

## ARCHIVE: COVID-19 Superintendent Call

April 13, 2020

The following are questions asked by directors of schools during this call and the point-in-time answers provided by the department. For additional guidance and up-to-the-minute supports, please check the TDOE website for more information:

<https://www.tn.gov/education/health-and-safety/update-on-coronavirus.html>.

### Legal Requirements and Needs

- Question: If a local school board decides to dismiss school for the remainder of the school year, will the current blanket waiver cover those days as well?
  - **RESPONSE:** Yes, pursuant to section 8 of Chapter 652 of the Public Acts of 2020, the commissioner of education shall waive the requirement of one hundred eighty (180) days of classroom instruction for the 2019-2020 school year. In response to the new law, the commissioner has issued a blanket waiver to school districts for all school days missed due to COVID-19.
- **Question:** Please provide guidance related to grading for grades K-8. Are there differences in how this guidance applies to charter schools?
  - **RESPONSE:** [Here is a link](#) to the information about the emergency State Board of Education meeting that was held on April 9 to address concerns related to school closures due to COVID-19.

At this meeting, the board passed an emergency rule related to graduation requirements and student grades. The link above includes video of the meeting and the proposed rules considered. The emergency rule passed applies to graduating seniors and any student enrolled in a high school credit course. Please note that the proposed rule includes the following: "Students taking courses for high school credit who were not scheduled to graduate in the 2019-20 school year shall receive no grade lower than the grade they earned in the course as of March 20, 2020; however, LEAs and public charter schools may provide remote learning opportunities to students as an opportunity to improve the student's grade."

For students in grades K-8, the emergency rule leaves those grading decisions to local boards of education (unless the 8th grader is enrolled in a high school algebra course). This is consistent with the uniform grading policy which leaves K-8 grading considerations up to local district policy. The decision on if/ how districts allow students to complete extra work to raise their grade should be made on a district by district basis.

Whether public charter schools have the authority to adopt their own grading policies for grades K-8 or must follow their district authorizer's policy depends on the charter agreement. If a charter school does not currently follow the authorizer's grading policy for K-8, the charter school may have the authority to develop a separate policy. However, charter schools are encouraged to confirm this matter with their district authorizer. If a charter school currently follows their district authorizer's grading policy, the charter school should seek permission from the authorizer to do adopt a separate policy.

### School Nutrition

- Question: What guidance is available for districts who may be providing special education supports for students up to age 22, but are able to provide meals only for students up to age 18?
  - **RESPONSE:** As part of the Seamless Summer Option program, sites may serve meals to students designated as students with disabilities, including up to age 22. For more information, refer to the or more information, refer to the [School Nutrition guidance](#) on the Department's website.