

DATE: January 26, 2018

SUBJECT: Tennessee Reconnect Update

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

Background Information:

The Tennessee Reconnect Act legislation that was passed during the session of the 110th General Assembly authorized the creation of a last-dollar scholarship for adult learners, similar in structure to that of TN Promise.

Beginning with the fall 2018 semester, students who meet the following criteria will be eligible for the Tennessee Reconnect grant:

- Not already have an associate or bachelor degree;
- Have been a Tennessee resident for at least one year;
- Complete the FAFSA and be determined as an independent student;
- Be admitted to an eligible institution, enroll in a degree or certificate program, and attend at least part-time; and
- Participate in a partnering advising program.

Tennessee Reconnect grantees must enroll in six hours each semester and maintain a 2.0 GPA to remain eligible.

Over the past eight months, THEC and TSAC staff have been working to plan for the launch of the Reconnect application in mid-February 2018 and to build the infrastructure necessary to do so. Specifically, staff have developed:

- A student application/questionnaire which will generate a Reconnect Success Plan for every Reconnect applicant;
- A statewide marketing initiative, which will launch in mid-February to align with the opening of the Reconnect application;
- A marketing toolkit for Reconnect partners, including institutions, Tennessee Reconnect Communities, and Reconnect champions;
- A centralized data collection system that will help us understand high-impact interventions for adult learners; and
- Training to prepare Tennessee Reconnect Community Navigators on details on the grant and shoring up capacity to serve a greater number of adult learners in the coming months.

Additionally, staff are working closely with the Tennessee Board of Regents system and other eligible institutions to support their work focusing on the needs of adult learners through new strategies, initiatives and faculty and staff training.

Staff will provide a progress update on the aforementioned activities.