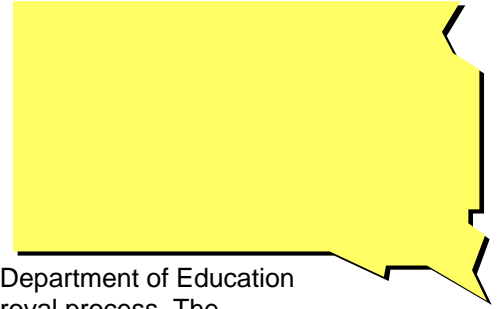


# SOUTH DAKOTA

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## ACCREDITATION, LICENSING & APPROVAL

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

- Private schools must get state approval every year. The state Department of Education is authorized to set the content, format and timeline of the approval process. The requirements for approval include, but are not limited to, regulations on governance, teacher certification, curriculum, assessment practices, length of school years, health and safety.

### **Applies only to accredited private schools**

- Private schools choosing to seek accreditation may request in writing that the state Department of Education coordinate its approval activities with those of an approved external third-party accreditation agency. In the request the school must provide documentation of its affiliation with the accreditation agency for the purpose of continual performance improvement and must indicate the length and dates of the improvement plan and cycle.

## TRANSPARENCY & REPORTING

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

- All students enrolling in private schools must present a valid birth certificate or a sworn affidavit verifying identity signed by two or more witnesses.
- Private schools must provide attendance reports to the state Department of Education.
- The Department of Education may inspect the attendance records and evidence of academic progress in a private school if it has probable cause to believe the school is not in compliance with requirements.

## CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

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

- The state Board of Education is authorized to establish standards for minimum curriculum requirements for all private schools.
- The Department of Education supervises private schools, including their instruction. It may visit and inspect private schools.
- Instruction must promote mastery of oral and written English.
- Private school students in grades three through eight and eleven must take the state's achievement test of basic skills, DakotaSTEP.
- The school term for grades four through 12 may not be fewer than 962½ hours, not including recess or lunch.
- Private schools must provide regular courses of instruction in the U.S. and South Dakota constitutions, beginning no later than the opening of eighth grade and continuing in high school as directed by the state Board of Education.

### **Applies only to accredited private schools**

- In accredited private schools, teachers who teach subjects that are required in public schools must be certified.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### Applies to all private schools

- Private schools must maintain sanitary facilities and conditions and a supply of water suitable for drinking.
- Private schools must be constructed, equipped, operated and maintained in a safe condition with respect to the type of construction and materials used, fireproofing, types of egress, aisles, passageways, stairs, fire escapes, wall openings, exits and exit signs, doors and doorways, shaft ways and other vertical openings, fire alarm systems, electrical equipment, flammable and explosive materials, heating systems and fuel storage, numbers of occupants, ventilation and all other emergency protection so as to provide for the safety of all people employed, accommodated, housed or assembled in them.
- The state fire marshal may inspect all buildings operated in conjunction with school activities of any private school, whether owned by the school or not.
- Any person employed by or providing services to a private school must notify the school principal, superintendent or a designee of suspected abuse or neglect.
- It is a felony to sell or consume illegal drugs within 1,000 feet of a private school.
- Private schools may develop fingerprinting programs for students. These programs must be developed for the sole purpose of locating or identifying a missing child. Participation by students must be voluntary. All fingerprinting must be conducted by local authorities. Fingerprint records must be delivered to parents.
- Private school buses must be inspected before the beginning of each school year.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- All private school property is exempt from taxation.



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.