



BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NINTH FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0375

LIZZETTE REYNOLDS
COMMISSIONER

Via Electronic Mail

January 25, 2024

Tim Haney, Director of Schools
Trenton Special School District
201 West Tenth Street
Trenton, TN 38382

Re: Waiver for Career and Technical Education Classes

Dear Director Haney:

I am in receipt of your January 17, 2024 letter requesting a waiver of the class size average for Career and Technical Education classes found in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104 for the Trenton Special School District for the 2023-24 school year.

The commissioner's waiver authority under Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-201(d) is limited by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104(a), which states that "neither the commissioner nor the state board of education shall grant waivers from the maximum class sizes established in this section."

With the understanding that none of the Career and Technical Education classes in the Trenton Special School District will exceed 25, the maximum number of students per class specified in the above referenced law, your request for a waiver of the class size average is granted for the remainder of the 2023-24 school year.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Lizzette Reynolds
Commissioner



Trenton Special School District

201 West Tenth Street
Trenton, Tennessee 38382

Phone 731-855-1191
Fax 731-855-1414

www.trentonssd.org

Tim Haney
Director of Schools

January 17, 2024

Re: Waiver for CTE class size requirements

Dear Commissioner Reynolds,

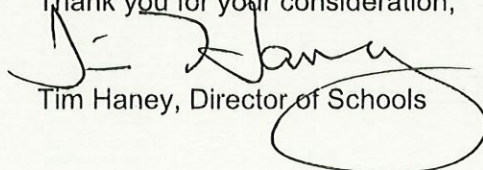
Trenton is respectfully requesting an exemption to the Tennessee Code Annotated statute, 49-1-104, which limit CTE class size to 25 students/class. This request applies only to the STEM 1 class, not the entirety of our CTE offerings. Also, I apologize for the lateness of this request (we have worked to solve this in other ways, but are now requesting this help).

We have three issues unique to us this year: an uptick in transfers "in", an increase in student requests for CTE courses, and, as most other places are experiencing, a struggle to find qualified CTE teachers to fill our empty positions. Countless hours have been spent trying to decrease our increased CTE class sizes, but our proposed solutions ended with students not being able to finish as concentrators/completers in CTE courses, students that are unable to take their requested program of study, and teachers who would be teaching multiple out of area subjects.

We have worked to reduce the average number of students in each CTE course to approximately 15 students/class, but an influx of 9th grade students has increased our STEM 1 courses to exceed the 25 student per 1 certified instructor limit. However, we have taken steps to reduce the number of students per teacher by hiring additional qualified teacher assistants. These newly hired teacher assistants are placed in the classes that exceed the 25 student size limit in order to provide a lower student to teacher ratio.

In order to work toward our mission to graduate college and career ready students, eliminating the 25 class size limit will provide the opportunity for these students to participate in the CTE elective focus of their choice. Therefore, to better prepare our students for their post-secondary lives, we respectfully request the exemption to TCA 49-1-104 to be granted for the 2023-2024 school year.

Thank you for your consideration,


Tim Haney, Director of Schools

Shane Jacobs, CTE Director