



## Continuous Learning Plan (CLP) [Rule](#) and [Policy](#) FAQ

### **Q: Why is July 24, 2020 the deadline for submission of CLPs to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE)?**

*Outbreaks of COVID-19 are not predictable. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) or public charter schools may intend to start the school year with traditional in-person instruction and unexpectedly need to close one or more schools. School closures without a CLP in place would result in lost instructional days that the LEA or public charter school would have to make up from stockpile days and/or by altering their school calendars. Therefore, the rule requires all LEAs and public charter schools to submit a plan by July 24, 2020 so that they may implement their CLP in the event of sudden school closures.*

### **Q: When do LEAs and public charter schools have to implement their CLP?**

*It is completely up to the LEA or public charter school when and if they choose to operate under the CLP during a COVID-19 related disruption to traditional school operations in the 2020-21 school year. If the LEA or public charter school chooses not to implement the CLP during a COVID-19 related disruption and to instead utilize additional stockpile days or extend its school year in order to ensure it meets the 180-day requirement in law, the CLP emergency rule would not prevent that.*

### **Q: Why is access to 6.5 hours of instructional time required for students in grades 1-12?**

*T.C.A. §§ 49-6-3004 and [State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.02](#) require schools to provide a minimum of 6.5 hours of instructional time per day for students in grades 1-12 for 180 school days per school year.*

### **Q: Why weren't the number of instructional days or instructional hours reduced in this rule?**

*The law does not currently give the State Board any leeway to reduce the required 6.5 hours per day of instruction for grades 1-12 and four hours of instruction for Kindergarten. However, we have attempted in this rule to give flexibility to districts and charter schools by stating the CLP should address how students will be provided access to 6.5 hours (or four hours for Kindergarten) of instruction when operating under the CLP. This language recognizes that it will be challenging for districts and schools to accurately assess whether students engage in 6.5 hours of instruction each day, especially when students are remote. The rule states that access to instructional time can be achieved through synchronous instruction, asynchronous instruction, or a combination of the two, as defined in the rule.*

**Q: Why is access to four hours of instructional time required for students in Kindergarten?**

*T.C.A. § 49-6-201(b)(2) and State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.02 require a minimum of four hours of instructional time per school day for students in Kindergarten for 180 days per school year.*

**Q: What does access to 6.5 hours of instructional time for grades 1-12 and four hours of instructional time for Kindergarten look like?**

*What this looks like will vary for each LEA and public charter school based on their unique needs. The State Board recognizes that LEAs and public charter schools across the state will need to develop plans based on their unique needs and has provided flexibility in the rule for districts and charter schools with varying levels of connectivity and device access to still meet the requirements of the rule and the law. The rule defines instructional time as the amount of instruction provided through synchronous instruction, asynchronous instruction, or a combination of the two.*

*Synchronous instruction is defined as instruction provided by a Tennessee educator to a student or students at the same time but not necessarily in the same place who engage in instruction while it occurs. This may include, but is not limited to, in-person instruction or telephonic, Internet-based, or other appropriate methods of communication as determined by the TDOE and may include full-class or small-group instruction or one-on-one instruction between student and teacher. Examples of synchronous instruction are a class happening via platforms such as Webex or Zoom, over the telephone, or in person.*

*Asynchronous instruction is defined as instruction provided by a Tennessee educator to students who participate in instruction at a separate time from when the teacher delivered the instruction. This may include, but is not limited to, methods such as printed work materials, teacher-assigned individual or group projects, audio- or video-recorded lessons, online course modules, or other appropriate methods as determined by the TDOE.*

**Q: Can LEAs and public charter schools use flexible models to provide direct service hours to English learners when implementing their CLP?**

*Yes, the State Board amended its [English as a Second Language Program Policy 3.207](#) at its June 22, 2020 special called meeting to clarify that EL students may receive a minimum of five hours of ESL service per week from a teacher who holds an ESL endorsement rather than the minimum of one hour per day otherwise required by the policy as long as the LEA or public charter school is operating under an approved CLP.*

**Q: What if implementing our CLP would require waivers from other state requirements, such as state laws or State Board rules?**

*An LEA or public charter school may submit [waiver requests](#) to the Commissioner of Education that are needed to fully implement its CLP. The Commissioner will make recommendations for approval of LEA waiver requests to the State Board. The State Board makes the final decision regarding approval of any LEA waiver request.*

*The State Board amended [Emergency Rule 0520-01-03-.11](#) at its June 22, 2020 meeting to clarify that the Commissioner can accept waiver requests after the June 30, 2020 deadline if the request is for the 2020-21 school year.*

**Q: What does the approval process for CLPs look like?**

*The TDOE published guidance on how to submit CLPs for approval, including [templates](#) and an [FAQ document](#) on its [website](#). The TDOE also shared the timeline for submission, initial review, and approval.*

**Q: Will LEAs and public charter schools need to maintain CLPs after the 2020-21 school year?**

*The current rule and policy regarding CLPs is specific to the 2020-21 school year. However, the State Board plans to promulgate permanent rules requiring LEAs and public charter schools to maintain CLPs moving forward to ensure a plan is in place for future school closures due to reasons such as public health emergencies or natural disasters. The permanent CLP rule will undergo review by the State Board across two readings and include a public hearing to collect feedback on improvements to the process.*

**Q: What if some families choose to keep their students home due to COVID-19 related reasons, even when school buildings are open?**

*LEAs and public charter schools are required to address this scenario in their CLPs.*