



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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TIMOTHY K. WEBB, Ed.D.
ACTING COMMISSIONER

June 10, 2008

VIA UNITED STATES MAIL

Jordan Riak, Executive Director
Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education
P.O. Box 1033
Alamo, CA 94507-7033


Dear Mr. Riak:

I am in receipt of your May 27, 2007 letter and appreciate your organization sharing its concerns about the practice of corporal punishment in Tennessee schools. The 1979 Tennessee General Assembly authorized corporal punishment in Tennessee pursuant Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4103 which provides "*(A)ny teacher or school principal may use corporal punishment in a reasonable manner against any pupil for good cause in order to maintain discipline and order within the public schools.*" Additionally, Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4104 provides "*(E)ach local board of education shall adopt such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to implement and control any form of corporal punishment in the schools in its district.*"

As you can see from the above referenced statutes, the use of corporal punishment in individual school districts is a matter of local school board policy. Any effort to ban corporal punishment in Tennessee public schools statewide could only be accomplished through legislative action.

If you have further questions regarding the law in Tennessee, please feel free to contact the Department's Office of General Counsel at (615)741-2921.

Sincerely,


Timothy K. Webb, Ed. D.

cc: Christy Ballard, General Counsel

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