
Bethel University's Petition for Declaratory Order and for Stay

The Background:

At the July 22, 2016 State Board of Education (State Board) meeting, the Tennessee Department of Education recommended that the State Board deny approval of Bethel University's (Bethel) educator preparation program (EPP) based on the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation review, which concluded that the EPP does not meet expectations on two of the six NCATE standards. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 4-5-223, which is in the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, parties may petition agencies for a declaratory order. Bethel has petitioned the State Board for an order ruling that: (1) The State Board does not have statutory authority to oversee approval of EPPs; (2) State Board Rules 0520-02-04-.01 and State Board Policy 5.504 and the Board's actions take under this rule and/or policy are null and void; (3) Tennessee board of Education policy 5.504 is null and void; and (4) the Board's action denying Bethel's approval violated their due process rights. Bethel also asks the Board to stay its decision.

Recommendation:

Due to pending litigation associated with this decision, there is no State Board recommendation for this item.