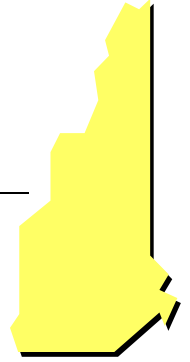


# NEW HAMPSHIRE

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All private schools must seek approval from the state. The state maintains two levels of approval: approval for attendance purposes and approval for both program and attendance. A private school approved for attendance may operate for three years before its next review. A school approved for attendance and program may operate for five years before its next review.

## ACCREDITATION, LICENSING & APPROVAL

### **Applies to all private schools**

- All private schools in New Hampshire must get approval from the state. Schools seeking approval must provide a letter of intent to establish a private school to the state Department of Education no fewer than 90 days before to the proposed date of opening. The letter must detail the specific education purposes and objectives to be served; a statement of the general principles, ideas or beliefs about education that influenced the applicant in the development of the school program; the school's philosophic or religious traditions; the school's educational theory or theorist; the scope of the program's responsibility for education of youths; the relationship between the school and the community; the procedure for evaluation and the development of the school program; a copy of the school's curriculum, which may consist of a list of courses and their descriptions; a brief description of the school's supporting services; a brief statement indicating how the school complies with each of the statutory requirements of private schools; a brief biographical sketch of each staff member listing education, credentials and professional experience; a brief description of the administrative organization of the school; provisions for safety and security; a brief statement indicating the school's policy concerning the availability of individual student transcripts; a description of the procedure for development of the school's budget and operating statement indicating whether the school provides a financial statement of its operations; assurance that persons responsible for the handling of school funds shall be bonded in accordance with the school's governing board policy, if any; indication of whether the school is incorporated as a nonprofit institution and whether it has federal tax exempt status; educational level(s) to be included in the school's enrollment such as elementary, middle/junior high or high school or, if the school is to be ungraded, the approximate age range of the students to be enrolled; and school contact information.
- Schools seeking approval for both attendance and program must be approved by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Association of Christian Schools International, the American Association of Christian Schools or another recognized agency recommended by the Nonpublic School Advisory Council of New Hampshire. Schools may seek approval for both attendance and program directly from the state Department of Education by submitting the following written materials: a complete description of the educational program that supports the school's statement of purposes and objectives and the educational program; the basis for the program in philosophic or religious tradition or as derived from educational theory or theorist(s); academic competencies and personal characteristics the program is designed to develop; the characteristics of the student body to be served by the program; a description of all courses, activities and offerings included in the program; descriptions of all support services (library, media, advising, meals, etc) included in the program; a description of how the elements of the program encourage and promote the student attitudes, ideals and beliefs identified in the school's statement of purposes and objectives; a description of the criteria for student selection and admission; a description of the procedures used in documenting and evaluating student progress, including the methods and policies for

- reporting that progress to students and parents; a description of the school's requirements for student promotion to the next educational level and, where applicable, graduation from secondary school; a description of the school's policy on student records; teaching assignments, including class sizes and school assignments other than teaching responsibilities; a description of the procedures used to evaluate staff performance, including opportunities provided for staff orientation and professional development; a description of the school's physical facilities and any off-campus facilities used for the program; a copy of the school's operating budget and operating statement, which must clearly demonstrate the availability of resources to support the program; and a description of how the operating budget is developed and approved.
- Upon receiving the required materials from schools seeking program approval, the state Department of Education must schedule a visit to the school by a three-member team for a tour of the school, interviews with school personnel and verification of data.

## TRANSPARENCY & REPORTING

### **Applies to all private schools**

- Every fall, private schools must submit average daily membership in attendance, fall enrollment and a teacher staff census.
- All private schools must be furnished with copies of the school register and must make an annual report of membership to the department of education.
- All private schools must furnish student records, upon request and without charge, to any elementary or secondary educational institution authorized by a parent, student or former student.
- All private must furnish, upon request, a complete school record for students transferring into a new school system. Such record must include records relating to any incidents involving suspension or expulsion, delinquent or criminal acts or any incident reports in which the student was charged with theft, destruction or violence in a safe-school zone.
- If a private school closes, it must maintain student records permanently and inform the Department of Education where these records will be maintained or else deposit the records with the department.
- A parent of a student attending an approved private school with a potential grievance against the school must request a meeting with the governing body of the school to resolve the issue. The state has a detailed process for handling complaints against schools, reprimanding schools and revoking approval status of schools in some instances.

## CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

### **Applies to all private schools**

- Private schools must display a U.S. flag, not less than five feet in length, according to the same display rules required in public schools.
- Only English is to be used in instruction for reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, physiology, history, civil government, music and drawing, as well as for purposes of general administration. Bilingual educational programs are permitted with the approval of the state Board of Education and the local school district.
- Private schools must provide regular courses of instruction in the history, government and constitutions of the United States and New Hampshire, including the organization and operation of New Hampshire municipal, county and state governments and of the federal government. This instruction must begin by the opening of the eighth grade and continue in high school as an identifiable component of an annual course in the history and government of the United States and New Hampshire.
- A school year with a length other than 180 days must be approved by the commissioner of education for good cause.

- All private schools are eligible to participate in state-funded child benefit services, dual-enrollment programs, driver-education reimbursement, child-nutrition programs, federal education programs and vocational rehabilitation.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### Applies to all private schools

- All private schools must comply with state fire safety requirements regarding the number of emergency exits in school buildings.
- All private schools must comply with applicable state, local and federal fire and health requirements and must provide documentation from federal, state and/or local officials for such compliance.
- Any private school employee who has witnessed or who has information from the victim of theft, destruction or violence in a safe-school zone must immediately report the act in writing to a supervisor. A supervisor receiving such a report must immediately forward it to the school principal, who must immediately inform the local law enforcement authority by telephone or otherwise, and follow up with a written report within 48 hours.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Any child age 16 to 18 who wishes to terminate education prior to graduating from high school may do so only after a conference with the school principal or the principal's designee. The principal must request a conference with the parent, guardian or other custodian. Written approval of withdrawal must be received from the student's parent. The written approval must be dated and the signature witnessed by the principal or the principal's designee.
- Students attending approved private schools, up to and including the 12th grade, are entitled to the same transportation privileges within any town or district as provided for students in public schools.



This list was compiled by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice based on publicly available laws and regulations. In each state we sought the assistance of the state's Department of Education in ensuring the accuracy of our information. However, given the enormous volume of relevant laws and regulations, some errors or omissions may still occur. The Friedman Foundation welcomes suggestions for corrections or additions to this list. For more information on the regulation of private schools, see "Fifty Educational Markets: State Laws and Regulations Governing Private Schools" by Friedman Foundation Senior Fellow Chris Hammons.