



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 24, 2026

Kurt Dronebrger, Director of Schools
White County Schools
576 Hale Street
Sparta, TN 38583

Dear Director Dronebarger:

I am in receipt of your waiver request of State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-19 as it relates to service time for English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. You have requested to use an alternative schedule to provide ESL services at schools within White County Schools due to students who have significant cognitive and behavioral impairment, who are placed in self-contained environments, and who have been determined to be unable to participate in continuous instruction for the full 60 minutes.

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 comply with the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-19 by implementing the monitoring steps required under the Rule, as well as implementing the additional action steps to address the students who have significant cognitive and behavioral impairments, who are placed in a self-contained environments, and who have been determined to be unable to meaningfully participate in the full 60 minutes of continuous instruction outlined in your waiver request, your request is hereby granted for the remainder of the 2026-27 school year.

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

Sincerely,

Lizzette
Reynolds_CLB

Digitally signed by
Lizzette Reynolds_CLB
Date: 2026.08.26
11:19:27 -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.

White County Schools

Local Education Agency/Public Charter School

System-wide

School Name, if applicable

576 Hale St., Sparta, TN 38583

School Address, if applicable

director@whitecoschools.net

Director of Schools/Head of School Email Address

Kurt Dronebarger

Director of Schools/Head of School Printed Name

 8/14/24
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.
0520-01-1.9-.03 (7)

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 upon approval from TDOE

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).

This waiver is being submitted as a request to tailor service time and location for students who have significant cognitive/behavioral impairments, are placed in a self-contained (CDC) environment, and whose IEP team has determined that the student is not able to participate in continuous instruction for the full 60 minutes.

If approved, ESL services would be provided in the student's self-contained classroom for a duration of time determined by the student's learning team based on individual needs. The ESL teacher will continue to monitor the student's language goals quarterly and will adjust instruction based on the student's individual needs. Should the IEP team determine, at any time, that the student would benefit from the required 60 minutes of instructional time, full ESL services will resume.

Federal Programs Supervisor: Brittany King

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.
N/A
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.
N/A
7. Number of PD stockpile days that have been utilized at the time the waiver is requested.
N/A
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. N/A
10. Explanation of the impact of the event necessitating this request (attach additional pages if more space is needed).

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