
Category IV Non-Public School Application: The Honor School

The Background:

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-50-801 and State Board Rule 0520-07-02-.05(4), church-related schools “operated by denominational, parochial, or other bona fide [religious] organizations” may apply directly to the State Board of Education (“State Board”) for approval if they are not accredited by or members of one of the accrediting or membership agencies set forth in T.C.A. § 49-50-801(a). Schools seeking approval directly from the State Board must complete and submit a completed application to the State Board’s Executive Director for a recommendation for approval or denial. The Tennessee Department of Education is charged with monitoring SBE-approved Category IV schools for continued compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including State Board rules.

The Honor School is a Category IV umbrella-school operated by the Grateful Life Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. The Honor School is already in operation and a current member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). State Board staff evaluated the school’s application using the Board’s Category VI Church-Related Schools Application Rubric and drafted its findings and recommendation, copies of which have been provided to Board members and posted on the State Board’s website for review.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board’s strategic focus on Engagement and Accountability outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring SBE meetings ensure transparency, accountability, and effective implementation of education policy.

The Recommendation:

Rule 0520-07-02-.05(4) only authorizes the Board to approve church-related schools *not accredited by or members of* the agencies enumerated in Rule. Therefore, because the Honor School has met each of the Board’s requirements for approval, State Board staff, including the Executive Director, recommend the Board approve the Honor School’s application on first and final reading, contingent upon SBE’s receipt of documentation of termination of the school’s membership with its current accreditor.