



BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NINTH FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0375

LIZZETTE REYNOLDS
COMMISSIONER

Via Electronic Mail

September 28, 2026

Dr. Mark Griffith, Director of Schools
Marion County Schools
204 Betsy Pack Drive
Jasper, TN 37347

Dear Director Griffith:

I am in receipt of your waiver request for Summer Learning Camp Funds Carryover for High-Dosage, Low-Ratio Tutoring pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2). The request seeks approval to use remaining 2026 Summer Programming funds to provide high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring services in literacy and/or mathematics to additional students identified as at risk of performing below grade level, after ensuring all students required to be served under T.C.A. § 49-6-3115 have been served.

After review of the information submitted, and with the understanding that Marion County Schools will continue to prioritize all students required to receive tutoring services under T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, your request for a waiver of the limitation contained in T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2) is hereby granted for the 2026-27 school year.

If applicable and specifically requested in the waiver application, approval also extends to the waiver of the required number of weeks (12) for the fall semester as outlined in the assurances for the 2026 Summer Programming Extension Grant Application.

Please do not hesitate to contact the department if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lizzette Reynolds *CR*
Lizzette Reynolds
Commissioner

Summer Learning Camp Funds Carryover for High-Dosage, Low-Ratio Tutoring Waiver Request Application

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2), funding for after-school learning mini-camps, learning loss bridge camps, and summer learning camps must first be used for the purposes outlined in T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(1). Any remaining funds may be used by LEAs or public charter schools to provide tutoring required by T.C.A. § 49-6-3115. T.C.A. § 49-6-3115 requires tutoring services for students that were retained in grades K-3 and students required to be tutored as part of a promotion pathway in grades 4-5.

This specialized waiver application is to be used by local education agencies (LEAs) to request a waiver of the provision in T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2) limiting the use of the remaining funds from 2026 Summer Programming to students that were retained in grades K-3 and students required to be tutored as part of a promotion pathway in grades 4-5.

This specialized waiver request is designed to allow the remaining funds from 2026 Summer Programming to be spent on tutoring services for students to provide high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring services in literacy and/or math to additional students at-risk of performing below grade level upon the condition that the LEA has ensured that any students required to be served by T.C.A. § 49-6-3115 have been served first.

In addition, the LEA may request to waive the required number of weeks (12) for the fall semester as outlined in the assurances for the 2026 Summer Programming Extension Grant Application.

To apply for a waiver, email the completed form to Education.Waivers@tn.gov. Following review by the commissioner, the requestor will be notified in writing if the waiver request is approved or denied. Unless otherwise stated, all waivers granted by the commissioner shall be granted for one-year terms.

District Name

Marion County Schools

School Name, if applicable

N/A

School Address, if applicable

N/A



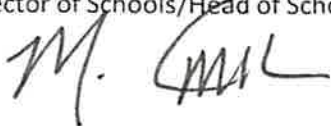
Director of Schools/Head of School Email Address

mgriffith@mctns.net

Director of Schools/Head of School Printed Name

Dr. Mark Griffith

Director of Schools/Head of School Signature & Date

 9.24.24

1. ☒ The LEA is requesting a waiver of the provision in T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2) limiting the use of the remaining funds from 2026 Summer Programming to students that were retained in grades K-3 and students required to be tutored as part of a promotion pathway in grades 4-5.

2. ☐ The LEA is requesting a waiver of the required number of weeks (12) for the fall semester as outlined in the assurances for the 2026 Summer Programming Extension Grant Application.

3. **Explanation of how the statutory requirement limits the LEA's ability to meet student needs:**

Provide an explanation of why the waiver is needed and how approval of the waiver would support improving academic outcomes for eligible students. Please include a description of how the LEA will prioritize students for high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring including data sources, grade levels, and content areas.

See attached document.

Explanation of how the statutory requirement limits the LEA's ability to meet student needs:

The statutory restriction under T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2) limits the use of remaining 2026 Summer Programming funds strictly to students retained in grades K–3 and students required to receive tutoring as part of a promotion pathway in grades 4–5. This requirement significantly restricts the LEA's ability to meet critical student needs because it prevents funds from being utilized for other severely at-risk students who fall outside these explicit categories but desperately require targeted intervention. Specifically, our LEA currently has **one 2nd-grade student** who is academically at risk and currently participating in high-dosage tutoring within a 3:1 ratio alongside two other second graders. Because this student does not fall under the strict statutory definition of a retained student or a grade 4–5 promotion pathway student, **without approval of this waiver, this student will not be able to be served using these funds.**

Approving this waiver is essential to remove this financial barrier and allow the LEA to deploy remaining 2026 Summer Programming funds where they are most urgently needed. Granting flexibility ensures this at-risk 2nd-grade student receives continuous, high-dosage tutoring. Securing these funds directly impacts academic outcomes by providing uninterrupted foundational literacy and math instruction, closing skill gaps early, and preventing future retention or promotion risks.

Student Prioritization Description

To maximize the impact of remaining funds, the LEA will prioritize students for high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring through a structured, data-driven system:

- **Grade Levels & Content Areas:**
 - **Primary Focus:** Grades K–3 Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, specifically targeting foundational early literacy skills for identified at-risk students.
 - **Secondary Focus:** Grades 4–5 Mathematics and ELA for students requiring targeted skill recovery outside standard promotion pathways.
- **Data Sources for Identification:**
 - **Universal Screeners & Diagnostic Tools:** Tennessee Universal Math and Reading Screeners (e.g., AIMSwebPlus, MVPA) administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year to identify students scoring in the bottom 25th percentile.
 - **Summative Assessment:** TCAP for grades 3-5
 - **Progress Monitoring Data:** Weekly/bi-weekly RTI² (Response to Instruction and Intervention) progress monitoring scores.
 - **Classroom Benchmarks & Assessments:** Formative unit assessments and teacher observation
- **Prioritization Tiering:**
 1. **Tier 1:** Retained K–3 students and Grade 4–5 promotion pathway students requiring mandatory tutoring support.
 2. **Tier 2: (Highest Priority):** At-risk K–3 students—such as our identified 2nd-grade student—who demonstrate significant academic need on universal screeners but would otherwise go unserved due to the strict statutory funding parameters of T.C.A. § 49-6-1503(c)(2).
 3. **Tier 3:** Additional students performing below grade-level benchmarks in ELA or Math who demonstrate a need for supplemental tier-2 high-dosage instruction.