

**STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF
NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN RHODE ISLAND**



**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL APPROVALS**

STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN RHODE ISLAND

TIME IN SCHOOL

1. The period of attendance of the pupils in the non-public schools shall be substantially equal to that required by law in public schools. Public schools are required to establish and maintain a 180 day school year exclusive of holidays. (16-2-2 and 16-19-2)
2. A kindergarten day shall not be less than 2 1/2 hours. An elementary school day shall not be less than five (5) hours excluding lunch and recess. A secondary school day shall not be less than five and one-half hours (5 1/2). Each of these school days exclude pre- and post-school teacher time, which is the period of time that teachers are required to be in the classroom before and after the regular instructional day.
3. A secondary school class period shall be sufficiently flexible to allow the school to schedule classes four or five times weekly or to provide large group instruction with long or short periods as the program demands. However, a minimum of 200 minutes weekly in class shall normally be required for each subject for which a unit of credit (for graduation) is allowed.
4. All children in grades one through twelve shall receive therein instruction in health and physical education under such rules and regulations as the Department of Education may prescribe or approve during periods which shall be substantially equal to an average of at least twenty (20) minutes in each school day. (16-22-4)

SCHOOL STAFF

5. The faculty and staff shall be large enough to carry out the program of the school. All personnel shall be of high character and integrity, shall be genuinely devoted to the profession of teaching and shall have the knowledge, training, and experience adequate for the positions they hold.
6. All teachers in non-public schools shall have a bachelor's degree or equivalent. This requirement may be waived by the Commissioner of Education for teachers who were employed prior to September 1, 1972. Such teachers will be expected, however, to enroll in courses and/or to participate in seminars and other programs which will further develop their professional competencies.
7. Para-professional personnel shall be selected and utilized in accordance with state policy and criteria developed by the school system. (See state publication Auxiliary School Personnel)
8. The school health program as defined by state health regulations shall be staffed by personnel whose qualifications are substantially equivalent to their counterparts in public schools. (R16-21-SCHO Part II, Section 3.1)

CURRICULUM

9. Each school shall have a clearly stated educational policy, cooperatively developed and written by the faculty and administration. The statement shall set forth the objectives of the school and the philosophy underlying the methods used to attain these objectives. The performance of each school shall be judged against its policy statement.
10. Each school shall have a carefully planned program of study and activities, consistent with its policy and objectives, which shall be approved by the Commissioner of Education.
11. Each school shall provide all children in attendance with instruction in reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, the history of the United States, the history of Rhode Island and the principles of American government, each shall be taught in the English language. This does not deny the right to teach said subjects or any other subject in any other language in addition to the teaching in English. (16-19-2)
12. Each school shall provide all children in attendance with instruction in the principles of popular and representative government as enunciated in the Constitutions of Rhode Island and the United States. Commencing with the fourth grade in elementary schools instruction shall be given in the history and government of Rhode Island, and in every high school thorough instruction shall be given in the Constitution and government of Rhode Island and in the Constitution and government of the United States. (16-22-2)
13. In the study of history of the United States and of Rhode Island, there shall be included the major contributions made by African-Americans and other racial and ethnic groups in the development of the United States and the State of Rhode Island.
14. Each school shall provide all children in attendance with a health education program in grades K through 12 as appropriate. The health education program shall be approved if deemed substantially equivalent to that required in public schools as defined in Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs of the Department of elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health. (R16-21-SCHO, Part II, Section 3.1)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

15. The minimum requirements for a student to graduate from an approved non-public secondary school shall be sixteen (16) units, earned in grades 9 through 12 including four (4) units of English, 2 units in Social Studies (to include a unit in United States History and Government, 2 units in Mathematics, 2 units in Science and 6 units in electives.

STUDENT SERVICES

16. Schools shall provide library/media services as specified in the most recent Standards for School Libraries in the State of Rhode Island.

17. Schools shall provide an approved school health program that includes services consistent with Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health. (R16-21-SCHO Part 1, Section 2.1)
18. Every teacher in any private school shall keep a register of the names of all the students attending the school, their sex and age, names of parents or guardians, the time when each student enters and leaves the school, and their daily attendance and shall prepare any report required by the school committee or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (16-12-4)

FIRE DRILLS

19. It shall be the duty of the principal or other person in charge of every public school or private school, college, university, or post-secondary institutions or education institution within the state, having more than twenty-five (25) pupils, to instruct and train the pupils by means of drills, so that they may in a sudden emergency be able to leave school buildings and dormitories in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic. In all schools but colleges, universities, or post-secondary institutions, there shall be fifteen (15) drills or rapid dismissals during the school year, at least eight (8) of which shall be held during the months of September, October, and November. The remaining seven (7) drills or rapid dismissals shall be held at the discretion of the principal or person in charge of the school. At least four (4) drills or rapid dismissals shall be obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits and stairways in the school building are blocked off or not used and at least two (2) of the obstructed drills shall be held during the months of September and October. (16-21-4)
20. In residence facilities in private schools there shall be at least four (4) drills or rapid dismissals during the academic year for each school building or residence facility, at least two (2) of which shall be held between the months of September through December inclusive. The remaining two (2) drills shall be held between the months of January through June inclusive. Any college, university, or post-secondary institution which holds a summer session shall hold a drill or rapid dismissal during the first full week of the summer session.

At least one drill or rapid dismissal shall be obstructed so that at least one or more exits or stairways in the school building or dormitory are blocked off or not used.

For purposes of this section "residence facility" shall mean dormitory, fraternity, sorority, or any other type of residence hall, whether on campus or off campus, owned or leased by a college, university, post-secondary institutions, public schools, or private school with accommodations for twenty (20) or more students. (16-21-4)