



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

August 14, 2024

Danny L. Weeks, Ed.D.
Robertson County Schools
800 M S Coutts Boulevard
Springfield, TN 37172

Re: Waiver for English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs

Dear Director Weeks:

I am in receipt of your waiver request of State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-19 as it relates to the use of an alternate English as a Second Language (ESL) service model. You have requested to use a co-teaching model for ESL programs for students in Robertson County Schools.

According to your request, this alternative model will allow schools flexibility with scheduling, provide EL students the opportunity to receive their services while remaining in content area class, and allow content-and ESL-experts to work together to meet the needs of these students.

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-201(d) grants the commissioner the authority to “waive any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the LEA’s ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission.” On the condition that the school district complies with the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-19, your waiver is hereby granted until the revised ESL State Board of Education Rule allowing for co-teaching goes into effect in September 2024.

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

Sincerely,

Lizzette Reynolds
Commissioner



Robertson County Schools

800 M. S. Courts Boulevard • Springfield, Tennessee 37172 • Phone (615) 384-5588 • Fax (615) 384-9749
Danny L. Weeks, Ed.D., Director of Schools

Commissioner Reynolds,

My name is Emily Hollingsworth, and I am the Supervisor of Federal Programs for Robertson County Schools. In this role, I oversee the district's ESL program. Robertson County Schools is requesting a waiver to implement co-teaching as an approved service-delivery model for the 2024-2025 school year. This waiver would cover the first two months of school (August and September) until the newly adopted ESL Rule takes effect. Co-teaching will be implemented in most of our schools and in all grade bands. While we still use pull-out to serve many of our multilingual learners, co-teaching will allow schools flexibility with scheduling, provide EL students the opportunity to receive their services while remaining in content area classes, and allow content- and ESL- experts to work together to meet the needs of these students. This service model will be monitored through walkthroughs by both school administrators and the district EL Coordinator, Angela Shepherd and through the ILP oversight process. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Hollingsworth
Supervisor of Federal Programs
Robertson County Schools



Tennessee Department of Education – Office of The Commissioner

710 James Robertson Parkway - Andrew Johnson Tower, 9th Floor - Nashville, TN 37243

Local Education Agency Waiver Request

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-1-201(d), upon application by the local education agency (LEA) for one or more of its schools, the commissioner of education may waive any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the LEA's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission. Please submit completed forms to Commissioner.Education@tn.gov. Following review by the commissioner, the LEA 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.

Waivers may **not** be granted by the commissioner for regulatory or statutory requirements related to:

- (A) Federal and state civil rights;
- (B) Federal, state and local health and safety;
- (C) Federal and state public records;
- (D) Immunizations;
- (E) Possession of weapons on school grounds;
- (F) Background checks and fingerprinting of personnel;
- (G) Federal and state special education services;
- (H) Student due process;
- (I) Parental rights;
- (J) Federal and state student assessment and accountability;
- (K) Open meetings;
- (L) Educators' due process rights;
- (M) Reductions in teachers' salaries;
- (N) Employee rights, salaries and benefits; and
- (O) Licensure of employees.

Local Education Agency:

Robertson County Schools

School Information (if applicable): Co-teaching will be utilized district-wide.

School Name:

Street:

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Please list the statute(s) and/or state board rule(s) for which waiver is being requested:

Robertson County Schools is requesting a waiver in order to use co-teaching as an ESL service delivery model.

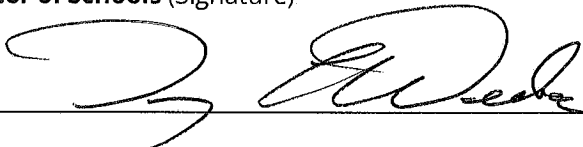
Explanation of how the statute(s) and/or state board rule(s) inhibits or hinders the local education agency's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission:

Co-teaching will become a state-approved model in mid-September. This waiver will cover the months of August and September until the new rule goes into effect. Allowing the district to implement this service delivery model at the beginning of schools will provide schools flexibility with scheduling, provide EL students the opportunity to receive their services while remaining in content area classes, and allow content- and ESL-experts to work together to meet the needs of our multi-lingual learners.

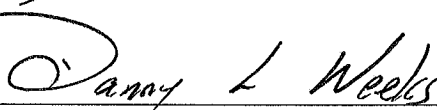
Expected duration of the condition necessitating this waiver request:

This waiver will be used for the first two months of school to cover co-teaching until the new ESL rule goes into effect in mid-September.

Director of Schools (Signature)



Print Name



Date

