
Administrative Rules: State Special Schools, Rule 0520-04-03

The Background:

T.C.A. §§ 49-10-801 and 49-10-901 provide the State Board of Education the authority to set policies and operating guidelines for the state special schools.

This final read item proposes to update and clarify the standards of eligibility for admission to the Tennessee School for the Blind (TSB), Tennessee School for the Deaf (TSD), and West Tennessee School for the Deaf (WTSD). In an effort to ensure all students are learning in school environments that provide the most appropriate placement within the least restrictive environment, the following changes were made to the rule:

- Clarifies students may be eligible for admission to TSB, TSD, and WTSD beginning at age three (3).
- Adds additional criteria by which students may be eligible for admission to TSB, TSD, and WTSD.
- Clarifies students with multiple disabilities (in addition to visual and/or hearing impairment) are eligible for admission to TSB, TSD, and WTSD.
- Clarifies that a student must be referred by his or her IEP team, which includes a representative from one of the state special schools.

Since first reading, an example was added to the visual impairments definition to provide further clarity.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department 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.

The Recommendation:

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