
Charter Schools Rules 0520-14-01-.01 and -.03 through -.05

The Background:

Tennessee State Board of Education (State Board) Charter Schools Rule 0520-14-01 outlines various charter school and charter authorizer requirements, including the approval of a charter school, allocation of state and local funds, and enrollment. Public Chapter 1066 (PC 1066) of the Public Acts of 2024 created the opportunity charter school which serves students in grades six through twelve (6-12) for which at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the students enrolled are at-risk students and authorizes the State Board, in consultation with the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission (Charter Commission), to promulgate rules.

To align with PC 1066, this item proposes the following revisions to the Rule:

- Removing outdated BEP funding language and specifying funding requirements for the first year for a student who transfers to an opportunity charter school located in an LEA other than the LEA in which the student resides;
- Defining an opportunity charter school and its flexibilities required in law, including the option to operate a residential model and to enroll at-risk students;
- Including the definition of an “at-risk student” and the enrollment preferences for an opportunity charter school as required in law;
- The types of documentation that can be collected by the charter school to verify a student meets the at-risk enrollment criteria; and
- Requirements for the authorizer to conduct an evaluation of an opportunity charter school’s at-risk student enrollment and next steps should an opportunity charter school fail to meet the seventy-five percent (75%) at-risk student enrollment requirement for three (3) consecutive years, as outlined in law.

Additionally, this item proposes updates to the authorizer’s annual reporting requirements in section -.05 of the Rule to align with Public Chapter 923 (PC 923) of the Public Acts of 2024, which updates vacant and underutilized property reporting requirements of an LEA that authorizes one (1) or more charter schools.

To align with PC 923, revisions to this section includes:

- A timeline for an LEA to report and publicly post its vacant or underutilized property; and
- Definitions for what constitutes a vacant or underutilized property which the LEA is required to include in its annual report.

State Board staff consulted the Charter Commission, the Department of Education, the Department of Children's Services, the Tennessee Charter School Center, and charter school authorizers during the drafting of this Rule. The Department of Education will draft a guidance document to further clarify the requirements of this Rule. Additionally, the State Board will hold a rulemaking hearing between first and final reading to further engage and expand stakeholder outreach on this Rule.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item aligns with the State Board's focus on Engagement and Accountability as it updates the Charter Schools Rule in response to recent legislative changes and sets forth annual reporting requirements for the purposes of accountability.

The Recommendation:

State Board staff recommends acceptance of this item on first reading.