



About TBR

The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) was created in 1972 by the General Assembly as the governing body of the State University and Community College System of Tennessee. At that time, the member institutions of the system were the state universities and community colleges formerly governed by the Tennessee Board of Education. In 1983, the General Assembly transferred the technical institutes and area vocational schools (now called Tennessee Technology Centers) to the Tennessee Board of Regents. The Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees of the [University of Tennessee system](#) are coordinated by the [Tennessee Higher Education Commission](#) .

Board and System Operations

The composition and powers of the Tennessee Board of Regents are set forth in Tennessee Code Annotated 49-8-201 through 49-8-203. The board consists of 18 members: 12 lay citizens appointed for six-year terms by the governor, with one from each of the state's nine congressional districts and three grand divisions; one faculty member from among the system institutions appointed by the governor for a one-year term; one student from among the system institutions appointed for a one-year term by the governor ; and four ex-officio members--the Governor of Tennessee, the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, who is a non-voting member.

The board is responsible for assuring lay and public direction in postsecondary education. Members serve without compensation and meet at least four times a year in regular session; called sessions are convened occasionally for special purposes. The purpose of the board is to govern and manage the system. It is empowered to employ the system chancellor and define his or her duties; select and employ presidents of the institutions; confer tenure and approve promotions in rank of system faculty; prescribe curricula and requirements for diplomas and degrees; approve the operating and capital budgets of each institution and otherwise set policies for their fiscal affairs; establish policies and regulations regarding the campus life of the institutions; and assume general responsibility for the operations of the institutions while delegating specifically to the presidents such powers and duties as are necessary and appropriate for the efficient administration of their respective institutions and programs.

The board's policies and practices reflect decentralized decision-making and operations. Standardized policies are established to ensure institutional accountability while maintaining campus prerogatives.

The board maintains a strong committee structure through which all policies and other significant considerations are deliberated. Board members, as well as student and faculty representatives from the institutions, serve on these major committees: Academic Policies and Programs, Finance and Business Operations, Personnel, Student Life, Tennessee Technology Centers, Compensation, and Business, Community and Public Affairs. Additional committees are established on an ad hoc basis to address special concerns.

The chancellor is the chief executive of the system and is empowered to act on behalf of the board. The chancellor and his staff serve at the pleasure of the board and perform those duties prescribed by the board. As the board staff, they ensure implementation of board policies and directives, initiate and conduct studies, serve as liaison between the institutions and other state offices, provide certain centralized services, and provide leadership in the management of the system.

The board subscribes to a concept of strong presidencies in which the president is the chief executive officer of the institution with broadly delegated responsibilities for all facets of campus management and operations. The president serves at the pleasure of the board, reports to the board through the chancellor, and is the official medium of communication between the campus community and the chancellor. Students, faculty and staff share responsibilities in campus governance.

The policies through which the board implements its statutory responsibility for governance and management of the system establish both standards for consistency among the institutions and defined parameters to promote institutional flexibility and discretion. To ensure appropriate participation in the consideration of proposed board policies and system-wide decisions, all such matters are reviewed by a structure of system sub-councils, the presidents as a council, the board staff, and a board committee prior to their consideration by the board.