
Bethel University's Petition to Stay

The Background:

At the July 22, 2016 State Board of Education (State Board) meeting, the Tennessee Department of Education recommended that the State Board deny approval of Bethel University's (Bethel) educator preparation program (EPP) based on the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation review, which concluded that the EPP does not meet expectations on two of the six NCATE standards. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 4-5-316, which is in the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, parties may petition agencies to stay their decisions. On August 3, 2016, Bethel petitioned the State Board to stay its July 22 decision denying approval of Bethel's EPP and allow Bethel's educator preparation program to continue to operate with a conditional approval status until the fall of 2017. In support of its petition to stay, Bethel relies on its pleadings filed in the chancery court and alleges, generally, that the decision to deny approval was improper and as a result, Bethel, its students, faculty, staff, and the local education agencies with which it collaborates have and will suffer irreparable harm. Thus, Bethel is requesting that the Board stay its July decision and allow Bethel to continue under an approval with stipulations status until the fall of 2017.

Recommendation:

Due to pending litigation associated with this decision, there is no State Board recommendation for this item.