Kentucky Department of Education

Non-Public or Private School Information

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Kentucky Department of Education
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Welcome! This packet is designed to provide you with information on the laws and regulations that govern non-public or private schools.

Choosing a Private School

The Kentucky Constitution establishes the right of parents to choose the formal education for their child; therefore, parents may choose to have their child educated in a private school setting.

Kentucky law requires school attendance for every child between the ages of 6-18 either in a public school or a non-public, private school chosen by the parent, which also includes homeschool. They are expected to complete a minimum school term of at least of 170 instructional days with records indicating an overall total of 1062 instructional hours completed.

Private schools are required to teach subjects that will educate children to be intelligent citizens. Courses should be taught in the English language and should include subjects similar to those taught in public schools, which should include *at least* reading, writing, spelling, grammar, history, mathematics, and civics.

Responsibilities of the Private School

When children attend a private school, it is the responsibility of the private school to report to the local public school superintendent the names, ages, and residence of all pupils. If a private school declines to notify the local school board of students in attendance at the private school, the private school must notify each parent in writing and it becomes the duty of the parent to notify the local board of education.

Private schools are required to keep accurate record of pupil attendance. They are also responsible for issuing and keeping record of issued diplomas.

Available Services for Private Schools

Private school students may be eligible to receive services provided by federally funded educational programs. This may include special education services, English language instruction, tutoring services, and others. Each private school, including registered homeschools, will receive from the local school district each year an “Intent to Participate” form. This option provides services only; no money goes directly to a private school or individual homeschool. Services are

provided by the local school district or an agreed upon third party provider. Services may include speech therapy, tutoring services, migrant services, and others. Services may be provided in the public school, private school, local library, or other agreed upon location.

Credit Recognition

When students who previously attended a homeschool or non-accredited secondary school (any private school not certified pursuant to KRS 156.160(3)) desire to enroll in public schools, the local public school district is responsible for proper placement and awarding credits for the non-accredited private school.

If the student does not hold a properly certified transcript, the schools may place the students using one of two methods:

1. Pass a similar examination given to other students receiving credit for the course.
2. Attaining a "C" average in the course by the 12th week of school.

Those courses successfully completed by examination or performance shall be counted toward minimum high school graduation requirements in the local school district.

Certification of Non-Public Schools

While the Kentucky Department of Education does not require non-public schools to be certified, many non-public schools have chosen to participate in an optional certification process. When certified by the state, these non-public schools are more likely to be recognized as a valid educational institution by colleges, universities, and future employers.

Students from non-certified, private schools or homeschools do not receive a diploma recognized by the Kentucky Department of Education. When seeking employment or advanced education, these students may need to complete the General Education Development (GED) to show equivalence to a state recognized high school diploma.

Seeking Certification

Any private, parochial or church schools, wishing to pursue certification from the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) will comply with the following the process:

PART I - Describes the process available to non-public schools serving students preschool through the 12th grades. This does not apply to schools that serve students who are only in preschool or preschool and kindergarten or a stand-alone kindergarten.

1. Contact one of the accrediting agencies recognized by the KBE and the Kentucky Non-Public School Commission (KNPSC) to make the necessary arrangement to complete the required process to become accredited. For a list of the recognized accrediting agencies, contact the KNPSC at (859) 392-1534. or visit the following website: www.kynpsc.org.

2. After successfully engaging in the accreditation process, contact the KNPSC and initiate the process to have the Commission present the school to the KBE for either one-year Interim Certification for schools that are in the process of completing accreditation or for the applicable Full Certification as defined by the recognized accrediting agency.

3. After the necessary documentation is reviewed by the KNPSC a decision is made by the full commission regarding approval of the schools applying for Certification.

4. Upon an affirmative vote by the KNPSC the recommended schools are presented to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) for presentation to KBE for certification.

5. After consideration of the KNPSC recommendations, the KBE grants Certification.

6. The schools granted Certification will receive a letter from KDE staff confirming the Certification by KBE. This letter will include the beginning and ending dates for the Certification.

PART II - Describes the process available to preschools, preschools and kindergartens and stand-alone kindergartens

1. Contact one of the accrediting agencies recognized by the KBE and make the necessary arrangement to complete the required process to become accredited. (For a list of these accreditation agencies, contact the Kentucky Department of Education.)

2. Submit to KDE the following: a copy of the documentation of current accreditation; documentation of teacher credentials; a completed Teacher Credential Form and for Kindergarten teachers, an appropriate Kentucky teaching certification, for preschool teachers, credentials meeting 704 KAR 3:410.

3. KDE staff will review the documentation to determine whether or not the school is in compliance. When the school meets all of the requirements, schools will be submitted to the KBE for Certification. For schools that are currently undergoing self-study in preparation for accreditation, the schools may request Interim Certification, which may be extended only once. The one-year Interim Certification will be based on documentation that the schools: are actively engaged in a self-study process accreditation, with a time line for applying for accreditation; meet the Kentucky teacher credential requirements mentioned above; have classrooms which score at least a total of 6.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (Clifford and Harms, 1998) as validated by an independent evaluation approved by KDE for these purposes. All arrangements and costs for the onsite visits by the independent validator shall be borne by the non-public program.

4. Schools granted Certification will receive a letter from KDE staff confirming the Certification by KBE. This letter will include the beginning and ending dates for the Certification.

Applicable Statutes

STATUTES	DESCRIPTION
KRS 159.030	Requires compulsory school attendance children ages 6-18
KRS Ann. 159.030(1)(b)	Reporting names of private school students to local school board
KRS 159.040	Records kept by private schools
KRS 158.070	Courses to be taught
KRS 158.080	Required length of school term
KRS Ann. 156.160(3)	Certification of non-public schools

Contact Information

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