with a projected **\$713,130 gain for the full academic year**.

For Summer 2025, TSU was also home to 15 summer camps and conferences in Hale Hall, New Housing Facility, and the campus apartments. In total, **camps generated \$270,954 in revenue for Summer 2025**.

With a smaller incoming first-year class, Housing also seized the opportunity to launch the university's **first dedicated First-Year Experience Living Learning Community (FYE LLC) in Wilson Hall**. This innovative model consolidates first-year students in a single facility, enabling streamlined delivery of academic support, programming, tutoring, and engagement opportunities. Early feedback from both students and families has been highly positive, and the department will monitor GPA and engagement data to assess long-term impact.

Housing also continues to advance high-impact practices through specialized communities. Cohort 5 of the Dr. Levi Watkins Jr. Institute has been successfully placed in New Residence Hall, fostering leadership and academic excellence. Meanwhile, Watson Hall's all-junior and senior population will benefit from targeted programming focused on career readiness, professionalism, internship preparation, and graduate school exploration, ensuring that upper-division students receive resources aligned with their next stage of development.

In addition to progress in Living Learning Community development and revenue generation, Housing also achieved continued success in reducing the **no-show rate** through proactive, high-impact practices. By requiring **course registration and immunization clearance prior to room assignment**, the department ensured that only fully committed students received placements. This year, we further enhanced the process by leveraging the **move-in appointment scheduler** to identify potential no-shows early. Students flagged in the system were contacted directly by phone and reminded to confirm their arrival plans. These efforts minimized vacancies, maintained capacity, and allowed the department to quickly fill openings. In the short term, this strategy also improved the student experience by enabling more accurate roommate pairings, which fostered stronger pre-arrival communication and relationship building. Collectively, these initiatives highlight Housing's commitment to solving complex challenges with innovation, improving the student experience, and strengthening the university's residential life model while maintaining strong fiscal stewardship.

Residence Hall Maintenance, Projects, and Hall Improvements:

- a. Maintenance
 - Receive weekly report on Complete Work Orders (Ongoing)
 - Receive weekly report on Open Work Orders (Ongoing)
 - Weekly meetings with Housing leadership and TSU Operations/JLL leadership (Ongoing)
 - Committee formed for Housing Maintenance (New)
- b. Projects
 - Campus Apartments-floor structural repair for several apartments (Tentative semester break)
 - Hale Hall – Replaced rooftop exhaust fan for east wing of the building
 - Hale Hall - Roof Replacement scheduled
 - Watson Hall – Replacement of cast iron piping is scheduled
- c. Hall Improvements
 - Eppse Hall - 1st and 2nd floor restroom floors upgraded with Miracle Method
 - Hale Hall – Ten restrooms upgraded with Bath Fitter shower liners. This included nine suites and one room (39 students impacted).
 - Hale Hall – Main 1st floor lounge carpet removed and replaced with LVT flooring
 - Watson Hall-Upgraded Public Address (PA) intercom system with the installation of five new speakers and associated conduit and wiring
 - Watson Hall-Removing the urinals on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors where females reside
 - Wilson Hall - All shower basins in the restrooms upgraded with Miracle Method
 - Wilson Hall-Installed a new Amplifier/Mixer for the Public Address (PA) Intercom System
 - Wilson Hall-Installed an ADA smoke detector for the hearing impaired

Move In: Move-in of approved early arrival groups and individuals transitioning from summer school is already in full swing. Move-in dates for early arrivals are requested/established in advance (Sunday - Friday) to ensure room readiness. As of 8/4/2025, 254 students are checked in for Fall (8.7% of assigned students). Move-in instructions have been sent to students and are also posted on our website at <https://www.tnstate.edu/housing/movein.aspx> since mid-July.

RA Training: Students are currently completing the online portion of Resident Assistant training in preparation for students' return August 12-17. In-person instruction will begin on Wednesday. Our goal is provide a welcoming and safe environment for residents, where our student staff plays a large part in acclimating students to their floor, facility, and the campus a whole.

Customer Service:

Office Phone Calls: Residence Life worked with campus IT to transition office phone lines to a rolling line to ensure all calls were answered

Marketing/Website Updates: Residence Life staff this summer worked to overhaul the Residence Life & Housing website at www.tnstate.edu/housing to update photos and ensure information was up-to-date with recent changes. Mass email communication through the housing mercury system regarding updates (private room launch and process, Wilson First Year Experience LLC, Welcome letters from Hall Directors, etc.) went out consistently throughout the summer to keep students informed of changes and keep them excited about attending TSU and living on campus

Social Media: Residence Life staff and social media student interns this summer consistently put out content to keep students informed and engaged of happenings in residence life and on campus, as well as excite them about the upcoming year. Top performing posts on Facebook (TSU ResLife) and Instagram (@tsu_reslife) included Tigerman Missing You, Propaganda We're Not Falling For, the Private Room announcement post, and Former SGA President Chrishonda O'Quinn's "Dorm Diaries"

Meal Changes: Currently working with Aramark's online campaign for students to change meal plans PRIOR to returning to campus. This will ensure that requested plans are uploaded to student ID cards during Aramark's meal plan upload (scheduled for Friday 8/8/2025), bills are accurate prior to the first purge, and lower traffic at Aramark/Residence Life tables in Kean Hall during the One Stop week.

Hall Transfer Period: Residence Life moved up the Hall Transfer period from September 1 to August 1 after the private room request shift opened new vacancies around campus. This was also done to allow students to better prepare and plan for potential increases to their bill prior to the deregistration (purge) dates.

Recruitment/Retention:

Orientation: Residence Life holds a tabletop setup during the morning session of orientation. Office is also open during that time.

One Stop - Kean Hall: We will have a tabletop setup during the Kean Hall registration week August 13 - 24. Our regular office will be closed to visitors during that time, but phone lines will be open and staffed.

Programming:

Our Resident Assistants facilitate engagement through activities that foster community, personal growth, and a positive living environment. The activities are organized around five main components: cultural, health and wellness, educational programs, service learning, and social (C.H.E.S.S).

One Stop Navigation**Streamlined Enrollment Process**

Navigation 1 Stop Center (Dr. Bryant) worked with fifteen departments who provide support services to both new and continuing students during the registration period. Ensured each update their web sites with current data. This has led to a One Stop Online presence: <https://www.tnstate.edu/onestop-1/index.aspx>. This is on deck to be communicated (University Communications) any day now. The communication will include one QR Code – where our students can choose the area(s) where your specific needs are. This collaboration was supported by Public Relations and I.T.

You Belong Team Work

Navigation 1 Stop reviewed and called new students who were accepted for Fall but had not confirmed their intent to attend. Navigation 1 Stop hosted Virtual (Zooms) twice a week for the month of July for (New Students who were accepted, but had not confirmed attendance) and;

Ongoing Support

Extended online invites to our continuing students who are in Good Standing, but did not return in after Spring 24, but were not registered at the manual checkpoint. This invite was for navigational concerns including admissions and financial aid concerns. This in addition to the daily assistance with referrals from departments and parents who are very concerned about the Incoming 'Purge' dates.

Veteran's Affairs

The Tennessee State University (TSU) Veterans Affairs Office provides a wide array of services designed to address the unique needs of veterans. This includes assistance with educational benefits, funding information, and specialized support for individual concerns. The Office is dedicated to empowering veterans as they navigate their academic journeys. Currently, 172 students are receiving VA benefits for the Fall 25 Semester — 24 at the graduate level and 148 at the undergraduate level. The TSU Veterans Affairs Office stands as a committed ally for those who have served. With its comprehensive support services and strong community focus, it helps veterans excel both academically and personally, ensuring they succeed at TSU and carry valuable lessons into their futures.

This office exemplifies the resilience and dedication of the veteran community, serving as a vital support pillar at Tennessee State University.

Orientation: Attended New Student Orientation (NSO) sessions to inform incoming students eligible for Veteran Affairs benefits the process of enrolling. Was available for all students and family members afterwards to provide detailed explanations of VA benefits program, including educational assistance programs like the GI Bill, Chapter 35, and others.

Personalized Guidance: available in person and virtually to offer individual counseling sessions to students and families to discuss their specific needs, eligibility for VA benefits, and how to navigate the application process.

Streamlined Enrollment Process: assisted students with navigating the enrollment process for VA benefits, ensuring all necessary documentation is completed accurately and submitted on time. Aided with verifying enrollment with the VA, which is crucial for the timely disbursement of benefits.

Ongoing Support: Maintains open lines of communication with students, providing updates on changes to VA benefits or university policies.

Counseling Center

Cross-Campus Partnerships for Greater Visibility: The University Counseling Center (UCC) will actively increase its presence on campus by collaborating with key departments and organizations, including TSU Police Department, Residence Life, Student Health Services, Athletics, and various student organizations. These partnerships will allow the Counseling Center to be part of campus-wide initiatives, ensuring that students are aware of the mental health resources available to them and fostering a culture of proactive emotional and psychological support.

Engaging Programs and Events to Promote Mental Wellness: UCC will host and participate in a variety of outreach activities throughout the year, including tabling events, interactive group sessions, and educational presentations designed to normalize conversations around mental health. A highlight of the semester will be the Men's Mental Health Panel, which will provide a safe space for dialogue and break down stigma surrounding mental health among male students. These events aim to engage students in meaningful ways and encourage them to seek help when needed.

Wellness Spaces: Zen Room & New Meditation Room The Counseling Center continues to provide a Zen Room, a calming space where students can relax, de-stress, and focus on mindfulness. This semester, a new Meditation Room will be added, further enhancing the Center's commitment to offering restorative, student-centered environments that promote mental and emotional balance.

Holistic Outreach to Support Retention and Well-being: By combining partnerships, campus visibility, and wellness activities, the Counseling Center aims to not only address student mental health needs but also support overall retention and academic success. These efforts ensure that students feel connected, supported, and equipped with tools to navigate stress, anxiety, and the demands of college life.

Planned Events

August 26 - "Tiger Strong: Pounce Into Wellness"

September 8-12 - "Hope and Help: Suicide Prevention Week" Social Media Campaign

Week of October 13 - World Mental Health Day, October 10 (Tabling) - Social Media Campaign

November 7 or 14 - Men's Mental Health and Grief Awareness Month - November 7th or 14th

Student Health Services

- **Expanded Medical and Counseling Services provided by TimelyCare Telehealth Services**
 - TSU Student Health Services has partnered with TimelyCare to provide 24/7 medical and mental health support to enrolled students from anywhere in the U.S.—including all 50 states. This service includes immediate access to licensed physicians, counselors, and advanced practice providers after hours, on weekends, and during breaks—supporting students no matter where they are. Additionally, TimelyCare offers digital self-care tools and on-demand health coaching to help students build healthier habits and manage

stress, nutrition, sleep, and more. These resources not only support physical and emotional wellness but also contribute to increased retention by reducing health-related barriers to academic success.

- **Proactive Health Outreach & Educational Engagement**

- Student Health Services is committed to increasing health literacy and engagement through dynamic outreach and programming throughout the semester. This includes campaigns for Diabetes Awareness Month, on-campus Sickle Cell testing, confidential STI screening and education, and Alcohol and Drug Awareness initiatives. An Open House will welcome students into the clinic space and introduce available services. These efforts will be complemented by the use of social media to reach students where they are, promote upcoming events, and educate on topics relevant to college health. These initiatives are designed not only to improve student health outcomes but also to cultivate trust and increase utilization of health services—key factors in overall retention and student success.

- **Enhanced Convenience, Access, and Referral Support**

- This semester, Student Health Services is focused on improving operational flow and convenience for students. We now offer appointment scheduling to reduce wait times and improve access to care. In addition, we are actively cultivating partnerships with local healthcare providers and specialists to streamline referrals for services that fall outside the clinic's scope. These improvements aim to reduce the burden on students seeking care and to increase visibility of the clinic as a key resource in their campus experience.

- **Deepened Collaboration with Campus Partners**

- To ensure a holistic approach to student well-being, Student Health Services is strengthening partnerships with Student Organizations, Residence Life, and the University Counseling Center. These collaborations are vital to identifying students in need, supporting early intervention, and promoting a culture of wellness across campus. By working together, we can address the physical, emotional, and social determinants of health that affect retention, academic performance, and student development.

Student Health Services Planned Outreach Activities

Monthly

- **Sexually Transmitted Illness Testing** performed by the Metropolitan Nashville Health Department

August

- **Sports Physical Appointments** for TSU Students, including band, and athletes

September

- **Your Health Matters** – Vendors include Sickle Cell Trait Testing/Info, Music City PrEP Clinic for information regarding HIV Pre-Exposure and Prophylaxis, tabling with information about TimelyCare
- **Club TSU** – An outdoor student experience that promotes learning about the Dangers and Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Use through activities and educational opportunities

October

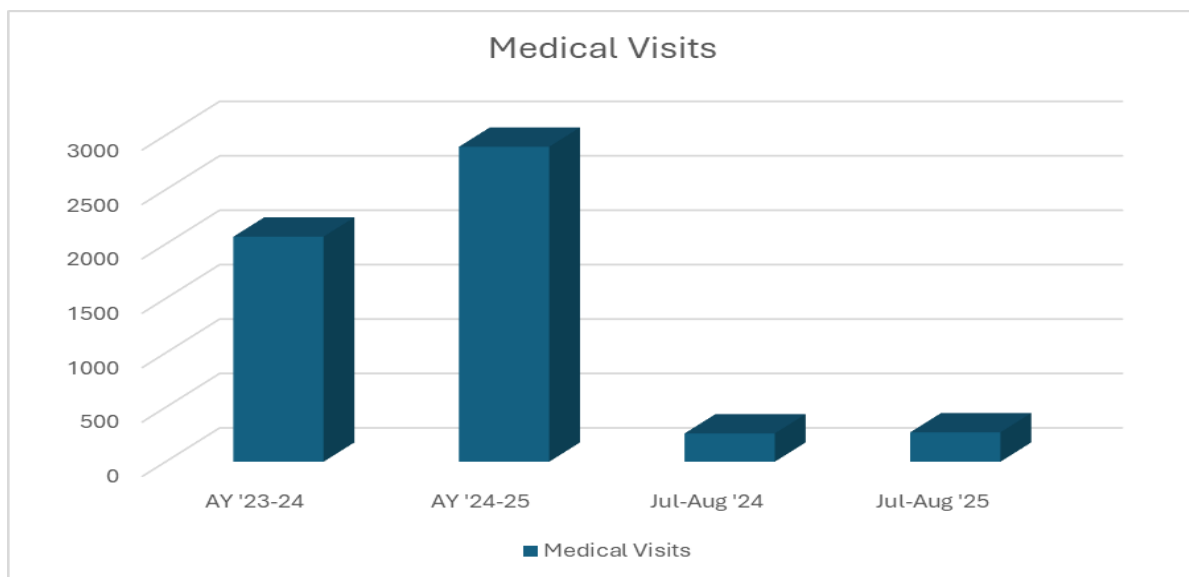
- **Breast Self-Exam Training** – Training completed throughout the month of October with **Pink Out** Event being held 1st week of October
- **Let's Get Real** – Event promoting student wellness and health. Confessional booth, mood boards, etc. will be available.

November

- **Diabetes Month Awareness** – Tabling with blood sugar screening, games/trivia related to diabetes knowledge.
- **Give Me a Break** – Healthy snacks distributed during Finals week. Information on importance of healthy sleep habits.

During the 2024–2025 academic year (July 2024 – June 2025), the Student Health Services Center recorded **2,894** medical visits, a substantial increase from **2,068** visits in 2023–2024. This reflects an increase of **826 visits (33.29%)**, underscoring the effectiveness of our enhanced visibility and expanded outreach programming.

For the current academic year (2025–2026), the Center has already documented **270 visits** in July–August, compared to **260 visits** during the same period in 2024. Importantly, this growth occurred even though student enrollment was lower in July–August 2025 compared to July–August 2024, further highlighting the positive impact of our outreach and visualization strategies.



In addition to on-campus care, the Center continues to expand its virtual health offerings through TimelyCare. Since January 13, 2025, we have achieved 720 student registrations for TimelyCare, with plans to launch a more robust marketing campaign this academic year in collaboration with IT, Media

Relations/Marketing, the Department of Residence Life, and the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership. These partnerships are designed to increase awareness and encourage adoption across both undergraduate and graduate populations. Our goal is to achieve over 35% of undergraduate and graduate students registered for TimelyCare before the end of the calendar year. Together, these efforts reflect a comprehensive approach to improving student access to both in-person and virtual health services, while fostering stronger institutional collaboration and student engagement.

Career Development Center

Customer Services: To strengthen customer service, our office will maintain professional phone etiquette by implementing a standardized greeting script and ensuring all calls are answered during business hours. We will maintain a clear phone coverage schedule to prevent missed calls during peak periods, and all voicemails will be returned within 24 hours. Staff will be trained to route calls effectively and handle basic questions related to other departments such as Financial Aid, Enrollment, and Bursars office.

Contacting students: We will take a proactive approach to student outreach by organizing call and email campaigns throughout the semester. In addition, we will send timely reminders about upcoming events, workshops, and application deadlines. After major events such as career fairs and employer visits, we will conduct personalized follow-ups to maintain student engagement. We will coordinate schedules and co-host events that emphasize both professional development and student well-being.

Career Development Improvements: The Career Development Center will regularly gather student feedback to assess our services and make data-informed adjustments. Additionally, our staff will be cross-trained to provide basic answers to frequently asked questions outside of the career scope, allowing us to better support students in a one-stop service model.

We will promote our services widely through digital platforms, class visits, and campus signage. We will align our hours with OAA's extended virtual hours and remain available on weekends during key enrollment periods. Students will be able to access our services through in-person, virtual, and online scheduling platforms, ensuring flexibility and convenience.

The Career Development Center is dedicated to being a responsive, student-centered partner in the university's mission. Through these efforts, we will help elevate the student experience, strengthen interdepartmental collaboration, and contribute meaningfully to TSU's goals for retention, progression, and graduation.

Schedule of Events for Fall 2025 and Spring 2026

Fall 2025

August 26 – Resume Writing/Quinnia Overview with Senior Seminar Class Dept of Agriculture

August 27 – Graduate School Drop-in – Get Familiar with CDC

August 28 – Tabletop – Partnering with Fashion Merchandising Society

August 28 – Undergraduate Drop –in – Get familiar with CDC

August 29 – Quinnia Overview to prepare students for department career fairs

September 2-12 – Crash the Classroom (Career Development Presentation in the UNIV 1000 and other seminar classes throughout departments)

September 16 – MARS, HCA, Renasant Bank Campus Visit

September 18 – Bank of America Lunch and Learn
September 18 – Athletic Networking Event 6 pm-8 pm
September 18 – Fifth Third Bank Campus Visit
September 19 – Campus Wide Career Fair
September 22 – 26 – On Campus Interviews

October 13- 17 – Homecoming Week - Fun activities and networking opportunities with alumni and employers throughout week

October 16 – Alumni Panel at Career Development Center

Company campus visits are subject to company availability and CDC scheduling, as the CDC continues to coordinate ongoing company visits

Spring 2026

March 13 – Campus Wide Career Fair

Wellness Center

The Wellness Center offers various social, sports, and recreational activities to meet students, faculty, and staff's diverse interests. The Wellness Center values student involvement in its decision-making and program development. The program has an underlying mission of "something for everyone." There are outdoor recreation facilities around the campus. All other games, such as billiards, board games, card games, corn hole, volleyball, and basketball, are played in Kean Hall, the recreation center, or various other locations as provided.

The Wellness Program is conveniently housed in the Ralph H. Boston Wellness Center, located adjacent to the existing pool in Gentry Center. This strategic location provides easy access to the pool through the men's and women's locker rooms during the pool hours of operation, ensuring your comfort and convenience.

Our facility is equipped with a state-of-the-art work-out room, designed to inspire and motivate your fitness journey. It includes a variety of equipment such as traditional weight-training machines, free weights, recumbent bicycles, and cardiovascular units like treadmills, rowing machines, and elliptical trainers. For your entertainment, we have five televisions strategically placed for those exercising. The other large room in the center is an aerobic/dance room, measuring more than 1,300 square feet. The flooring in this room is a padded slip-resistant hardwood flooring typical of dance classrooms with mirrors and dance bars.

The wellness/fitness center will be open six days a week and accessible to all TSU students, faculty, and staff. A valid TSU ID is required for entry.

Facilities & Operational Hours (Evening and Night Specific)

Ralph H. Boston Wellness Center

- Features: Fully equipped gym (weights, cardio, aerobic/dance studio) and an Olympic-size indoor pool.
- Hours:
 - Monday - Thursday: 7:30 AM - 9:30 PM
 - Friday: 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM, 8:30 PM
 - Saturday: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 - Sunday: Closed

Wellness/Gentry Complex

- Features: Racquetball courts, indoor track, training & weight rooms, dance studio, and Olympic swimming pool.

Intramural Sports

- Location: Wellness Center
- Seasons Offered: Fall & Spring
- Available Sports:
 - 7x7 Flag Football
 - Volleyball (clubs)
 - Pickleball
 - Skating (covered pavilion)
 - Soccer
 - Basketball
 - Aquatics

Other Recreational Options: Swimming, racquetball, and outdoor basketball under the pavilion.

Registration & Tracking

- Platform: Use IM Leagues - online intramural league registration program
- Engagement: Introduce a participation tracker to boost engagement.

Promotion & Visibility

- Weekly Flyers: Distribute in residence halls and Floyd Payne Campus Center.
- Digital Flyers/Calendars: Share on Instagram, campus emails, and screens in student spaces.

Note - Advance Sign-Up: Offer sign-up for classes in advance to manage space.

Wellness Center Fall Programs

Theme for September: "Childhood Obesity Awareness"

- Focus: Strength training, cardio, resilience, and focus will be on healthy eating tips and information given to students on making good choices on campus. *
- **Goals**
 - Intramural kick-off tournaments (flag football).
 - TSU recreational therapist will coordinate teams' schedule/location of flag football tournament starting September 15 thru October 13. All games will be held on Monday on outdoor band field.
 - Aquatic endurance challenge (laps or water aerobics). Water fitness classes will be taught by Aquatics Director, Jocelyn Fernandez, beginning September 22 every Monday and Wednesday until November 24.
 - Fitness/Group Workout Classes- all group classes will begin September 8.
 - Mondays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - Abs & Weight taught by Dr. Davis, 6:45pm-7:30pm.
 - "Row with Me": 7:45pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
 - Tuesdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - Tiger Time: 4:00pm-4:30pm (students make an appointment to have your fitness questions answered by Dr. Davis) *
 - "Trap Fitness" w/ Seresta: 6:30pm-7:15pm
 - "Spin the Block" (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm

- Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
- Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
- Wednesdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - Faculty/Staff Only Group Training w/ Dr. Davis 5:00pm-6:00pm
 - Abs & Weight taught by Dr. Davis, 6:45pm-7:30pm.
 - “Row with Me”: 7:45pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
- Thursdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
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 - “Spin the Block” (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
- Fridays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-3:00pm
 - Open Time (students can reserve dance studio) 3:00pm-7:00pm
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA

Theme for October: “Breast Cancer Awareness- Wellness Center Goes Pink!”

- Focus: Providing health information for men and women about breast cancer.
- Homecoming Week- October 12th thru October 19th (limited programming)
- Midterm Week- Limited programming TBA
- Schedule-
 - Mondays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - Abs & Weight taught by Dr. Davis, 6:45pm-7:30pm.
 - “Row with Me”: 7:45pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
 - Tuesdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - *Breast Cancer Conversations*: 4:00pm-4:30pm (students make an appointment to have your fitness questions answered by Dr. Davis)
 - “Trap Fitness” w/ Seresta: 6:30pm-7:15pm
 - “Spin the Block” (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm
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- Thursdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - *Breast Cancer Conversations*: 4:00pm-4:30pm (students make an appointment to have your fitness questions answered by Dr. Davis)
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 - “Spin the Block” (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
- Fridays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-3:00pm
 - Open Time (students can reserve dance studio) 3:00pm-7:00pm
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA

Theme for November: “American Diabetes Month and Men's Health Awareness Month”

- Focus: Conversations and information about diabetes and men taking better care of themselves. Men age 18-24.
- Closed- November 27th – November 30th
- Schedule-
 - Mondays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - Abs & Weight taught by Dr. Davis, 6:45pm-7:30pm.
 - “Row with Me”: 7:45pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
 - Tuesdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - *Diabetes/Men's Health Conversation*: 4:00pm-4:30pm (students make an appointment to have your fitness questions answered by Dr. Davis)
 - “Trap Fitness” w/ Seresta: 6:30pm-7:15pm
 - “Spin the Block” (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
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- Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
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- Thursdays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-1:00pm
 - *Diabetes/Men’s Health Conversation*: 4:00pm-4:30pm (students make an appointment to have your fitness questions answered by Dr. Davis)
 - “Trap Fitness” w/ Seresta: 6:30pm-7:15pm
 - “Spin the Block” (spinning class) 7:30pm-8:15pm
 - Open Time (stretching and relaxing space/time for students to use the dance studio)
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA
- Fridays:
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-3:00pm
 - Open Time (students can reserve dance studio) 3:00pm-7:00pm
 - Lap swimming and water fitness classes: Afternoon/evening TBA

Theme for December: “Fitness in Finals” (Aids Awareness)

- Monday, December 1st thru Friday, December 5th Saturday, December 6th (Graduation)
 - Open Gym- All day
 - Apple Fitness (virtual classes) 12:00pm-4:00pm
 - Tiger Time- How to Maintain Over the Holidays! 4:00pm-4:30pm
- Monday, December 8th thru Tuesday, December 23rd modified holiday schedule
 - 8:00am-8:00pm
 - Planning and preparation for spring semester.

Campus Partners Collaborations & Program Launch

- August:
 - RA Training Residence Life Scavenger Hunt, 11th-15th
 - Wellness Center Opening fall hours, 18th
 - 7:30am-9:00pm
 - Academic Classes begin, 18th
- September:
 - Group Fitness Class, 15th
 - Aquatics Open Swim, 15th
 - Childhood Obesity Awareness
 - Intramural Sports begins
 - “Meet the Students Where They Are”- visit the residence halls once a month to discuss fitness with the students.
- October:
 - Soft Grand Opening of Pool, TBA
 - Homecoming (Do’s & Don’ts)
 - How to Prepare for Midterms (no programs)
 - Breast Cancer Awareness
 - “Meet the Students Where They Are”- visit the residence halls once a month to discuss fitness with the students.

- November:
 - Diabetes & Men's Health Awareness
 - Seminar of Healthy-ish Eating Over Thanksgiving
 - Fitness & Finals Preparation (no programs)
 - "Meet the Students Where They Are" - visit the residence halls once a month to discuss fitness with the students.
- December:
 - Finals Week
 - Graduation
 - Preparing for spring semester

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. Student Affairs Update

1

The Division of Student Affairs is comprised of 11 units, Career Development Center, Floyd Payne Student Center, Student Conduct, Student Counseling Center, Health Services, Residential Life, (Housing), Student Activities, Cheerleading, Aristocrat of Bands, Ralph Boston Wellness Center, and our newest unit, the Navigation 1Stop Center.



2

Fall 2025 Enrollment Report

**as of August 28, 2025*

Comparative Enrollment by Student Level

Term	Total Headcount	Undergraduate	Graduate
Fall 2025	5293	4156	1137
Fall 2024	6518	5256	1262
Difference	-1225	-1100	-125

Undergraduate Students

Term	Count
Continuing	3200
First Time High School	130
New First Time Freshman	431
New Special/Non-Degree	26
New Transfer	213
New Transient	21
Readmitted	114
Summer First Time Freshman Returning Fall	21
Total	4156

3

Undergraduate Students

Term	Count
Continuing	3200
First Time High School	130
New First Time Freshman	431
New Special/Non-Degree	26
New Transfer	213
New Transient	21
Readmitted	114
Summer First Time Freshman Returning Fall	21
Total	4156

4

Graduate Students

Term	Count
Continuing	792
New Inst / First Time Grad/Prof	267
New Special/Non-Degree	31
Readmitted	47
Total	1137

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Headcount and FTE

Level	Headcount	FTE
Graduate	1137	735.25
Undergraduate	4156	4033.87
Total (1-SEPT-25)	5293	4769.12

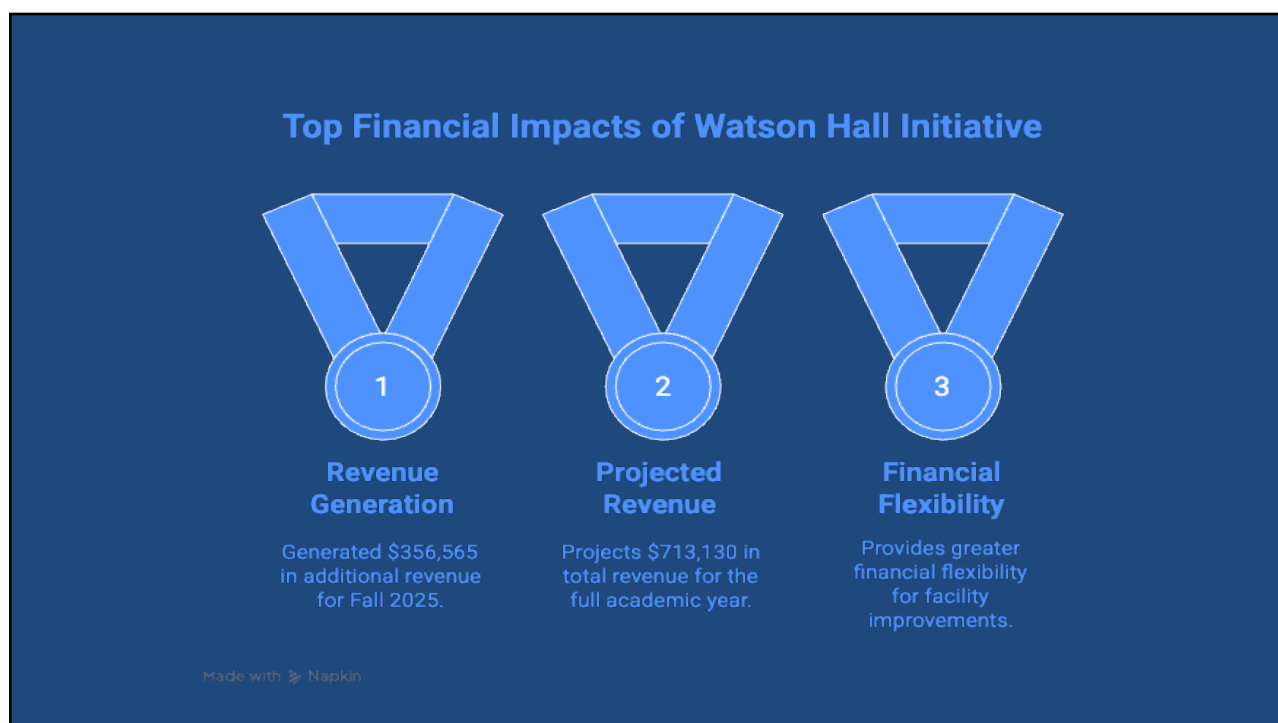
6



RESIDENCE LIFE HOUSING INITIATIVE

- In July, the Housing Department began offering private rooms in Watson Hall to upper-division students.
- This initiative was intended to address the demand for more privacy among juniors and seniors while also increasing departmental revenue.
- The offering generated an additional \$356,565 in revenue for the Fall 2025 semester.
- The department projects a total revenue gain of \$713,130 for the full academic year.
- The increased revenue provides the Housing Department with more financial flexibility to invest in facility improvements and programming that will enhance the student experience.

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8



TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Modification to Admission Testing Scores

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Eric Stokes, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Background Information

The purpose of this action is to ensure clarity and equity in our freshman admissions criteria, by requesting to update our SAT score requirement to align with the ACT score requirement for first-year applicants. Currently, our benchmark ACT for guaranteed admissions is a 19 composite score, while the SAT requirement for guaranteed admissions is a 900 composite score. According to the ACT concordance a 900 SAT equates to a 16 ACT composite score.

This uncommon practice of misalignment between the ACT and SAT score requirements present an inequity to applicants and leads to confusion among prospective students and school counselors. To maintain consistency and fairness in our admissions standards, it is proposed that we update the SAT requirement to a 990 composite score to reflect the ACT concordant score of a 19, as established by the College Board and ACT concordance tables.

This alignment update will help TSU to:

- Ensure parity between standardized test options
- Improve transparency in our admissions communications
- Support students in making informed decisions during the application process

References:

ACT Concordance

<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/scores/act-sat-concordance.html>

The College Board Concordance

<https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/guide-2018-act-sat-concordance.pdf>

Committee Action

The Committee Chair will call for a motion on the requested action.

MOTION: To approve the alignment of the SAT score requirement for first-year students with the corresponding ACT score. Thus, moving the SAT score from a 900 composite to a 990 composite, equivalent to a 19 ACT composite.



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

FINANCE COMMITTEE	
Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:00 p.m. CT	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call/Declaration of a Quorum
- III. Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Approval of June 12, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes (Action)
- V. Update on Enrollment
- VI. Finance and Budget Report
- VII. Approval of the Bank Reconciliation Policy (Action)
- VIII. Institutional Advancement Update
- IX. Adjournment

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Charles Traughber, Committee Chair

Background Information

The committee conducted the meeting(s) referenced below. The document reflecting the minutes from the meeting(s) are included in the Board materials:

June 12, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Action

The Committee Chair will call for a motion recommending the approval of the meeting minutes.

MOTION: I move to approve the June 12, 2025, Finance Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, Board meeting.

Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Finance Committee Meeting
June 12, 2025
Tennessee State University – The Farrell Westbrook Complex (the “Barn”)

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Trustees Charles Traughber, Jeffery Norfleet (virtual), and Dakasha Winton. Other Board members present: Trevia Chatman, Marquita Qualls, Dimeta Smith Knight, Terica Smith, Artenzia Young-Seigler

University Staff Present: Interim President Dwayne Tucker; Ginette Garza Brown, Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Robbie Melton, Acting Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Bradley White, Interim VP of Business and Finance; Sterlin Sanders, Chief Information Officer; LoLita Toney, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement; Jim Grady, Alvarez & Marsal;

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Traughber called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Committee Chair Traughber declared that a physical quorum was not present and moved that electronic participation by a quorum was necessary, which was approved. Committee Secretary conducted the roll call. The following committee members were present: Trustees Charles Traughber, Dakasha Winton, and Jeffery Norfleet (virtual).

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 12, 2025, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the March 12, 2025, meeting of the Finance Committee were approved as submitted, with Chair Winton making the motion and Trustee Norfleet seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2024-2026 TUTION, FEES, AND BUDGET ITEMS

- A. Approval of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Tuition and Mandatory Fees Increase**
- B. Approval of Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Estimated Budget**
- C. Approval of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget**

Committee Chair Traughber announced the day's agenda items, which was the approval of the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Tuition and Mandatory Fees Increase, the approval of the proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Estimated Budget, and the approval of the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget. Committee Chair Traughber asked Jim Grady from Alvarez &

Marcel to present information regarding these items to the Board on behalf of the Finance Committee altogether instead of breaking them up.

Mr. Grady began by explaining that in February, TSU submitted a five-year financial sustainability plan to the State Building Commission identifying a need for approximately \$95 million in total funding to stabilize the University's finances. The proposed FY2026 budget reflects a projected deficit of about \$39 million, underscoring the urgency of implementing both revenue enhancements and cost containment measures. In March, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission adopted a guiding tuition increase range of 0–6.5% for public institutions—setting the upper limit higher than initially anticipated specifically to give TSU the flexibility needed to address these challenges. Even with the proposed increase, TSU would remain the lowest-cost public option for in-state students in Tennessee. The recommendation includes a 6% increase in maintenance and mandatory fees for in-state undergraduates, as well as similar increases for graduate students and out-of-state categories, including the full freight rate, scholar rate, and the 250-mile radius rate. For in-state students, this would mean an additional cost of approximately \$270 per semester; out-of-state students would see semester increases ranging from about \$270 to \$539. Despite these adjustments, TSU's tuition levels would continue to be lower than those at peer LGI institutions and comparable HBCUs such as Alabama A&M, FAMU, Jackson State, and North Carolina A&T. Graduate in-state tuition would remain among the lowest, while out-of-state graduate tuition would still be somewhat higher than peers, largely due to historical pricing decisions.

Mr. Grady emphasized that without adopting the 6% tuition increase, the projected deficit would widen by roughly \$7 million, adding to the nearly \$20 million in cost reductions already identified. These reductions come from a four-pronged strategy focused on adjusting scholarship allocations, reducing personnel costs on both instructional and non-instructional sides, lowering non-personnel expenses, and pursuing other operational efficiencies. To date, the University has identified approximately \$20–25 million in savings. Scholarship-related savings are expected to total around \$5–6 million, slightly below earlier projections due to existing commitments that limited immediate adjustments. Personnel cost reductions have included a workforce realignment last fall affecting 95 positions, an ongoing hiring freeze with very limited exceptions for mission-critical roles, and a comprehensive review that closed non-essential open positions, resulting in about \$9–10 million in annualized savings. Additional attrition since October contributed further vacancy-related savings. On the non-personnel side, the University has identified around \$9–10 million in reductions by scrutinizing discretionary spending, renegotiating vendor agreements, and implementing tighter controls during the budget process.

Mr. Grady also provided historical context, noting that in FY2023, the University had an enrollment of over 8,000 full-time equivalent students. However, enrollment has declined in recent years, significantly impacting tuition and fee revenue. Comparing actual FY2023, actual FY2024, the estimated adjusted FY2025 budget, and the proposed FY2026 budget shows a clear downward trend in total education and general revenues, driven in large part by enrollment declines. The FY2025 estimated adjusted budget, after accounting for non-recurring items, reflects a deficit of about \$45 million, which closely aligns with the October 2024 revised budget estimate of approximately \$46 million. Key adjustments to that estimate included lower-than-expected tuition revenue from out-of-state premiums, slightly better-than-expected scholarship savings (including

a one-time \$3 million reduction from unutilized “building bridges” scholarships), and lower personnel costs following workforce realignment and strict hiring controls.

Looking forward, the proposed FY2026 budget includes continued cost reduction targets: maintaining the hiring freeze and rigorous position control, operating with approximately 15% less discretionary funding (adjusted for contractual obligations), and implementing tighter budget adjustment procedures. Additional revenue opportunities are being explored, such as parking and space rental fees, and assessing whether some restricted endowment returns can be used to offset educational and general expenses where allowed. The current proposed FY2026 deficit of roughly \$39 million is slightly higher than the \$35 million deficit anticipated in the pro forma shared with the state earlier this year. This difference reflects updated enrollment assumptions, modestly higher scholarships, and some revenue adjustments. Nevertheless, Mr. Grady emphasized that the University remains committed to narrowing the gap through disciplined financial management and ongoing collaboration. He concluded by noting that while the pro forma plan anticipated deficits into FY2027 and beyond, continued vigilance and additional revenue strategies could help improve these projections over time, supporting TSU’s long-term financial stability.

Chair Winton thanked Mr. Grady for the detailed presentation and noted the challenge of aligning past budget expectations with current realities. She asked how many students might be affected by the planned registration purge, and Mr. Grady estimated about 1,000 students.

Trustee Traughber commended Alvarez & Marsal and Interim President Tucker for improving the budgeting process, observing that the estimated fiscal year 2025 deficit now closely matches the October forecast, thanks to better scholarship management, personnel savings, and non-personnel cost reductions. He asked what could be done to help close the gap in the fiscal year 2026 budget if enrollment falls short. Mr. Grady replied that lower enrollment would likely require further efficiencies, such as consolidating low-enrollment classes or reducing costs tied to underutilized facilities.

President Tucker added that ongoing recruitment efforts in Memphis, Atlanta, and Chicago aim to offset enrollment declines, and that improved fall-to-spring retention has already helped. Trustee Traughber also asked if additional cuts could be made beyond personnel reductions. Mr. Grady suggested reviewing the use of campus buildings to reduce operating costs and better leveraging departmental funds in the Foundation to offset expenses.

Trustee Traughber then asked about the impact of not adopting the proposed 6% tuition increase. Mr. Grady explained that without it, the deficit would grow by roughly \$3–4 million, requiring further cuts that could affect core programs. Trustee Smith asked about the total departmental and Foundation funds potentially available; Mr. Grady estimated around \$15 million, subject to further review. Trustee Smith Knight asked how quickly new donations, like those from the Juneteenth campaign, could be used. Dr. Toney confirmed that once deposited into the Foundation, funds designated for purposes such as student support become available immediately.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Trustee Traughber made the motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Tuition and Mandatory Fees Increase as contained in the meeting materials. Chair Winton made the motion, and Trustee Norfleet seconded. The Board Secretary called the roll, and Trustees Norfleet, Traughber, and Chair Winton voted in favor. The motion passed.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Trustee Traughber made the motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the proposed 2024-2025 Estimated Budget as contained in the meeting materials. Trustee Norfleet made the motion, and Chair Winton seconded. The Board Secretary called the roll, and Trustees Norfleet, Traughber, and Chair Winton voted in favor. The motion passed.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Trustee Traughber made the motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget as contained in the meeting materials. Trustee Norfleet made the motion, and Chair Winton seconded. The Board Secretary called the roll, and Trustees Norfleet, Traughber, and Chair Winton voted in favor. The motion passed.

V. INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT REPORT

Committee Chair Traughber announced the next agenda item, which was the Institutional Advancement update. Committee Chair Traughber asked Dr. LoLita Toney from TSU Foundation to present information regarding these items to the Board on behalf of the Finance Committee.

Dr. Toney began by explaining that although the university has seen positive trends in donor engagement so far, this fiscal year, external challenges have affected corporate giving. As of May 24, the university secured approximately \$5.37 million in donations, reflecting a decline of about \$610,000 primarily due to reduced corporate contributions. Many corporate partners have expressed concerns about the university's stability, prompting the advancement team to engage Interim President Tucker in donor conversations to help restore confidence in the institution's leadership and financial direction. Encouragingly, alumni giving has increased for the first time since fiscal year 2020, showing a 15% growth over the prior year and bringing the university's alumni giving rate into double digits, which is significant given that it has historically remained below 8%. Dr. Toney noted that while peer institutions often reach alumni participation rates closer to 20%, and institutions like Spelman achieve rates around 30–35%, TSU's increase represents meaningful progress.

In addition to alumni giving, student giving has also surged, with a 134% increase that signals stronger philanthropic engagement among younger stakeholders. Dr. Toney highlighted the team's efforts to foster a culture of giving from students' first days on campus. The university's stewardship strategies have also driven results, with a 40% increase in giving among retained donors and growth in first-time donors, which together suggest future retention opportunities. While the average gift size has grown gradually, targeted appeals and improved impact reporting are being used to encourage larger gifts. Dr. Toney shared that the advancement office is transitioning to Blackbaud, a modern development software platform, which will improve

reporting, donor segmentation, and personalized stewardship. The migration is expected to be completed by fall 2025 and marks an important step, as it is uncommon for an institution of TSU's size and history to have gone so long without such a platform.

To further build transparency and donor trust, the team plans to produce the university's first annual fundraising report in several years. Dr. Toney emphasized the importance of deepening alumni engagement as a way to strengthen overall fundraising. This year, the university relaunched class reunions for graduating classes ending in zero and five, raising \$434,258 so far, with a goal to reach \$500,000 by the end of the fiscal year. Attendance at reunion weekend included 74 alumni, and survey responses indicated that 95% of participants were satisfied with the events, with 76% reporting they felt more connected to classmates as a result.

Looking ahead, Dr. Toney shared that the university's next major initiative is a TSU Day of Giving, aligned with Founders Day, which historically has not been formally celebrated at TSU. This event is planned as a final effort to strengthen fundraising as the fiscal year closes, with an ambitious goal of raising \$300,000. The campaign will include targeted appeals to faculty and staff, alumni, religious organizations, students, and lapsed donors who have not yet made contributions this year. Dr. Toney concluded by acknowledging the challenges posed by reduced corporate giving and past narratives affecting the university's reputation but expressed optimism about the growing engagement of alumni and students. She noted that partnering closely with Interim President Tucker has been instrumental in addressing concerns among corporate and foundation partners. Finally, she expressed appreciation for the board's continued support as the advancement team works to build sustainable, long-term growth in fundraising.

Trustee Qualls inquired about the inclusion of matching gifts in the fundraising numbers, to which Dr. Toney confirmed that matching gifts are included but noted that further breakdown would require additional analysis. Trustee Qualls also sought clarity on the proportion of new money raised versus existing donor contributions. Dr. Toney explained that the reported figures reflect cash on hand with some payouts from prior commitments, emphasizing that no pledges are included. Trustee Qualls expressed appreciation for the university's partnership with organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters. Trustee Smith followed up by asking about student engagement efforts in fundraising, noting the absence of direct outreach to donors by current students. Dr. Toney reported a recent student-led phone bank on Giving Tuesday, although she acknowledged challenges due to outdated contact information, which a new platform migration aims to resolve.

Trustee Chatman asked about the status of corporate commitments from prior years, noting that some long-term pledges have ended. Dr. Toney confirmed that while two corporate commitments have officially ended, efforts are underway to re-engage others. She also clarified that not all reductions in corporate donors reflect lost funding, as some were one-time gifts. Trustee Chatman requested information on religious organizations' contributions, learning that a significant gift from Mount Zion had notably impacted totals. President Tucker underscored the need to improve accountability and customer service in corporate relationships, acknowledging past failures to meet funders' expectations and promising greater stewardship moving forward. Trustee Smith queried who is responsible for managing corporate relations, and President Tucker stated that while it is a university-wide accountability, prior lapses included executives not showing up for meetings.

Regarding impact reporting, Trustee Qualls asked whether reports are publicly available or shared privately with donors. Trustee Chatman explained that general impact reports are publicly accessible, but detailed donor-specific reports remain confidential. Dr. Toney noted the absence of an annual report in recent years but confirmed plans to publish one, alongside continued individualized impact reports for donors. President Tucker emphasized the importance of comprehensive impact summaries for all donor types. Dr. Toney described efforts to provide detailed reports that include student stories, citing the successful renewal of funding from Lowe's based on such reporting. Trustee Chatman expressed confidence in the team's ability to meet future reporting requirements, and Dr. Toney highlighted the anticipated benefits of transitioning to the Blackbaud platform for enhanced gift and reporting management.

Trustee Chatman raised questions about alumni associations, seeking to understand the funds held by various chapters and how much is remitted to the university foundation. Dr. Toney explained that while reports exist regarding chapter assets, some funds are managed outside the foundation, limiting transparency. President Tucker described the decentralized nature of alumni fundraising, noting inefficiencies and potential risks associated with chapters operating as "mini endowments." He advocated for a transformational change to unify alumni giving under the foundation, a shift that appears increasingly feasible as alumni leadership grows more receptive. Trustee Traugher supported this approach, highlighting the investment advantages of consolidated funds. Trustee Smith Knight questioned decreases in alumni association giving despite stable donor numbers, and Dr. Toney attributed part of this to misclassifications in donor data, which the team is working to correct. Trustee Smith Knight further asked about donor categorization criteria and whether small and mid-sized businesses are being adequately engaged. Dr. Toney responded that classification depends on donor self-identification and that corporate prospects are prioritized based on shared interests with TSU. She gave NASCAR as an example where engagement expanded from athletics to engineering opportunities.

Trustee Young Seigler requested clarification on category definitions and stressed the importance of accurate donor classification to ensure data integrity. Dr. Toney acknowledged ongoing cleanup efforts and anticipated that migration to Blackbaud would support improved data accuracy. Trustee Young Seigler also addressed the notable drop in giving from religious organizations, with Dr. Toney explaining that although segmented outreach and events like "Sunday of Giving" are planned, staff shortages have limited focused efforts in this area. President Tucker advised alumni chapters to temporarily hold funds to avoid competing solicitations until a major university fundraising campaign is announced, with the goal of consolidating and accelerating giving momentum. Trustee Young Seigler sought clarity on handling donors who fit multiple categories, and Dr. Toney noted that donor self-identification drives classification.

Trustee Chatman questioned the rationale behind the request for donors to delay giving to which President Tucker explained the need to reduce fragmented and redundant giving across various university entities and focus on a unified campaign. Trustee Smith Knight confirmed understanding that donors are encouraged to consolidate gifts rather than withhold giving altogether. President Tucker emphasized that this approach aims to increase overall giving impact and create sustainable financial support. Trustee Smith Knight expressed concern about supporting student experiences and asked how departments are addressing funding needs. President Tucker assured that budgeted funds remain available for essential activities and that the university is

working to streamline and coordinate fundraising efforts. Finally, Trustee Chatman requested data on grants applied for and success rates, and Dr. Toney indicated that such information had been previously shared.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Winton moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by Trustee Norfleet. A roll call vote was taken, with Trustees Traugher, Winton, and Norfleet voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

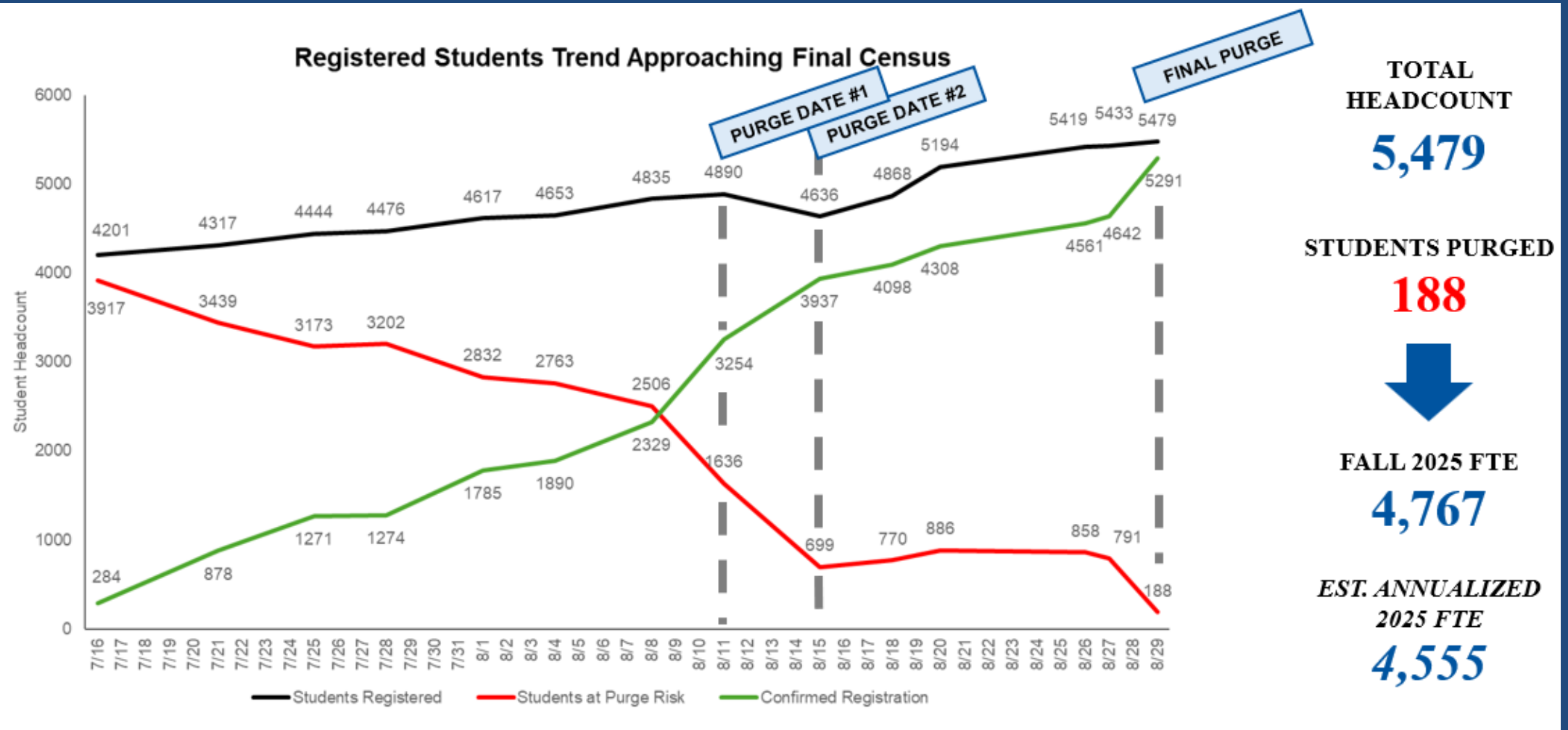
ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

V. Update on Enrollment

VI. Finance and Budget Report

Enrollment Trends Leading Up to Fall 2025



Foundation Scholarships to Address Purge Risk

Matching at Risk Students

379

\$760K

Students Removed from Purge List

Total Reduction in Student Balances

379 students were awarded existing foundation scholarships, eliminating the risk of being purged and allowing them to remain enrolled.

Remaining Close the Gap Funds

73

\$301K

Students Removed from Purge List

Total Reduction in Student Balances

By using the remaining Close the Gap funds, an additional 73 students can have their balances reduced below \$200.

Remaining Balances

45

\$331K

Students Removed from Purge List

Total Reduction in Student Balances

The Foundation agreed to fund up to a total of \$3.3M in student balances, with the expectation to hold additional funds for future use as needed.

497

Students Removed from Purge List

\$1.4M

Total Reduction in Student Balances

Enrollment Effect on Budgeted Tuition Revenue

FY26 Proposed Tuition Revenue

Fall/Spring Tuition	\$ 55,744,974
Program Service Fees	3,605,000
Other Tuition & Fees	5,025,550
Bed Debt Expense	(5,200,000)
Total	\$ 59,175,524

FY26 LTF Fall/Spring Tuition & Fees

Tuition Category	Enrollment	Registered Hours	FTE Hour Basis	Student FTE	Est FTE Annualized	Annual Tuition & Fees	Est. Total Revenue
In-state	2,119	28,930	15	1,931	1,845	\$ 8,878	\$ 16,377,708
Out-of-state FF	519	7,621	15	509	486	23,350	11,357,748
Out-of-state 250m	837	13,520	15	902	862	15,238	13,137,891
Out-of-state Scholar	596	9,714	15	649	620	18,418	11,414,322
Grad In-state	971	7,360	12	614	587	11,644	6,834,976
Grad Out-of-state	193	1,501	12	126	120	25,544	3,077,353
UG OOS Unknown	56	536	15	36	34	16,619	567,414
Total	5,291			4,767	4,555	\$	\$ 62,767,412

*assume 8.9% loss Fall to Spring

Add: Other Tuition & Fees

Less: Bad Debt Expense

5,385,844

(3,801,765)

LTF Est. Tuition & Fees \$ 64,351,492

Est. Surplus/(Deficit) to FY26 Proposed \$ **5,175,968**

Breakdown of FY26 Proposed to FY26 LTF

(in millions)

	FY26 Proposed	FY26 LTF	Change
Fall/Spring Tuition	\$ 55.7	\$ 59.6	\$ 3.9
Program Service Fees	3.6	3.1	(0.5)
Other Tuition & Fees	5.0	5.4	0.4
Bad Debt Expense	(5.2)	(3.8)	1.4
Total	\$ 59.2	\$ 64.4	\$ 5.2

Although this is positive news, it is important to keep front of mind that our beginning FY26 deficit was **\$(39)M**

Notable Budget Adjustments to Date – FY26

Budget Adjustment	Justification	Value (\$, 000s)
TBR Contract	Provide finance and accounting services to fill critical resource gaps and provide training for TSU staff.	\$(850)
Recruiting Strategic Investment	Investment into enrollment strategy proposed by AVP Stokes to drive meaningful recruitment in FY26.	(425)
THEC Contract	Provide Financial Aid assistance and expertise to train TSU staff and flex on-ground staff in response to student demand for services.	(200)
Internal Audit Position	Re-opening of 1 internal audit position to fill critical need not captured in zero-based reset process.	(128)
Levi Watkins Program Position	Re-opening of 1 Levi Watkins program management position to fill critical need not captured in zero-based reset process.	(122)
Ingram Group Invoices	TSU lobbying services.	(100)
Employee Education Assistance	Employee education assistance previously covered under Title 3, moving over to E&G.	(100)
Other Budget Increases	Various adjustments to rectify small items missed in budgeting process.	(232)
Parking Revenue	Increased parking revenues; YMCA agreement.	500
Savings from Unfilled Positions	Approximate savings compared to budget of approx. 2 months salaries and benefits for vacancies not yet filled.	1,300
Total Net Impact		\$(357)

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Update on Enrollment

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Eric Stokes, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Background Information

Dr. Stokes will present on university enrollment with the presentation attached.



**Meeting
of the
TSU Board of Trustees**

Thursday, September 18, 2025

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thursday, September 18, 2025

V. Update on Enrollment

Enrollment Strategy

Strategic Recruitment Efforts for 2026-2027

Recruitment plan is data informed by and building upon the RHB | SIG recommendations

Focus Objectives:

1. Strategic initiatives
2. Recruitment travel
3. Recruitment events
4. Campus visit experience

6 key initiatives to strengthen TSU's enrollment future

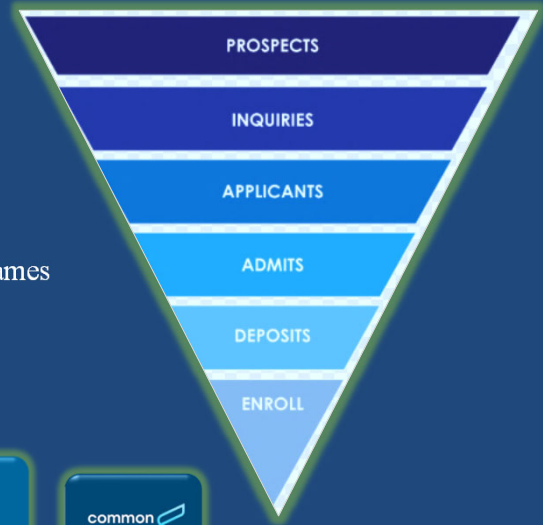
Initiative	Target project start	First significant milestone
Scholarships: Simplify, clarify and communicate an array of market-competitive TSU scholarships that will help TSU increase net student revenue	May 2025	July 2025 Website updated with new scholarship info
CRM: Implement Slate, the best-in-class college admissions communications and application management system.	May 2025	Late summer 2025 Application launched
Restructure enrollment functions into single division comprising undergraduate admissions, graduate admissions, financial aid and operations	June 2025	August 2025 Financial aid and admissions integrated
Develop and execute a strategic enrollment management plan encompassing recruitment and retention environment, goals and strategies for TSU	June 2025	August 2025 Plan approval
Develop and launch an enrollment marketing communications plan to build the top of the funnel, drive applications and improve yield	June 2025	Fall 2025 First application generation campaigns launched
Develop and execute lead generation (i.e., search) campaigns for 10th and 11th graders to build inquiry pool and applicant pool for 2027 and 2028.	September 2025	Winter/Spring 2026 Campaigns launched

While beyond the direct control of enrollment, it's important to note that **the university website urgently needs a comprehensive overhaul**: information is difficult to find, often outdated, and the overall design does not reflect the stature of a historic institution like Tennessee State.

The marketing research that will drive the enrollment marketing communications plans should inform the look, feel and tone of the website to ensure coherence.

Strategic Initiatives

- Launching the Slate CRM
 - Fall 2026 application
 - Enrollment communication engagement campaign
 - Prospective student cultivate and nurture campaign
 - Campus tours, events and orientation registration
 - Comprehensive applicant lifecycle tracking
- Lead Generation – acquiring 100,000 Encoura (ACT) names
- Joining the Common App
- Participating in Governor Lee & THEC's Direct Admit Initiative
- Yield initiatives –confirmation incentives



Recruitment Travel

More than 50% of enrolled students come from TN, GA and IL

Focus on most productive markets: 30 counties in the U.S. drive 58% of TSU enrollment

These 30 counties account for 58% of Tennessee State's enrollment over the past three cycles. Recommend placing your most capable recruitment officers in Tennessee,

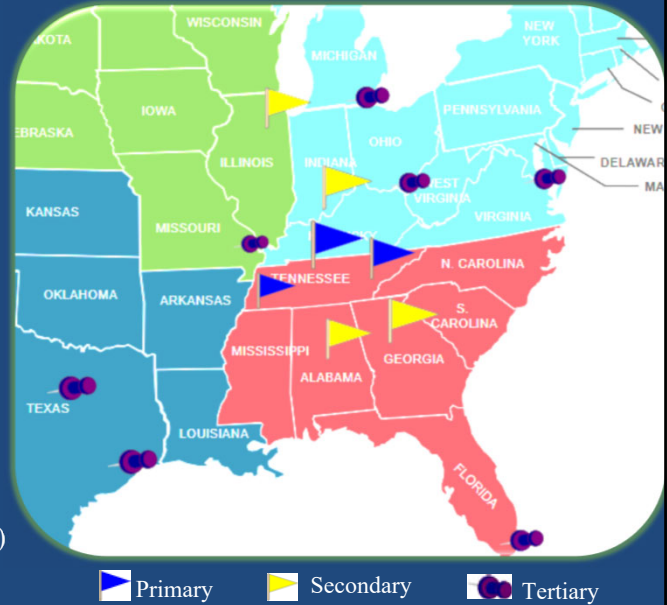
TSU's most productive counties for enrolled first-year students, 23-2025



State	County	Enrollment	Share of Enrollment
TN	DAVIDSON	515	11%
TN	SHELBY	507	10%
IL	COOK	291	6%
GA	FULTON	153	3%
MS	WAYNE	127	2%
TN	RUTHERFORD	115	2%
IL	MARION	109	2%
GA	DEKALB	107	2%
GA	COBB	90	2%
AL	JEFFERSON	87	2%
GA	DARWIN	64	1%
TN	HAMILTON	60	1%
TN	MONTGOMERY	53	1%
GA	HENRY	52	1%
AL	MADISON	48	1%
OH	HAMILTON	47	1%
MS	OAKLAND	42	1%
FL	MIAMI-DADE	41	1%
GA	CLAYTON	38	1%
AL	MONTGOMERY	34	1%
OH	MONTGOMERY	31	1%
TN	MADISON	31	1%
GA	DOUGLAS	30	1%
TN	KNOX	30	1%
TN	WILSON	29	1%
IL	SAINT CLAIR	28	1%
GA	ROCKDALE	27	1%
IL	LAKE	26	1%
TN	WILLIAMSON	26	1%
FL	BROWARD	25	1%

Recruitment Travel & Events

- ✓ 4 Recruitment Team members for 2025-2026
(only 1 recruiter for 2024-2025)
- ✓ 18-20 weeks of annual recruitment travel
(August-May)
- ✓ Engagement activities include:
(100+ engagements scheduled for fall 2025)
 - High school visits
 - College fairs
 - Community college visits
 - Virtual information sessions
 - Regional events
 - Partnerships with
 - Alumni Chapters
 - Community Based Organizations (CBOs)



Campus Visit Experience



Dedicated Staff

- Ensure a high-quality and memorable campus visit experience
- Daily family & group tours
- Campus recruitment events

Tiger Tour Guides

- Hiring and interview process
- Enhanced training





TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 18, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Bank Reconciliation Policy

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Bradley White, Interim Vice President of Business and Finance

Background Information

Bradley White will discuss a new university Bank Reconciliation Policy for the Board's approval.

Action

MOTION: I move to approve the Bank Reconciliation Policy, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, Board meeting.



BUSINESS AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT
General Accounting

Effective Date: Upon Approval

BANK RECONCILIATION POLICY

Policy Number	501-01
Approval Authority	TSU Board of Trustees
Responsible Administrator	Controller
Responsible Office	Business and Finance
Policy Contact	Director of General Accounting and Financial Reporting

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Tennessee State University's bank reconciliation policy requires all incoming and outgoing funds from its bank accounts to be recorded in the general ledger promptly. Monthly bank account reconciliations are crucial for preventing fraud, identifying errors, managing cash flow, and ensuring that the university's funds are managed with fiscal responsibility and oversight. In essence, this bank reconciliation policy is key to maintaining the financial health, security, and integrity of the institution, safeguarding it against errors, fraud, and other risks.

2.0 IMPORTANCE AND REASON FOR THE POLICY

A bank reconciliation policy is crucial for ensuring accurate financial records and upholding the integrity of the university's accounting processes. Bank reconciliations must be completed promptly in accordance with governmental accounting standards and for audit purposes. A thorough bank reconciliation policy also aids in detecting fraud, quickly identifying errors, improving forecasting, preventing financial mismanagement, and ensuring the university is always audit-ready.

If the university neglects to perform the required bank reconciliations, it can lead to errors in financial records, including accounting misclassifications, unsupported expenditures, and missing documentation. These issues can have negative consequences, including:

- Difficulty in detecting fraud such as theft or altered checks
- Errors in accounting records leading to incorrect financial statements
- Flawed data leading to poor financial decision-making

- Negatively impacting the university's cash position
- Funding agencies may hold or withdraw funding

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Bank Account Reconciliation** – The “Bank Account Reconciliation” is the process of confirming that the bank statement is valid and accurate, that transactions are correctly reflected in the general ledger account, and that the ending balance on the general ledger account is accurate. Any differences should be identified, reconciling items investigated, and balances adjusted appropriately.
- B. **Bank Statement** – The “bank statement” is a paper or electronic record of all financial activity for a given month, provided by the bank.
- C. **General Ledger** – The “general ledger” contains all the university's financial transactions.
- D. **Reconciling Item** – A “reconciling item” is a transaction or item that represents a difference between the general ledger and the balance in a subsidiary ledger, supporting schedule, or external document (e.g., bank statement). All reconciling items should be investigated and adjusted or explained and supported by appropriate documentation. A reconciling item of ‘bank-to-book’ represents a deposit/withdrawal that appears on the bank statement but not on the general ledger. A reconciling item of ‘book-to-bank’ represents a deposit/withdrawal recorded in the books but not yet reflected by the bank.

4.0 PROCEDURES

- I. Preparer. Bank Account Reconciliations are to be prepared by a designated staff member within the General Accounting department, ensuring accuracy and compliance with financial regulations. This role involves thoroughly reviewing and verifying the financial records against bank statements to identify discrepancies, thus contributing to the organization's overall financial integrity. Preparers are also responsible for aging reconciling items and flagging any that exceed the thresholds defined in Section V of this policy.
- II. Reconciliation Timeframe. Each bank account should be reconciled within 30 days following the conclusion of each month. This ensures that all transactions are accurately aligned with the bank statements, discrepancies are promptly addressed, and financial records remain up-to-date and precise.
- III. Outstanding Ledger Items. Clearing account balances should be clearly identified and reported as outstanding items within the general ledger during the bank reconciliation process. This ensures that any discrepancies between the bank records and the university's financial records are accurately accounted for and addressed.

- IV. Clearing Accounts Adjustments. When making adjustments to address any discrepancies that remain unreconciled through the use of clearing accounts, it is essential to ensure that these changes are accurately captured in the bank reconciliation process. These adjustments should not be classified as reconciled items, as they are still under review. This distinction helps maintain clarity and accuracy in financial reporting, ensuring that all outstanding differences are properly documented.
- V. Aging of Reconciling Items and Resolution Plan. All reconciling items begin aging on the first calendar day following the month-end. Reconciling items should be categorized into the following aging groups by number of calendar days: 0-30, 31-60, 61-90, and >90. All reconciling items >\$10,000 and aged greater than 90 days must have a documented plan for resolution submitted to the Controller by the preparer or the Director of General Accounting. The Controller will review all reconciling items, regardless of amount, and aged greater than 90 days annually, and a plan for resolution will be required.
- VI. Supporting Documentation.
- A. All adjustments must be supported by valid documentation. Supporting documentation for adjustments should include, but is not limited to, bank statements, general ledger records, subledger reports, calculation work papers, and notes from preparers/approvers, to ensure clarity and auditability.
 - B. Completed bank reconciliation documents are to include the bank reconciliation, bank statement, general ledger activity report, and copies of required journal entries.
 - C. All reconciliations must be dated, signed by the preparer and reviewer, and stored electronically in the financial system or a secure network location.
- VII. Month-End Bank Reconciliation and Close. The Controller will review and approve the completed bank reconciliation. The preparer's and reviewer's signatures and dates should be documented electronically using an approved e-signature platform. Entries will not be made after the month-end close. Bank reconciliations must be based on the finalized general ledger balances as of the month-end close date. Any reconciling items identified after the close must be addressed in the subsequent period.

5.0 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

This policy is issued under the authority of the Vice President of Business and Finance and is enforced by the Controller's Office. The Vice President of Business and Finance is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and for approving any exceptions.

6.0 HISTORY

Policy Revised: November 2022

Last Reviewed: August 2025



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETING**

Friday, September 19, 2025 9:00 a.m. CT	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209
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AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Welcome and Introductions
- IV. Adoption of Agenda
- V. Action Items and Reports
 - A. Approval of Consent Agenda Items
 - 1. Approval of June 12, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes
 - 2. Approval of June 12, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
 - 3. Approval of June 13, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
 - 4. Approval of June 13, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
 - 5. Approval of July 1, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
 - 6. Approval of August 5, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
 - B. Committee Reports
 - 1. Audit Committee Report and Recommendations
 - 2. Student and Academic Affairs Committee Report and Recommendations
 - a. Consideration of 2024-2025 Tenure and Promotion

Recommendations (Action)

- b. Approval of Post-Tenure Review Policy (Action)
- c. Approval of Modification to Admission Testing Scores (Action)

3. Finance Committee Report and Recommendations

- a. Approval of the Bank Reconciliation Policy (Action).

- VI. Presidential Contract
- VII. Real Estate Discussion
- VIII. Adoption of 2026 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar (Action)
- IX. Naming of Additional Committee Members and New Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs
- X. President's Report
- XI. Board Chair's Report
- XII. Adjournment

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Approval of Consent Agenda Items

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Trustee Dakasha Winton, Board Chair

Background Information

The only items on the consent agenda are meeting minutes. The Board conducted the meetings referenced below. The document reflecting the minutes from the following Board and committee meetings are included in the Board materials:

Approval of June 12, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes
Approval of June 12, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Approval of June 13, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
Approval of June 13, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
Approval of July 1, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
Approval of August 5, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

Action

The Chair will call for a motion approving the consent agenda items, which include past Board minutes and committee meeting minutes recommended for approval by the committees.

MOTION: I move to approve the consent agenda items, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, meeting.

Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
August 5, 2025
Tennessee State University – Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Trustees Dakasha Winton, Charles Traughber, Azana Bruce, Trevia Chatman, Jeffery Norfleet, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, Leticia Towns, and Artenzia Young-Seigler.

University Staff Present: Interim President Dwayne Tucker; Ginette Garza Brown, Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Robbie Melton, Acting Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs;

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Winton called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Chair Winton declared that a physical quorum was not present and moved that electronic participation by a quorum was necessary, which was approved. Board Secretary conducted the roll call. The following Board members were present: Trustees Dakasha Winton, Charles Traughber, Azana Bruce, Trevia Chatman, Jeffery Norfleet, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, Leticia Towns, and Artenzia Young-Seigler.

III. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION PROCESS AND THE SELECTION OF A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Board Chair Winton announced the first agenda item, which was the presidential selection process. She reminded members that under Board Policy No. 4, the Board has the authority to appoint the president of the University and to determine the appropriate selection process. She emphasized that the Board's actions must reflect consultation with the campus and broader community, while also ensuring stable leadership during a critical period for the institution.

Chair Winton reviewed the history of the presidential selection process to date. She noted that in the summer of 2024, the Board formed a presidential search committee, chaired by Trustee Qualls, which developed candidate qualifications. These qualifications included demonstrated ability in organizational leadership, financial management, external relations, and team development. The Board subsequently retained a national search firm to assist in identifying candidates.

In December 2024, the Board appointed Mr. Dwayne Tucker as Interim President during a time of financial and organizational challenges. Mr. Tucker agreed to serve for six months without compensation. Chair Winton explained that in early 2025, the presidential search process was paused, and on June 17, 2025, the Board entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

with the State of Tennessee. This MOU requires leadership capable of addressing audit findings, restoring financial stability, improving enrollment and morale, and strengthening the University's reputation.

Chair Winton stated that under the Board's bylaws, it is not obligated to conduct additional search steps and retains the discretion to proceed directly with a presidential appointment. She then opened the floor for discussion.

Trustee Traughber raised a point of order, noting that the agenda had not yet been formally adopted. He moved to amend the agenda to include a discussion item for possible ratification of the extension of Interim President Tucker's contract before proceeding with the presidential selection item. The motion was seconded.

The amendment was carried by a roll call vote, and the amended agenda was adopted.

Following the adoption of the agenda, Trustee Traughber inquired about the status of Interim President Tucker's contract and whether Chair Winton had acted unilaterally to extend it. Chair Winton confirmed that she had extended the contract on a month-to-month basis, citing authority delegated by the Board in December 2024.

Trustee Traughber expressed concern that the contract language appeared to require Board approval rather than unilateral action by Chair Winton. After further discussion on governance responsibilities, interpretation of contract provisions, and the scope of authority, Trustee Traughber moved to ratify the extension of Interim President Tucker's contract as executed by Chair Winton. The motion was seconded by Trustee Chatman.

The motion was put to a roll call vote and failed with the votes casted below.

- Trustee Chatman – Yes
- Trustee Norfleet – No
- Trustee Qualls – Yes
- Trustee Smith – No
- Trustee Smith-Knight – Yes
- Trustee Towns – No
- Trustee Traughber – Yes
- Chair Winton – No
- Trustee Young-Seigler – No

Chair Winton then returned to the agenda item regarding presidential selection. She invited discussion on whether the Board should rely on the existing presidential profile previously developed with the search firm or consider updating it to reflect current conditions and the requirements of the MOU.

Several Trustees raised questions about the MOU, including whether it explicitly required the Board to name a president and whether state officials had communicated such an expectation. Chair Winton responded that while the MOU may not contain direct language to that effect, both

legislative and executive officials had conveyed their desire for the University to appoint a permanent president.

Chair Winton aimed to refocus the meeting on the agenda item regarding the selection of a candidate for the next president of Tennessee State University. She explained that before any nominations could be considered, the Board needed to conduct a formal vote to outline a process

Following the discussion, Trustee Smith made the motion proceed with outlining a presidential selection process. Chair Winton seconded the motion. The motion passed with the votes casted below.

- Trustee Chatman – Yes
- Trustee Norfleet – Yes
- Trustee Qualls – No
- Trustee Smith – Yes
- Trustee Smith-Knight – Yes
- Trustee Towns – Yes
- Trustee Traughber – Yes
- Chair Winton – Yes
- Trustee Young-Seigler – Yes

Then Chair Winton outlined that the selection process could be that the process would be name a president directly. Following the discussion, Trustee Smith made the motion to proceed with a direct and immediate vote and Chair Winton seconded the motion. The motion passed with the votes casted below.

- Trustee Chatman – Yes
- Trustee Norfleet – Yes
- Trustee Qualls – No
- Trustee Smith – Yes
- Trustee Smith-Knight – Yes
- Trustee Towns – Yes
- Trustee Traughber – Yes
- Chair Winton – Yes
- Trustee Young-Seigler – Yes

Chair Winton then nominated Interim President Dwayne Tucker to serve as the permanent president of TSU. She cited his longstanding commitment to the University, his leadership experience in both public education and the corporate sector, and his effective service during a period of institutional transition. She emphasized that Mr. Tucker had helped restore confidence and unity across the TSU community and had earned strong support from students, faculty, and alumni.

Trustee Chatman made a motion to appoint Mr. Tucker and Trustee Smith seconded the motion. Prior to the vote, Trustee Qualls expressed appreciation for Mr. Tucker's contributions but clarified that her concerns were procedural in nature and not a reflection on the nominee himself—the motion to appoint Mr. Tucker as president passed by roll call vote with the votes casted below.

- Trustee Chatman – Yes
- Trustee Norfleet – Yes
- Trustee Qualls – Abstained
- Trustee Smith – Yes
- Trustee Smith-Knight – Yes
- Trustee Towns – Yes
- Trustee Traugher – Yes
- Chair Winton – Yes
- Trustee Young-Seigler – Yes

Chair Winton congratulated President Dwayne Tucker and thanked him for his continued service to the Board, the University, and the broader TSU community.

IV. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE PRESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

Chair Winton introduced the next agenda item regarding the delegation of authority to the Chair to execute agreements related to the appointment and employment of the president. She explained that in hiring Mr. Tucker as president, the Board would need to execute one or more agreements outlining the standard terms of presidential employment, including the length of the contract, compensation, and other conditions. Chair Winton requested a motion to approve the delegation of authority to the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, to finalize and execute these agreements.

Trustee Towns made the motion regarding the delegation of authority to the Chair Winton and Trustee Smith seconded the motion.

During the discussion, Trustee Traugher asked about the extent of the “consultation” with the Executive Committee, specifically how it would be implemented in practice. Chair Winton responded that she envisaged circulating any proposed agreement to Executive Committee members before signing and subsequently sharing the final version with the full Board, in line with past practices.

Trustee Traugher noted that, to his knowledge, such consultation had not previously occurred with presidential or interim presidential contracts. Chair Winton reiterated her focus on the current motion and expressed her willingness to involve the full Board if broader input was preferred.

Trustee Chatman clarified that consultation should include collaboration on the terms and conditions of employment. She suggested that given the Board's collective expertise in executive employment, the process should allow for wider participation from the full Board. Trustee Young-

Seigler agreed, observing that relying solely on the Executive Committee could create the impression that other trustees were being excluded from meaningful participation.

Trustee Towns proposed a compromise, suggesting that the Chair and Executive Committee negotiate the agreement, but that the final employment contract be returned to the full Board for ratification. She emphasized that negotiating terms with a group of ten or more trustees would be inefficient, but that final review by the Board would ensure transparency and allow for meaningful input.

Trustee Smith-Knight added that many boards maintain a standing personnel committee for such matters and suggested creating an ad hoc group of trustees with relevant expertise to assist in drafting the agreement. Several trustees supported this idea, noting that it would balance efficiency with inclusivity.

After extended discussion, Chair Winton determined that consensus had not been reached. She made a motion to withdraw the pending motion and Trustee Young-Seigler seconded the motion. Chair Winton announced that the item would be tabled. She asked trustees to submit comments or suggested terms for the presidential employment agreement in writing, so that draft provisions could be prepared and circulated to the Board before a subsequent meeting.

V. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC ACTIONS – LOW PRODUCING PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS

Chair Winton introduced the next item on the agenda: the approval of academic program modifications. She invited Trustee Norfleet, Chair of the Student and Academic Affairs Committee, to present the committee's recommendation.

Trustee Norfleet reported that the committee met on July 1, 2025, to review proposed academic actions, which included modifications to low-producing programs and the reorganization of certain academic units. The committee voted to recommend approval of these actions as outlined in Table One of the Board's materials. Furthermore, they recommended authorizing the appropriate officers of the University to collaborate with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to implement the approved actions. Trustee Norfleet made the motion to approve the actions regarding the modifications to low-producing programs and the reorganization of certain academic units and Trustee Young-Seigler seconded the motion.

During the discussion, Trustee Qualls expressed concern about the proposal to consolidate four departments within the College of Business into three. She noted that a search for a new dean was currently underway and suggested that the incoming dean should participate in shaping the reorganization. She inquired whether a "yes" vote would constitute approval of all proposed program changes, even if a trustee disagreed with one specific item. Trustee Norfleet confirmed that the vote would be collective.

Provost Melton clarified that all curriculum-related proposals originated with faculty committees at the department and college levels and underwent multiple layers of academic review before

reaching the Board. She emphasized that, while not all faculty members may have agreed with each recommendation, the process adhered to established shared governance practices.

After further discussion, the Board proceeded to a roll call vote and the motion passed with the votes casted below.

- Trustee Chatman – Yes
- Trustee Norfleet – Yes
- Trustee Qualls – No
- Trustee Smith – Yes
- Trustee Smith-Knight – No
- Trustee Towns – Yes
- Trustee Traughber – Yes
- Chair Winton – Yes
- Trustee Young-Seigler – Yes

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Winton stated that she would consider a motion to adjourn. Chair Chatman moved to adjourn, and Trustee Norfleet seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, with all committee members voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

**Meeting of the Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
June 13, 2025
Tennessee State University – the Barn**

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Trustees Trevia Chatman, Jeffery Norfleet, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, Charles Traughber, Dakasha Winton, Artenzia Young-Seigler

University Staff Present: Interim President Dwayne Tucker; Dr. Robbie Melton, Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Ginette Brown, Interim General Counsel & Board Secretary; Sterlin Sanders, Interim Chief Information Officer; Renée Forbes-Williams, Director of Internal Audits; Greg Robinson, Chief of Police; Will Radford, Assistant Vice President of Planning, Design & Construction and Campus Operations; Dr. Mikki Allen, Director of Athletics; Dr. Quincy Quick, Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs;

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Winton called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m. Chair Winton announced that the trustees were confirmed by the Tennessee General Assembly the day prior.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Chair Winton declared that a physical quorum was present. Committee Secretary conducted the roll call. The following committee members were present: Trustees Trevia Chatman, Dimeta Smith Knight, Jeffery Norfleet, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Charles Traughber, Dakasha Winton, and Artenzia Young-Seigler. A quorum was present.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Winton requested a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as presented in the materials for the June 13, 2025, meeting. A motion was made and duly seconded. Chair Winton opened the floor for discussion and provided an opportunity for members to suggest amendments to the agenda. No amendments were proposed, and the motion to adopt the agenda proceeded.

Following the adoption of the main agenda, Chair Winton entertained a motion to add an additional item to the agenda. The proposed item was to authorize Chair Winton and the University President to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Comptroller of the Treasury, the Commissioner of Finance and Administration, and the Secretary of Finance. The purpose of this MOU is to redirect capital outlay funds in accordance with T.C.A §49-7-3103. A motion was made and duly seconded. The motion to add the MOU item to the agenda was approved by majority vote.

Chair Winton noted a need to go slightly out of order to introduce another proposed amendment to the agenda. Trustee Qualls recommended a motion to remove item number two from the Student Academic Affairs Committee report, which concerned the approval of academic program modifications. Trustee Norfleet made the motion and Trustee Young-Seigler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. With this, two modifications to the agenda were formally approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF A DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Chair Winton introduced the first action item on the agenda, consideration of the approval of a delegation of authority to the Board Chair and the President to execute a MOU with the Comptroller of the Treasury and the Commissioner of Finance and Administration in order to redirect capital outlay funds in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-7-3103. Trustee Norfleet made the motion and Trustee Smith seconded the motion.

During discussion, Trustee Chatman requested that, prior to execution, the final MOU be circulated to the full Board. Chair Winton confirmed the request.

Trustee Traugher asked for a brief overview of the current status of the agreement. Chair Winton explained that the General Assembly had recently passed legislation permitting Tennessee State University to redirect certain funds originally appropriated for capital outlay projects toward operational expenses. She stated that, to access these funds, the State required execution of an MOU outlining benchmarks that the University must achieve, as well as timelines for the release of funds. She emphasized that the goal of the agreement is to support TSU's financial stability and continued operations.

Chair Winton further explained that multiple negotiations had occurred among University leadership, Interim President Tucker, representatives of Alvarez and Marsal, the Comptroller's Office, and the Commissioner of Finance and Administration. She noted that while some technical items remain unresolved, the agreement is nearing completion, with the goal of execution before the end of the month.

President Tucker added that the remaining open items were minor in nature and that, in his view, the agreement was fair, reasonable, and achievable for the University.

Following discussion, the motion was clarified to include the amendment offered by Trustee Chapman: that the final MOU be circulated to the full Board prior to execution.

Chair Winton recommended a motion to approve a delegation of authority to the Board Chair and the President to execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Comptroller of the Treasury and the Commissioner of Finance Administration. This action is intended to redirect capital outlay funds in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-7-3103. Before execution, the Board of Trustees will receive the MOU for review. The motion was approved by a majority vote and carried.

V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Winton presented the items on the consent agenda, which included the following minutes for approval:

- March 12, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
- March 13, 2025, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes
- March 13, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
- March 14, 2025, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
- April 28, 2025, Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
- April 30, 2025, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and duly seconded. The motion passed by voice vote.

VI. ACTION ITEMS AND REPORTS

A. Appointment of Student Trustee

Chair Winton introduced the next item on the agenda, the appointment of the student trustee pursuant to the FOCUS Act. She noted that the Act requires a Tennessee State University student to serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees for a one-year term.

Chair Winton reminded the Board that at its April 26, 2024, meeting, the Board adopted a student trustee recommendation process for the 2024–2025 fiscal year. The process included action and input from the Tennessee State University Student Government Association, along with institutional interviews involving Interim President Tucker and other campus leaders.

President Tucker provided an overview of the process and introduced the recommended candidate, Ms. Azana Bruce. He shared that Ms. Bruce is a rising senior double majoring in Political Science and Urban Studies, with a minor in Nonprofit Leadership. During the past semester, she interned in the Tennessee General Assembly, and over the summer she worked with nonprofit organizations in Memphis. President Tucker added that Ms. Bruce identified her key goals as student trustee to be increasing student turnout at Board meetings and improving communication between students and the Board.

President Tucker, along with other University leaders who participated in the interview process, recommended Ms. Bruce for appointment. A copy of her résumé was included in the Board's meeting materials beginning at page 32.

Following the recommendation, a motion was made and seconded to appoint Ms. Azana Bruce as student trustee for the 2025–2026 fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Winton introduced the next agenda item, which was committee reports.

B. Audit Committee Report

Trustee Smith Knight reported that the Audit Committee met to receive reports and consider several items and to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed confidential by state law. The Committee received reports on internal and external audits and recommended approval of the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 Audit Plan, which was approved by the full Board as outlined in the June 13, 2025, meeting materials.

C. Finance Committee Report

Trustee Traugher reported that the Finance Committee met to receive reports and consider several items. The Committee also heard a report from the Office of Institutional Advancement, which included updates on alumni engagement, donor relations, and giving trends. In addition, the Committee recommended approval of the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 tuition and mandatory fee increase, the Fiscal Year 2024–2025 estimated budget, and the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 operating budget, and the motions were approved by the full Board as contained in the Board materials for the June 13, 2025, meeting.

D. Governance and Governmental Affairs Committee Report

Chair Winton reported that the Governance and Governmental Affairs Committee met to receive an informational update from Attorney Leah Dupree Love on government affairs. No action items were presented for consideration.

E. Student and Academic Affairs Committee Report

Trustee Norfleet reported that the Student and Academic Affairs Committee met to consider action on one item and receive reports on four items. The committee voted to recommend the approval of low-producing programs, and the motion was approved by the full Board as contained in the Board materials for the June 13, 2025, meeting.

VII. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Tucker provided the President’s Report, focusing on the university’s multi-year financial turnaround plan. He acknowledged the hard work of the cabinet and staff in managing cash flow through the end of the academic year and reviewed the five-year pro forma presented to the SBC on February 19, 2025. The plan outlines projected cash needs, including a net deficit of roughly \$35 million for 2026 and \$25 million for the following year, with a path toward financial sustainability and long-term institutional stability.

President Tucker emphasized that the budget reflects these plans, noting that short-term enrollment fluctuations are anticipated as part of necessary infrastructure adjustments. He framed these challenges as opportunities to reset and reimagine Tennessee State University for the next 100 years.

He also provided an update on the MOU and funding from the legislature, including access to previously allocated funds for deferred maintenance, operational expenses, infrastructure projects,

and College of Agriculture buildings. He expressed confidence that finalization of the MOU is imminent, projecting that the university is days away from completing the agreement.

In closing, President Tucker highlighted TSU's achievements, including AI initiatives and the New Direction Gospel Choir's first-place win at the Sweet to Sound Finals in Washington, D.C., celebrating the university's talent and accomplishments. He concluded by sharing the choir's performance with the Board.

VIII. BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Winton delivered the Board Chair's Report, opening with appreciation for the patience of the Board and recognition of the staff's efforts in preparing materials in advance, which allowed for thorough review. The Chair emphasized the importance of collaboration among Board members, the president, and staff to ensure Tennessee State University operates in the best possible position.

The Chair acknowledged that faculty tenure was not addressed during the meeting due to ongoing financial considerations but reassured that this delay is temporary and not a denial. The Board remains committed to carefully reviewing and supporting faculty tenure and promotion decisions once the university is in a stronger position.

Finally, the Chair expressed gratitude to President Tucker for his voluntary service, long hours, and dedication, highlighting the early-morning calls and overall commitment to TSU. The Chair affirmed the Board's commitment to taking appropriate steps toward appointing a permanent president, with further information to be shared with Board members soon.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Winton asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Trustee Smith Knight moved to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Trustee Chatman. Secretary Brown took a roll call vote on the motion. The motion passed.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Presidential Contract

RECOMMENDED ACTION: None

PRESENTED BY: Dakasha Winton, Board Chair

Background Information

The Board Chair shall discuss this agenda item at the September 19, 2025, Tennessee State University Board of Trustees meeting.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DISCUSSION ITEM

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Real Estate Discussion

RECOMMENDED ACTION: None

PRESENTED BY: Dakasha Winton, Board Chair

Background Information

The Board Chair shall discuss this agenda item at the September 19, 2025, Tennessee State University Board of Trustees meeting.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ACTION ITEM

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Adoption of 2026 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval

PRESENTED BY: Dakasha Winton, Board Chair

Background Information

The proposed Board meeting dates for 2026 are:

February 19 and 20, 2026
May 14 and 15, 2026
September 10 and 11, 2026
November 5 and 6, 2026

Board Action

The Board Chair will call for a motion adopting the 2026 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar.

MOTION: I move to adopt the 2026 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar, as contained in the Board materials for the September 19, 2025, Board meeting.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Naming of Additional Committee Members and New
Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs

RECOMMENDED ACTION: None

PRESENTED BY: Dakasha Winton, Board Chair

Background Information

The Board Chair shall provide a report on this agenda item at the September 19, 2025, Tennessee State University Board of Trustees meeting.



**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETING**

Friday, September 19, 2025	Tennessee State University Main Campus Farrell Westbrook Complex ("The Barn") 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37209
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APPENDIX

- I. Executive Summary: Research and Sponsored Programs Update
- II. Executive Summary: Title III Update
- III. Executive Summary: Athletic Department Update

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Research and Sponsored Programs Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Quincy Quick, Associate Vice President Research and Sponsored Programs/Chief Research Officer

Background Information

Dr. Quick presents the following update on Federal Government R & D funding, Grant Awards and Submission data, Expanded Funded Strategies, and the Business Incubation Center.

RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAM BOARD OF TRUSTEES SEPTEMBER 2025 QUARTERLY REPORT

GRANT AWARDS AND SUBMISSION DATA: YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

Overview of Key Metrics

Metric	FY2024	FY2025	Change
Total Amount of Awards	\$92,134,396	\$78,464,943	▼ \$13,669,453 (-14.8%)
Total Number of Awards	189	169	▼ 20 awards (-10.6%)
Grant Applications Submitted	222	176	▼ 46 proposals (-20.7%)
Total Requested Funds	\$216,310,297	\$201,075,702	▼ \$15,234,595 (-7.0%)

Stable Indirect Cost Recovery

Despite the lower number of awards and reduced total funding, **indirect cost recovery declined by only 1.5%**, displaying effective capture of F&A costs on awarded grants.

Tennessee State University anticipates significant headwinds in its externally funded research and sponsored programs portfolio for FY2026 due to the scheduled termination of the \$11 million Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) grant. As a result of this termination, the University projects a **minimum 15% reduction in total grant awards** in FY2026 compared to FY2025 levels.

FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING UPDATE

Congress is charting a different course than the President's FY 2026 budget, rejecting deep proposed cuts to vital research agencies and striving to preserve federal R&D investment and is advancing appropriations that soften or reverse the steepest proposed cuts.

FY2026 Appropriations Senate Activity		
Department/Agency	Proposed request	Fy 25-26 Change
USDA	-25%	-8%
NSF	-55%	-5%
Health and Human Service	-36%	2%
NASA	-35%	1%
Department of Energy	-	-
		Total R&D change: -2%

STRATEGIC FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

In response to the evolving federal research funding environment, Tennessee State University is proactively pursuing diversified funding pathways to sustain and expand our research enterprise. We will leverage our established relationships with key state partners, including the **Nashville Innovation Alliance, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, and Oak Ridge Associated Universities** to identify and secure competitive opportunities that align with state and regional priorities. Additionally, we will intensify our efforts to pursue foundation grants and private funding by expanding collaborations with **corporate partners and philanthropic organizations**. This strategy includes working closely with the Office of Institutional Advancement to align fundraising efforts with institutional research and workforce development goals. Together, these efforts will position the university to enhance institutional resilience, broaden our funding base, and drive innovation through strategic partnership.

Opportunities for Growth

- **Industry Collaboration**
- **Translation and Applied Research**
- **Commercialization Pathways**
 - **Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)**
 - **Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR)**

BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTER (BIC)

There is considerable interest from several small businesses to partner with the Business Incubation Center. Current efforts are underway to position BIC to strengthen its incubation pipeline, enhance revenue potential, and expand its role as a hub for entrepreneurial growth. These include:

- Ongoing upgrades and renovation of (15) tenant suites and exterior building painting
- A new tenant contract under review and active negotiations in progress with three additional potential tenants

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Title III Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Andrea Tyler, Executive Director, Title III
Administration

Background Information

Dr. Tyler presents the following update on Title III.

Title III

Board of Trustees Executive Summary

With Title III funding, the institution has successfully carried out vital facility renovations that have transformed campus infrastructure and improved the overall learning environment. Renovations involved upgrading aging buildings to meet modern safety and accessibility standards, expanding technology-enabled spaces, and increasing energy efficiency across facilities. These improvements not only enhanced the physical state of the campus but also created a more welcoming and supportive setting for students, faculty, and staff. Examples of the facility upgrades include upgrades to Gentry lighting, a total renovation of the Olympic-size pool, campus-wide security cameras, three new marque digital signs, the university fitness center, and an upgrade to Avon Williams site wi-fi, as well as a new backup generator for the Avon Williams site. The upgraded facilities are designed to promote collaboration, innovation, and long-term growth for the institution.

In addition to facility improvements, Title III funding supported major upgrades to the classroom. Instructional spaces were modernized with smart technology, interactive learning tools, and flexible seating arrangements that encourage active learning. Laboratory spaces were updated with industry-standard equipment, allowing faculty to deliver experiential, hands-on instruction that meets workforce needs. These classroom and lab improvements help students be better prepared for academic success, while faculty are empowered to use innovative teaching methods. The upgraded classrooms directly lead to increased student engagement, retention, and persistence.

Title III resources were also key in strengthening institutional management systems and practices. Initiatives included investing in integrated data management systems and financial consulting services that enhance decision-making, strategic planning, and accountability. Administrative processes were streamlined to boost efficiency, while professional development opportunities were offered to faculty and staff to improve leadership and operational capacity. These improvements in institutional management reinforce the institution's ability to sustain growth, respond to challenges, and stay in compliance with accreditation and federal requirements.

Finally, Title III funding expanded student support initiatives, ensuring that learners receive comprehensive academic, personal, and career guidance. Programs were developed to provide tutoring, mentoring, and advising, focusing on supporting first-generation students in education and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields. By strengthening both academic and non-academic support services, the institution has fostered a student-centered culture that promotes holistic development, persistence to graduation, and long-term success beyond college.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DATE: September 19, 2025

ITEM: Athletic Department Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: No action

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Mikki Allen, Director of Athletics

Background Information

Dr. Allen presents the following Athletic Department update.

Executive Summary

To: Tennessee State University Board of Trustees

From: Dr. Mikki Allen, Director of Athletics

Date: September 19, 2025

Subject: Athletic Department Update

I am pleased to present an overview of our athletic department's achievements and initiatives as we continue to prioritize the academic success and overall development of our student-athletes.

Student-Athlete Demographics

Currently, our athletic department supports a total of 249 student-athletes, with 161 receiving athletic scholarship awards. Of these scholarship recipients, 24% are in-state students while 76% are out-of-state students. We anticipate 39 student-athlete graduations in the upcoming 2025-2026 academic year, reflecting our commitment to fostering academic excellence.

NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program Grant

We are proud to have received the 2024-2025 NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program (AASP) grant, aimed at enhancing student-athlete academic success and graduation rates. As part of this initiative, an NCAA representative, Marcus Brown, visited our campus on September 12, 2025, to engage with the university president, oversight committee, coaches, and student-athletes.

Enhancements Funded by the Grant

The 2024-2025 AASP grant has enabled significant improvements within our academic support framework, including:

- Refurbishment of two academic study spaces: a computer lab and a collaborative learning area specifically for student-athletes.
- Completion of technological upgrades to facilitate digital learning and improve accessibility.
- Hiring of five dedicated tutors, contributing to 732 hours of professional tutoring across essential academic subjects.

Facilities Updates

The Tennessee State University (TSU) Athletics Department has continued to make significant progress in upgrading and modernizing its athletic facilities to support student-athlete development, enhance the fan experience, and align with the University's broader strategic goals. These improvements are critical to maintaining competitive Division I programs and fostering school pride across the campus community.

Completed Projects

- **Musco Lighting Installation – Title III Project (Gentry Center):** Completed the installation of state-of-the-art Musco lighting in the Gentry Center, providing enhanced visibility and energy

efficiency for athletic competitions and practices, and other multipurpose events, ensuring a safer and more dynamic environment for student-athletes and spectators.

- **Weight Room Modifications and Enhancements (Gentry Center):** Renovated and modernized the weight room to include updated strength and conditioning equipment and improved layouts, better supporting student-athlete performance and long-term health.
- **Sports Medicine Training Room Expansion:** Upgraded the sports medicine facilities to deliver higher quality care, injury-prevention, and rehabilitation services, emphasizing student-athlete wellness and safety.
- **Centralized Space and Lab for Creative Content:** Established a dedicated space and production lab for creative and digital content development. This facility serves as a hub for athletics marketing, communications, and social media efforts, increasing TSU Athletics' visibility and brand engagement.

Upcoming Projects

- **Gentry Center Branding Initiative:** A comprehensive rebranding of the Gentry Center to reflect TSU's rich history and competitive spirit.
- **Softball Scoreboard Replacement:** Installation of a new, modern scoreboard to enhance the game-day experience for student-athletes, fans, and visiting teams.
- **Ed Temple Track Upgrades:** Investment in new equipment and enhancements to honor TSU's legendary track and field legacy while supporting current and future student-athletes in their training and competition efforts.

Revenue Generation

TSU Athletics Department is pleased to report unprecedented revenue generation following the first three home football games of the season. Total revenue has reached \$1.2 million, marking a historic high for this early stage of the season. This record-breaking figure is attributed to strong performance across key revenue streams such as ticket sales, parking, and vendor revenue, each exceeding expectations.

These results reflect successful strategies in fan engagement and game-day experience, positioning the department for continued financial growth.

Coaching Staff Update

Head men's basketball coach Nolan Smith has finalized his coaching staff for the upcoming 2025-26 season, bringing on three experienced assistants:

- DerMarr Johnson, a former NBA player with extensive coaching experience, including roles at West Virginia and Cincinnati.
- Vince Taylor, a veteran coach with over 20 years in collegiate and professional basketball, known for helping UCF achieve significant NCAA milestones.
- Dalonte Hill, recognized as a top recruiter with nearly 20 years of coaching experience across multiple conferences.

Brandon Lockridge will continue as assistant coach/director of operations, while Bilal "Bizzy" Joseph has been appointed as the program's first Executive Director of Basketball Strategy & Innovation, focusing on corporate partnerships and player brand development.

Additional Funding and Future Initiatives

We are excited to announce the receipt of an additional \$100,000 AASP grant for the 2025-26 academic year. This funding will support:

- The establishment of a dedicated nutrition area in the Academic Services Center, providing student-athletes with easy access to healthy snacks, hydration options, and tailored nutritional supplements.
- Continued hiring of dedicated tutors to further enhance academic success.
- Expansion of our "Becoming" student-athlete development initiative to support holistic growth.

Community Engagement

During the 2024-25 academic year, our student-athletes demonstrated a strong commitment to the community, completing and reporting over 2,200 hours of community service.

Strategic Impact

These projects collectively advance TSU's mission of excellence in athletics and academics. By modernizing facilities and expanding resources, TSU Athletics strengthens its ability to recruit and retain top-tier student-athletes, host high-quality events, and build pride within the Tiger community.

Conclusion

The athletic department remains dedicated to the academic and personal development of our student-athletes. With the support of the Board of Trustees, we look forward to leveraging these grants and initiatives to foster an environment that promotes both athletic and academic excellence.

Thank you for your continued support.