
Course Access Program, Rule 0520-01-14

The Background:

The Course Access Program, passed into state law in 2016, is a school choice program that gives students across the state the same access to certain “course access courses” that may not otherwise be available at their schools. During the 2018 legislative session, the original legislation was significantly updated. Public Chapter 784 of the Public Acts of 2018 provides the State Board the authority to promulgate rules to implement the program. This proposed rule outlines the eligibility requirements for students, the provider approval process, the course approval process, the allocation and flow of funds, monitoring and reporting requirements, and the roles of the State Board, the Department of Education, and local education agencies (LEAs).

Changes have been made since first reading to more clearly state teacher qualification and evaluation requirements for course access providers and to incorporate feedback from the Attorney General’s office and district stakeholders.

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 beyond the requirement in law that the Home LEA transfers funding to the Host LEA for each participating student.

The Recommendation:

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