



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

July 31, 2026

Dr. Bruce Borchers, Director of Schools
Oak Ridge Schools
304 New York Avenue
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Dear Director Borchers:

I am in receipt of your waiver request of the class size average found in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104 for all elementary and middle schools in Oak Ridge Schools.

The commissioner's waiver authority under Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-201(d) is limited by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104(a), which states that "neither the commissioner nor the state board of education shall grant waivers from the maximum class sizes established in this section."

With the understanding that none of the elementary and middle schools in Oak Ridge Schools will exceed the maximum number of students per class specified in the above referenced law, your request for a waiver of the class size average is hereby granted for the 2026-27 school year.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Lizzette
Reynolds_CLB

Digitally signed by
Lizzette Reynolds_CLB
Date: 2026.08.05
12:05:22 -05'00'

Lizzette Reynolds
Commissioner

General Waiver Request

Local education agencies (LEAs) and public charter schools should review the Local Education Agency and Public Charter School Waiver Guidance posted on the [department's website](#) before submitting this request. The guidance outlines what can and cannot be waived, as well as the information required for commonly requested waivers.

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.

If this is a waiver request for a public charter school, please attach documentation that confirms the public charter school first submitted this waiver to its LEA authorizer and the LEA authorized denied the request.

Oak Ridge Schools

Local Education Agency/Public Charter School

Glenwood, Linden, Woodland, Willow Brook, Jefferson & Robertsville Middle and Oak Ridge High School

School Name, if applicable

304 New York Avenue - Oak Ridge, TN 37830

School Address, if applicable

btborchers@ortn.edu

Director of Schools/Head of School Email Address

Dr. Bruce Borchers

Director of Schools/Head of School Printed Name

Bruce Borchers

 Digitally signed by Bruce Borchers
Date: 2026.07.31 07:35:20 -04'00'

Director of Schools/Head of School Signature & Date

1. Statute(s) or State Board of Education (SBE) rule(s) for which a waiver is being requested.
Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104
2. Expected duration of the condition necessitating this request. Please note that the department will not grant waivers beyond one year.
2026-2027 school year
3. Explanation of how the statute(s) or SBE rule(s) inhibits or hinders the LEA's/public charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission (attach additional pages if more space is needed).

Like many other cities in Tennessee, Oak Ridge has experienced significant growth over the past four years. This growth has led to a steady increase in student enrollment within the Oak Ridge Schools.

ORS Student Enrollment Committee, consisting of both school and city officials, continues to pay close attention to our current and future facility needs to address the anticipated student growth. The City Council is still in the process of developing an action plan to ensure we have the necessary facilities to adequately serve all students.

Given the continued trend of increased student enrollment, Oak Ridge Schools respectfully request a waiver allowing our elementary and middle school classrooms to adhere to the current average class size standard. This waiver is crucial to accommodate the growing number of students while we work on expanding our facilities.

Complete numbers 4-10 if requesting a waiver of the 180 instructional day requirement in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3004.

4. Dates of the day(s) requesting to be waived.
5. Reason for the request.
 - ☐ Natural disaster
 - ☐ Serious outbreak of illness affecting or endangering students or staff during a school year
6. Number of stockpile days scheduled for PD for the current school year.
7. Number of PD stockpile days that have been utilized at the time the waiver is requested.
8. Confirmation that all stockpile days have been exhausted.
 - ☐ **Yes**, all stockpile days **have** been exhausted.
 - ☐ **No**, all stockpile days **have not** been exhausted.
9. Number of instructional days that have already been waived by the commissioner during the current school year.
10. Explanation of the impact of the event necessitating this request (attach additional pages if more space is needed).

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