

## Approval of Private Schools

In accordance with MGL Chapter 76, § 1, School Committees are responsible for approving private schools.

"For the purposes of this section, school committees shall approve a private school when satisfied that the instruction in all the studies required by law equals in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town; but shall not withhold such approval on account of religious teaching ..."

### GUIDELINES

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education suggests the following criteria for approval of a private school by a School Committee.

1. Population to be served  
Admissions criteria; documentation of school's enrollment
2. Physical Plant/Safety
  - A. Documentation of:
    - i. Certificate of occupancy
    - ii. Fire inspection
    - iii. Safety inspection
    - iv. Elevator inspection, if applicable
    - v. Compliance with lead paint poisoning prevention (for children under 6-years-old)
    - vi. Compliance with other applicable federal and state health and safety standards (e.g., PCB, asbestos inspections, handicap accessibility)
    - vii. Copies of valid safety and health inspection certificates
    - viii. The site, plant, and equipment adequately support the program and are operated to ensure the safety and health of students
3. Curriculum
  - A. The curriculum offered is "equivalent" to that offered in the local school system generally, and specifically, in terms of the following instructional areas:
    - i. mathematics
    - ii. science and technology
    - iii. history and social science
    - iv. English
    - v. foreign languages
    - vi. the arts
    - vii. physical education

4. **Educational Materials**  
Textbooks and individual instructional materials, including computers and other technology, are adequate.
5. **School Staff**  
The instruction provided is "thorough and efficient" based on:
  - A. teacher qualifications
  - B. adequate student/teacher ratio
  - C. regular evaluation of staff
  - D. the school principal reviews criminal offender record information (CORI) of current and prospective employees and volunteers, as required by law.
6. **Administration**  
The school has a clearly defined organization that facilitates its objectives.
7. **Records**
  - A. The school maintains an adequate system of student records (e.g., attendance, health, discipline, progress reports).
  - B. The student records are kept in a secure and organized manner that is consistent with federal and state student record laws to the extent applicable.
  - C. The school maintains and timely provides transcripts in response to requests of students and former students in accordance with MGL, c. 71, § 34A.
  - D. The school is prepared efficiently to transfer transcripts of all students and former students to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and/or other schools should it cease operation, in accordance with MGL, c. 71, § 34G.
8. **Student Services**  
The school provides adequate pupil personnel services for all students (e.g., health care procedures, guidance counseling programs, discipline policy)
9. **Financial Support**  
The school provides evidence of financial solvency and resources to sustain the educational program.
10. **Student Learning Time**  
The school provides adequate student learning time (length of school year and school day) and hours of instruction in each subject.
11. **Student Performance Assessment**  
The school periodically evaluates students' skills, competencies, and knowledge, and documents their progress.

## APPLICATION FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL APPROVAL

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**School Name**

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**Street Address**

**City**

**State**

**Zip**

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**Telephone**

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**Principal/ Director**

### SCHOOL INFORMATION

Private school approval is based on a site visit along with the following submitted documentation.

1. Statement of philosophy and objectives
2. Attendance procedures
3. Hours in session per day
4. Number of days per school year/school calendar
5. Curriculum: English language arts, mathematics, science, history and social science, health and physical education
6. List of school staff and their certifications
7. Administrative organization table
8. Student records procedures
9. Discipline of student population e.g., statement of student rights and responsibilities

Upon receipt of this application along with the above documentation, a site visit will be scheduled.