
Standards for School-Administered Child Care Program Rules 0520-01-26

The Background:

T.C.A. §§ 49-1011 through 1109 require the State Board of Education (SBE) to promulgate rules for all school-administered child care programs. School-administered child care programs are child care programs run by public or private schools that provide child care to children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old, as well as programs that provide before and after-school care for school-age children in grades K-12.

The Standards for School-Administered Child Care have had minor revisions in recent years, but the most recent full revision was in 2018. This item proposes a comprehensive update to the rules to better align with changes in statute and current best practices and to address questions from program directors and teachers.

Changes on first reading included, but were not limited to:

- Reclassifying the rules as a rules of the State Board rather than under rules of the Commissioner to align with T.C.A. § 49-1-302(i)(2)(A).
- Updating requirements for adult-to-child ratios and group sizes for specific populations.
- Updating requirements for physical activity.
- Updating requirements for staff training.
- Further revisions to streamline the rules and move reporting and recordkeeping recommendations to Tennessee Department of Education-created guidance documents.

The Department has gathered both internal and external stakeholder feedback on these revisions, including input from the Department's Child Care Advisory Council. SBE staff held a rulemaking hearing on April 24, 2026. Public comments were received after the hearing and were shared with board members for their review ahead of this meeting.

Between first and final reading, revisions were made to:

- Incorporate stakeholder feedback to clarify revisions made on first reading regarding school approval, employee licensure, and program curriculum;
- Clarify requirements for program approval and revocation;
- Clarify staff responsibilities with regard to child supervision and release procedures;
- Review the minimum age for staff employment to consider recent statutory changes, including changes introduced by Chapter 679 and Chapter 873 of the Public Acts of 2026;
- Address grammatical errors and ensure consistent formatting and style; and
- Ensure defined terms are consistently capitalized when used throughout the rules;

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Tennessee Department of Education prepare 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 supports the State Board's strategic focus on Teachers and Leaders outlined in the Master Plan to ensure all young children have access to high-quality environments, adults (e.g., teachers), and instruction.

The Recommendation:

The Tennessee Department of Education recommends approval of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.