

*Calendar of the School Year
(COMAR 13A.09.09.10B)*

A school must provide a written calendar that states the specific dates and total number of days of the school year (the time when the school's educational program is implemented). A school's calendar for kindergarten, elementary school, and/or secondary school must be at least 170 days and must include 3 to 5 additional school days (depending on local weather patterns) in its school calendar to ensure that the 170 day requirement is met.

Please note: Child care, summer school, summer camp, enrichment, tutoring, and recreational programs are not part of the approved educational program and may not be included as part of the school year.



*Admissions
(COMAR 13A.09.09.10C)*

A school must provide a written policy stating the school's criteria for admission to the school. This policy must be consistent with the age of eligibility for admission to kindergarten if the school is approved to offer instruction at the kindergarten level.

Contact Us

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*A Guide
For
Parents*



Understanding the
Documentation
Nonpublic Schools
Must Provide to
Parents and Guardians
of Enrolled and
Prospective Students



Understanding the Requirements

Nonpublic schools provide a great deal of information to the parents and guardians of current and prospective students.

Nonpublic schools in Maryland require a Certificate of Approval from the State Department of Education (MSDE). In order to be approved by MSDE, nonpublic schools must comply with the regulations set forth in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

Section 13A.09.09 of COMAR outlines the information that nonpublic schools are required to provide annually to students' parents and guardians. This guide is intended to assist you, as parents and guardians, to understand the documents provided by nonpublic schools, and to help you make the best decisions for your child's education. If you would like to read the regulations in full, COMAR 13A.09.09 is available on the MDSE Nonpublic Schools website.

Nonpublic schools must provide the following information – annually in writing – to the parents and guardians of enrolled and prospective students.



Statement of Purposes (COMAR 13A.09.09.05)

A school must provide a written statement of purposes. This is the single most important document because it describes the goals and philosophies of the school and its educational program. The statement of purposes must accurately reflect the school's approved educational program, so this document can be very useful in helping you decide whether a school is the right fit for your child.

Statement of Teacher Qualifications (COMAR 13A.09.09.06C)

A school must provide a written statement each year about teacher qualifications. This statement is the school's assurance that the teachers who instruct in specific subject areas (English language arts, math, science, social studies, and courses for which secondary school credit is granted) hold, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, 120 semester hours of college credit from an accredited college or university, or (for teachers with foreign credentials) a bachelor's degree equivalent.

Teachers in Montessori schools must also hold a Montessori teacher credential for the appropriate level and area of instruction in addition to the above requirements.

The statement may specifically address each teacher's credentials or may be a general statement about the credentials held by all teachers at the school. Schools may also establish teacher requirements that exceed the minimum requirements set forth in this COMAR regulation.

Student-Teacher Ratio or Average Class Size (COMAR 13A.09.09.07D)

A school must provide a written statement of the ratio of students to teachers or average class size. Teacher aides and assistants may not be counted in these ratios and averages.

Credit Requirements for Secondary School Graduation (13A.09.09B)

A school must provide a written policy stating the number of credits required for secondary school graduation. Students entering Grade 9 must earn at least 21 credits to graduate from a nonpublic school, including several subject-specific requirements. The school may also choose to require additional credits for graduation.

Definition of a Unit Credit (COMAR 13A.09.09C)

A school must provide a written statement defining a unit of credit and any partial unit of credit granted by the school. This statement may be combined with the school's statement about credits required for graduation (see above: 13A.09.09B).

Schedule of the School Day (COMAR 13A.09.09.10A)

A school must provide a written schedule that states the beginning and end of the school day and the specific times when required areas of instruction take place.

Please note: Activities that are not part of the approved educational program, like summer school, summer camp, tutoring or enrichment programs, may not be included on the schedule of the school day.