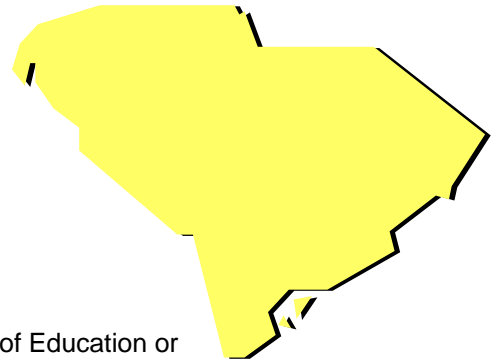


SOUTH CAROLINA



ACCREDITATION, LICENSING & APPROVAL

Applies to all private schools

- Private schools must either be approved by the state Board of Education or accredited by the South Carolina Independent School Association. Church-affiliated schools are exempt.

Applies only to accredited private schools

- Accredited private schools must meet the minimum standards set by the SCISA.
- Accredited private schools must employ qualified teachers and other necessary staff personnel, maintain a proper student-teacher ratio of no more than 25 per class, use a course of study appropriate to its students and adopt adequate textbooks approved by appropriate personnel or by a committee on standards representing the SCISA.
- Accredited private schools must employ a school administrator with at least a bachelor's degree who does not teach more than two periods a day or coach two varsity athletic teams, or one of each, and employ teachers whose academic training and experience fully indicate the professional ability, insight and enthusiasm necessary to complete classroom assignments satisfactorily. Each teacher must have a state certificate or a bachelor's degree.
- Accredited private schools with more than 250 students must employ an assistant administrator who teaches less than a full load of classes.
- Accredited private schools must provide a long-range plan with the following elements: a three-to-five year outlook for the school; a statement of the enrollment goals of the school; a statement of the budget and salary goals of the school; a plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's mission statement and the long-range plan; a plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's curriculum and the long-range plan; and input from the broad school constituency concerning all these items.
- A school is normally accredited for three years. However, the visiting accreditation committee may recommend either two- or one-year periods of accreditation when circumstances warrant. Reasons include but are not limited to frequent turnover of faculty, administration or trustees and a sharp decline in student enrollment.

TRANSPARENCY & REPORTING

Applies to all private schools

- A private schools must report to the county superintendent of education, upon request, the number of students receiving instruction, the number in regular attendance, the number of teachers employed and any other facts that show the grade and amount of educational work done in the school. A private school not filing the report within two weeks after the close of the regular session can be fined \$25.

Applies only to accredited private schools

- Accredited private schools must keep adequate permanent records on teachers and students, including current, valid transcripts for teachers and pupils. An official transcript or copy showing the college seal is required for all teachers and administrators.

- Accredited private schools must have curriculum guides providing a detailed description of the curriculum available for inspection by the visiting accreditation committee.

CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

Applies only to accredited private schools

- Private secondary schools accredited through the SCISA must follow a mandated curriculum for both subject matter and units of study. Different curricular plans are offered, allowing students to pursue either a “traditional” or “college-preparatory” plan.
- Accredited private schools must operate for no fewer than 5½ hours a day for a minimum of 180 school days a year, including no fewer than 175 student school days per session. Three half-day exam days per semester may count as full days toward the total number of days.
- Accredited private schools must provide on-campus, centralized, inventoried and controlled access to sufficient library books and technological and other resources to supplement and enrich the school program with an emphasis on instruction in research skills.
- Accredited private schools must provide adequate guidance services, including annual use of nationally recognized achievement tests, to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement. Schools must administer achievement tests to four grades a year and I.Q. tests to at least three grades each year through the SCISA testing program. In addition, the PSAT must be given in the 10th or 11th grade.
- Accredited private schools must make provisions for annual faculty development.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Applies to all private schools

- Applicants for employment at private schools must be appropriately evaluated for tuberculosis according to guidelines approved by the state Board of Health and Environmental Control.
- All private school buses that follow SC Code 56-5-2770 and the National School bus chrome yellow requirements in Section 59-67-30 must conform to state laws and the regulations of the state Board of Education with respect to painting, lettering on the front and rear of the bus, use of stop arm and warning lights for loading and unloading students on the highway, maximum speeds and stopping at railroad crossings.
- Private school physical facilities must meet applicable federal, state and local safety, fire, and health regulations.
- Private school laboratories must include eye washes, safety showers, ventilation, gas and water cut-offs located inside the laboratory, two fire extinguishers and safe storage for flammable substances.
- Private school grounds must provide areas for physical education and recreation. Buildings must be maintained to provide a safe, sanitary and attractive environment for learning.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Private school property is tax exempt.



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.

