

MINNESOTA



Private schools must either gain accreditation from a regional accrediting agency or comply with state regulations governing non-accredited schools. Private schools are monitored by the state Department of Education and the Council on Nonpublic Education. The council's 15 members represent geographical areas of the state and various types of private schools, and must be knowledgeable about private education.

ACCREDITATION, LICENSING & APPROVAL

Applies to all private schools

- Private schools must submit the name, address and birth date of each enrolled student. Unaccredited private schools also must provide the name and credentials of each instructor, an annual instructional calendar and documentation that the required curriculum is being taught in the school, including class schedules, copies of instructional materials and descriptions of teaching methods.

Applies only to accredited private schools

- An accredited private school (accredited through a regional accreditation agency) need provide only the names, addresses and birth dates of enrolled students.

TRANSPARENCY & REPORTING

Applies to all private schools

- A parent or guardian of a private school student may file a complaint about services provided by the school with the Council on Nonpublic Education. The council reviews the complaints and makes recommendations for resolution to the state commissioner of education.
- The local superintendent of education may make an annual visit to each unaccredited private school in the district to monitor compliance with state regulations. If the superintendent determines the school is not in compliance, he or she may make additional visits during the year.
- All schools found to be out of compliance with state regulations have 15 days to correct the violation after receiving written notification. If the violations are not corrected, the superintendent must request fact-finding and mediation services from the commissioner.
- If the alleged violations are not resolved through fact-finding and mediation, the superintendent must notify parents and the county attorney of the alleged violations. The county attorney may prosecute for violation of state law.
- A person seeking to teach in a private school must meet one of the following conditions: 1) hold a valid state teaching license in the field and for the grade taught; 2) be directly supervised by someone holding a teaching license, 3) successfully complete a teaching competency exam, 4) provide instruction in an accredited school or 5) hold a bachelor's degree.
- Schools must maintain immunization records for all students. When a student transfers out of a private school, the private school has 30 days to transfer the student's immunization records.
- Within 60 days after the start of the school year, private schools must file with the commissioner of health a report of all students enrolled in the school who have not been immunized or received exemptions.

Applies only to accredited private schools

- Upon mutual agreement, the local superintendent of education can arrange a visit to an accredited private school in the district to monitor compliance with state regulations. If the

superintendent determines the school is not in compliance, the superintendent may make additional visits during the year.

- Teachers in accredited private schools must meet the standards of the accrediting agency.

CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

Applies to all private schools

- Instruction must be provided in areas that correspond to the curriculum of the public schools, including reading, writing, literature, fine arts, math, science, social studies, health and physical education.
- Instruction, textbooks and materials must be in English.
- Each year the performance of every child who is not enrolled in a public school or an accredited private school must be assessed using a nationally norm-referenced standardized achievement examination. The local superintendent and the person in charge of the child's instruction must agree about the specific examination to be used and the administration and location of the examination.
- School districts may provide private school students of limited English proficiency opportunity to participate in programs designed for students who attend public schools.
- Private schools may contract with local school districts to provide language and cultural education programs to American Indian children.

Applies only to accredited private schools

- Accredited private schools are exempt from the requirement to assess students using a national standardized test.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Applies to all private schools

- Regulations related to immunization are extensive. No person may enroll in any private school without documentation of immunization. A student may be exempted from this requirement for medical or religious reasons. Private schools may allow new students up to 30 days to submit documentation of immunization.
- Private schools must develop and implement an individualized written health plan for students requiring nonsyringe injectors of epinephrine.
- Private schools must have at least nine fire drills each school year and must keep all doors and exits unlocked from the inside of the building during school hours.
- Private schools must instruct and train students and others to quickly and expeditiously evacuate in case of fire or other emergency, by means of drills or rapid dismissals, at least once each month. Records of such drills must be posted so that they are available for review by the state fire marshal at all times, and must include the drill date and the time required to evacuate the building.
- Private schools must comply with the Uniform Fire Code.
- The principal or chief administrative officer of a private school may develop a student fingerprinting program. Such a program must be developed in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies, may serve only the purpose of assisting in the location and identification of missing children and must be operated according to state law.
- Every private school that participates in a school district chemical-abuse program must establish a chemical-abuse preassessment team. The preassessment team is responsible for addressing reports of chemical-abuse problems and making recommendations for appropriate responses.
- A teacher in a private school who is participating in a school district chemical-use program and who knows or has reason to believe that a student is using, possessing or transferring alcohol or a controlled substance while on the school premises or at a

school-related activity must immediately notify the school's chemical-abuse preassessment team.

- Private schools may participate in sex education and AIDS prevention programs offered by the local school district and hosted at a neutral site.
- Private school students may participate in the state's milk program.
- If a private school participates in the state's school lunch aid program, the school must make lactose-free milk available.
- The state Department of Education may provide assistance to private schools participating in a local school district's violence-prevention program at a neutral site.

MISCELLANEOUS

Applies to all private schools

- A student age 16 to 18 who wants to drop out of school must meet with school officials and his or her parents and sign a written "election to withdraw from school" form.
- The commissioner shall ensure that textbooks and individualized instructional materials loaned to private schools are secular, neutral and nonideological and that they cannot be diverted to religious use.
- The servicing school district or the intermediary service area must take adequate measures to ensure an accurate and periodic inventory of all textbooks and individualized instructional materials loaned to private schools.
- The local school board must provide school bus transportation to the district boundary for students attending a private school in another district, provided this does not exceed the distance public school students are transported within the student's home district. Such transportation must be provided whether or not there is another private school within the student's home district, provided the student is being transported to a school maintaining grades or departments not maintained in the home district, or if the student's attendance at school can be more safely, economically or conveniently provided by such means. School districts may be reimbursed for the costs of such transportation using a formula provided in state law.
- Textbooks, individualized instructional materials, standardized tests, health services and guidance and counseling services must be made available to students in private schools.
- The state Department of Education must administer all funds used to support private schools and enact sound accounting principles and maintenance of records.
- State regulations provide a process by which allegations of misuse of state support by private schools can be investigated. Schools found to have misused state aid lose state support for the current school year.
- Non-profit private schools may contract with local public schools to provide educational services to at-risk students.
- The state may pay all or part of the fee for advanced placement examinations for needy students attending private schools.
- The sale of textbooks at private schools is tax exempt.
- Private schools may participate in the Minnesota Academic Excellence League to recognize outstanding academic achievement and teaching.



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.