



September 15, 2021

Dear Director Treece,

Thank you for your waiver submission on September 15, 2021.

The commissioner of education may consider waivers related to of the provisions of Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. Chapters 0520-01-03 and 0520-01-13 related to remote instruction to the extent necessary to allow students affected at the classroom or school level by COVID-19 isolation or quarantine to participate in remote instruction. As stated, your district still has the authority to quarantine students and staff on an individual case-by-case basis (not in the aggregate). Waivers will only be considered when a LEA can document and demonstrate a significant impact of COVID-19 quarantine or isolation on school operations, impacting students, teachers, and/or staff. Please note, if a waiver request is granted to a school, all extracurricular activities for that school must also be cancelled for the duration of the waiver period.

The waiver submitted by Morgan County Schools for Oakdale is **approved**.

The rationale for this approval is:

- Given 44% of teachers and staff are quarantined or isolated, without additional district staff or substitutes available, it is reasonable that in-person operations would be challenged.
- I want to also appreciate and validate the strategies that you've used to re-allocate staff to support your schools and that you've prioritized the elementary grades.

If not already in place, the department also continues to encourage all districts to implement as many mitigation strategies as possible to contain the spread of COVID-19, limit quarantines, and remain in-person, such as utilizing:

- The same or enhanced mitigation strategies used last school year such as temperature checks, physical distancing, frequent handwashing, etc.
- Seating charts in all settings, including classrooms, cafeteria/meals, bus routes, etc.
- Proactively stocking non-perishable items for breakfasts/lunches to account for meal staff absences
- Cohorting students to limit close contacts
- The consideration of masking

I continue to be incredibly grateful for the work of your district, educators, students and families as we collectively address and respond to COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Penny Schwinn, PhD, MAT
Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education

Local Education Agency Waiver Request Application: COVID-19 Relief

Upon application by the local education agency (LEA) for one (1) or more of its classrooms or schools, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-209 (d), the commissioner of education will consider waivers of the provisions of Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. Chapters 0520-01-03 and 0520-01-13 related to remote instruction to the extent necessary to allow students affected at the classroom or school level by COVID-19 isolation or quarantine to participate in remote instruction. This waiver process is not required for individual students on quarantine.

Waivers will only be considered when a LEA can document and demonstrate a significant impact of COVID-19 quarantine or isolation on school operations, impacting students, teachers, and/or staff. Please note, if a waiver request is granted to a school, all extracurricular activities for that school must also be cancelled.

Please submit completed applications to Commissioner.Schwinn@tn.gov. Following review by the commissioner or designee, the local education agency will be notified in writing if the waiver request application is approved or denied. If approved, the waiver will only be valid for seven (7) calendar days. If conditions warranting a waiver persist, then the LEA may submit additional waivers.

Morgan County Schools

Local Education Agency

136 Flat Fork Rd. Wartburg 37887

Street City Zip

David Treese *9-15-21*

Director of Schools (Signature) Date

1. Number of **classrooms** for which you are requesting a waiver: 9 high school classrooms (entire 9-12)

Grade of Classroom	Name of School	In Quarantine or Isolation					
		# of Teachers	% of Teachers	# of Staff	% of Staff	# of Students	% of Students
9-12	Oakdale	4	44%	4	44%	30	19%

Please explain why this waiver is necessary and in-person instruction is not feasible at this time:

No additional substitutes are available to cover the 44% of high school teachers in quarantine. There are no high school assistants to maintain classrooms. Oakdale is a PK-12 school and any current staff resources are being utilized to make sure in-person learning in PK-8 is secure.

2. Number of **schools** for which you are requesting a waiver: _____

Name of School	In Quarantine or Isolation

	# of Teachers	% of Teachers	# of Staff	% of Staff	# of Students	% of Students

Please explain why this waiver is necessary and in-person instruction is not feasible at this time: