
Charter Schools Rules 0520-14-01-.01, -.03, -.04, and -.05

The Background:

Chapters 275 and 456 of the Public Acts of 2025 amended several charter school laws, including funding disbursement requirements and shifting the development of various charter documents from the Tennessee Department of Education (Department) to the State Board. These legislative changes require updates to the State Board's Charter Schools Rules.

Additionally, State Board staff engaged the Department, charter school support organizations, and charter authorizer stakeholders to discuss opportunities for streamlining the processes outlined in State Board rules. Proposed changes to the Charter Schools Rules include the following:

Charter Schools Rule 0520-14-01-.01

- Changes as a result of the new legislation:
 - Moving development of the charter school application and scoring rubric from the Department to the State Board;
 - Requiring sponsors to submit a letter of intent to apply to the authorizer and the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission (Commission); and
 - Requiring sponsors to submit charter school applications directly to the authorizer only and requiring authorizer to report receipt of any completed applications to the Commission within 10 days.
- Additional proposed changes:
 - Removing the requirement for authorizers to conduct a completion check of the letter of intent due to the removal of application categories from the application materials;
 - Simplifying the completion check authorizers conduct on any charter applications received in consideration of application review timelines;
 - Clarifying the authorizer's right to set a time for receiving any requested application fee and paper copies on the due date established in law;
 - Removing the option for authorizers to establish additional priorities as part of the application process (since authorizers were prohibited from requiring applicants to answer such questions);
 - Streamlining the use of terms like "authorizer" vs. "local board of education" and "initial" vs. "amended" applications; and
 - A general reorganization to better align with process timelines required in law.

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- The changes proposed in this Rule mirror those that were approved as an Emergency Rule at the State Board's special called meeting on July 30, 2025.
- Changes as a result of Chapter 456 of the Public Acts of 2025 (PC 456) include:
 - Requiring the state share of funding a charter school student generated in the prior year through the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) formula to be disbursed directly to the public charter schools rather than to the authorizer or geographic local education agency (LEA) unless the public charter school is authorized by the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission (TPCSC) or the Achievement School District (ASD).

Charter Schools Rule 0520-14-01-.04

- Changes as a result of the new legislation:
 - Adding an enrollment preference for children of a public institution of higher education's employees or members of the institution's governing body; and
 - Clarifying an enrollment preference for students who reside in a county LEA.
- Additional proposed changes:
 - Minor reorganization and non-substantive revisions to ensure clarity.

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- Changes as a result of the new legislation:
 - Updating reporting requirements that will now be submitted to the State Board rather than the Department; and
 - Adding the requirement for authorizers and the State Board to post the annual authorizer report to their respective websites.
- Additional proposed changes:
 - Adding the requirement for authorizers to post the authorizer fee report to their website;
 - Updating the reporting requirement for authorizers to submit their projected authorizing budgets to the State Board rather than the Department;
 - Requiring the State Board to conduct a review of an authorizers' use of authorizer fee funds;
 - Streamlining the use of terms like "authorizer" vs. "local board of education"; and
 - Minor reorganization and non-substantive revisions to ensure clarity.

State Board staff will hold a rulemaking hearing between first and final reading for public comment on these Rules.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item aligns with the Master Plan's focus on Engagement and Accountability, which requires the State Board to annually amend rule or policy as necessitated by changes in the law.

The Recommendation:

State Board staff recommends acceptance of this item on first reading.