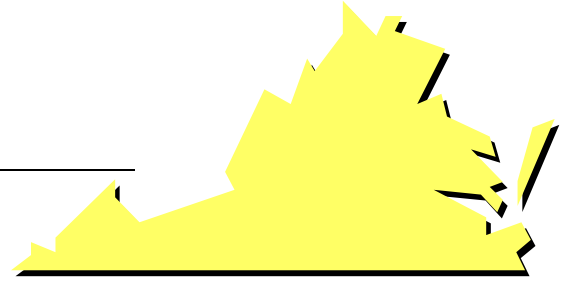


# VIRGINIA

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## ACCREDITATION, LICENSING & APPROVAL

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

- Private schools need not be accredited. However, on a voluntary basis, the state Board of Education recognizes accreditation conducted by accrediting bodies that are approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education. When students transfer from private school to public school, state law only guarantees that private school course credits will be recognized if they were completed at a state-recognized accredited school.

## TRANSPARENCY & REPORTING

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

- Private schools must submit and maintain a guaranty instrument payable to the state and conditioned to protect the contractual rights of students and other contracting parties. The amount of the bond is established by Board of Education regulations; the minimum bond for any school is \$1,000.
- Private school teachers must keep an accurate daily record of attendance of all students. These records must be made available at any time to state officers, who may inspect or copy them.
- Private schools must keep a record of each student's immunizations as part of the mandatory permanent student record. Such record must be open to inspection by state and local health officials and must be transferred by the school whenever it transfers a student's permanent academic or scholastic records.
- Within 30 calendar days after the beginning of each school year or entrance of a student, private schools must file a report with the local health department stating the number of students admitted to school with documentary proof of immunization, the number of students admitted with a medical or religious exemption and the number of students conditionally admitted, including those who are homeless.

## CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

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

- Private schools must operate for the same number of days and hours per day as public schools. The standard school year must consist of 180 school days, averaging 5.5 hours per day (not including meals and recess), or 3 hours for kindergarten.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

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

- Students enrolling in private schools must submit documentary proof of immunization, unless the student is exempted from immunization for health or religious reasons.
- Upon the identification of an outbreak, potential epidemic or epidemic of a vaccine-preventable disease in a private school, state health officials may require the exclusion of all students who are not immunized.
- Private schools that accept state subsidies for Internet access must select a technology that filters or blocks child pornography and obscenity from all computers with Internet access.

- Students and teachers must wear industrial-quality eye-protective devices while participating in any activity that poses an eye hazard. Private schools must furnish the eye-protective devices free of charge or at cost; however, such devices also may be furnished by parents or guardians of such students. Eye-protective devices must be furnished to all visitors.
- Private schools must post a notice that any teacher who has reason to suspect a child is abused or neglected, including any child who may be abandoned, is required to report that to local or state social services agencies or the person in charge of the relevant school or a designee. The notice must include the state Department of Social Services' toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.
- Private school bus drivers must present the same documents and meet the same qualifications required of public school bus drivers, including physical examination forms.
- Private school buses operating on a highway with two or more roadways that are separated by a physical barrier or unpaved area or that have five or more lanes where the center lane is a flush median marked for use by turning traffic only must be routed so that no student is picked up or discharged at any point that will require a student to cross the highway to reach the bus or to return to his or her residence.
- Private schools may be inspected by the local fire marshal. In areas of the state where there is no fire marshal, the state conducts an annual fire inspection.

**Applies only to accredited private schools**

- Job applicants at state-recognized accredited private schools must submit to fingerprinting and provide personal descriptive information to be forwarded with the applicant's fingerprints through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of obtaining criminal history information.
- Each state-recognized accredited private school must have a written crisis management plan.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- Local school districts may enter into agreements with private schools to provide transportation, but are not required to do so.



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.