

TICUA Policy Update
April 27, 2006

Lottery Bills...Again.

The bills impacting the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship programs are still in committee. Neither the House nor the Senate Education Committee's were able to move the bills out this week. Both Chairs hope to take action this next week.

Nursing Program Challenge

Brentwood based Community Health System recently purchased Southside Regional Medical Center (SRMC) in Petersburg, VA which has a nursing diploma program as a part of the hospital. The diploma program is currently offering on-campus courses in Virginia and online courses in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

SRMC recently applied for approval from the Tennessee Board of Nursing to offer on-line diploma courses but were denied. The Board is citing concerns over the program's substandard NCLEX passage rate, potential depletion of clinical sites, and an unwillingness to approve diploma programs which have been phased out of Tennessee. SRMC has engaged legal counsel to appeal the ruling.

In the meantime, SRMC has pushed for legislation that would side-step the Tennessee Board of Nursing and allows them to operate as a "pilot program" over the next two years without Board approval. TICUA is firmly opposed to usurping the Board's authority by way of legislation and is calling on the General Assembly to allow the appeals process to take its course.