
Category II and III Private School Accrediting Agencies Policy 3.500

The Background:

T.C.A. § 49-6-3001 requires every child residing in Tennessee between the ages of six and seventeen to attend a public or non-public school. Non-public schools are defined in law as including private schools, church-related schools, and independent home schools. T.C.A § 49-1-302(i) provides that the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, shall “enforce standards for... programs operated by private schools as defined by § 49-6-3001(c)(3).” State Board of Education Rule 0520-07-02 currently establishes the different types of non-public schools in Tennessee, the process for approval of non-public schools and their accrediting/membership agencies, as well as requirements that schools and accrediting agencies must comply with.

Revisions to Rule Chapter 0520-07-02 were approved on final reading at the October 28, 2022 meeting. Revisions to Chapter 0520-07-02 require that the list of Category III accrediting agencies be moved out of rule and into this newly created policy 3.500, as the names of these agencies change often and are best suited to be included in policy, rather than rule. Additionally, it is proposed that this policy also list all Category II accrediting agencies approved by the State Board, as the list is not contained anywhere in policy currently.

The Recommendation:

The State Board staff recommends approval of this item on first reading.