

SENATE BILL 1220

By Niceley

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 16, Part 2, relative to participation in interscholastic athletics by virtual school students.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-16-203, is amended by adding the following as a new subdivision:

() "Virtual school student" means a student enrolled in a virtual school operating pursuant to this part.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 16, Part 2, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

49-16-217.

(a) If any of the public schools established under the jurisdiction of an LEA in which a virtual school student resides are members of an organization or an association that regulates interscholastic athletic competition, and if the organization or association establishes or maintains eligibility requirements for virtual school students who desire to participate in interscholastic athletics at a member school, then the LEA shall permit participation in interscholastic athletics at those schools by virtual school students who satisfy the eligibility requirements established by the organization or association regulating interscholastic athletics.

(b) This section does not guarantee that a virtual school student trying out for an interscholastic athletics team will make the team or supplant the authority of coaches or other school officials to decide who makes the team. This section only guarantees that the virtual school student shall not be prohibited from trying out for an interscholastic

athletics team, if the student is eligible under the rules of the organization or association, solely by reason of the student's status as a virtual school student.

(c) This section shall not be construed to limit or supplant the authority of the organization or association to determine eligibility and to establish, modify, and enforce its rules and eligibility requirements, including those applicable to virtual school students.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect July 1, 2021, the public welfare requiring it.