

HOUSE BILL 797

By Campfield

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, relative to participation in athletics by home school students.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 4, is amended by adding the following language as new, appropriately designated sections:

§ 49-6-410. Interscholastic extracurricular student activities are an important complement to an academic curriculum. Participation in a comprehensive extracurricular and academic program contributes to the development of social and intellectual skills necessary to become a well-rounded adult. As used in this part, the term "extracurricular" means any school-authorized or education-related athletic activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day.

§ 49-6-411.

(a) To be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities, a home school student shall be enrolled in a home school study program in compliance with Section 49-6-3050(b)(1), be registered with the local school superintendent by September 1 of the current school year, and maintain satisfactory conduct. A student shall be ineligible if convicted of a felony or an act which would have been a felony if committed by an adult.

(b) An individual home education student is eligible to participate at the public school to which the student would be assigned or authorized to attend according to district school board attendance area, provided:

(1) During the period of participation at a school, the home education student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects taken in the home education program by a method of evaluation agreed upon by the parent and the school principal, which may include (a) Review of the student's work by a certified teacher chosen by the parent; (b) Grades earned through correspondence; (c) Grades earned in courses taken at a community college, university, or trade school; and (d) Standardized test scores above the 35th percentile.

(2) The home education student shall meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which such home education student participates.

(3) The home education student shall meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities.

(4) The student shall register with the school his or her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which he or she wishes to participate. A home education student shall be able to participate in curricular activities if that is a requirement for the extracurricular activity.

(c) A student who transfers from a home education program to a public school before or during the first grading period of the school year is academically eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities during the first grading period provided the student has a successful evaluation from the previous school year, pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(d) Any public school or private school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities is ineligible to participate in such activities as a home education student until the student has successfully completed one (1) grading period.

(e) Public schools are prohibited from membership in any organization or entity which regulates or governs interscholastic extracurricular activities and discriminates against eligible students in public, private, or home education.

(f) Any insurance provided by LEA's for participants in extracurricular activities shall cover the participating home education student. If there is an additional premium for such coverage, the participating home education student shall pay the premium.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009, the public welfare requiring it.