



Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Wyoming

Private Schools

Steps to Start a Private School

1. Select a name for your school. You will need to verify that the name is available by researching the name availability on your state's Division of Corporations website.
2. Plan to retain this name throughout the duration of the school's operation.
3. Designate a Chief Administrative Officer. Select a title, such as Director, Principal, Superintendent, etc.
4. Register as a corporation. This is usually a for-profit LLC. Register with your state's Division of Corporations.
 - Please be aware that you may receive solicitation letters from "third-party application assistance" companies offering various services for processing fees. These companies are NOT affiliated, endorsed, or approved by any governmental entity. The items offered in the advertisements have NOT been approved or endorsed by any governmental agency, and the offers are NOT being made by an agency of the government. The documents offered by these advertisements are available to Florida consumers free of charge or for a lesser price from government agencies.
5. A Federal Employer Identification Number (FEI/EIN) will be required after registering as a company. Apply with the IRS online at: <https://sa.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp>
6. Things to consider
 - 6.1. Accreditation: is optional. OptimaEd has been accredited by Cognia.
 - 6.2. Teacher Certification: Is not required. Parents must be notified if not certified.
 - 6.3. Registration: is not required.
 - 6.4. Licensing: is required.
 - 6.5. Approval: Is not required.
 - 6.6. School Certification: is required to participate in the Wyoming Education Savings Accounts program.
 - 6.7. Length of School Year and Days: K–12 private schools must be open during the entire time that the public schools are in session in the district in which the pupil resides in order to satisfy compulsory attendance law. (Public schools are required by statute to

operate 175 days each school year unless an alternative schedule is approved by the state board.)

6.8. Curriculum: See statutes.

6.9. State Testing: Testing is not required under the private school licensing statutes. It is required for the ESA program. See [W.S. 21-2-904\(b\)\(ii\)\(B\)](#).

6.10. Health and Safety: Immunization is required. Other requirements exist. See statutes below.

6.11. Nursing and Health: There is no state policy at this time pertaining to nursing and health for private schools.

Submit an Application for a Private School License

It is required by law that all Trade, Correspondence, Distance Education, Technical, Vocational, Business and Other Private Schools are licensed prior to operating or doing business in the state of Wyoming.

(Wyoming Statutes 21-2-401 through 21-2-407; and WDE Rules and Regulations Chapters 1, 18, and 30)

Private Non-Religious K-12 schools are governed by [Chapter 18](#) of Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations.

Submit an application for a private school using this link: [Chapter 18 K-12 Application](#). There is a \$200 fee.

If you will be recruiting or soliciting students for enrollment to your school, you will need to also submit an [Application to License Agents – Chapter 18](#). This is also included in the [Chapter 18 K-12 Application](#). There is a \$100 fee.

Private School Statutes & Rules

The Education Freedom Foundation has relied on the [U.S. Department of Education’s State Regulation of Private and Home Schools Map](#) for relevant statutes. Over time, the state pages on this map have been updated since their initial creation. In some cases, states have changed their laws without these updates being reflected on the map. Given the various methods each state uses to publicize changes to its laws, the most recent information for the Start-A-School project was often obtained directly from the U.S. Department of Education website. Users are encouraged to verify any information before making decisions based on it.

Accreditation, Registration, Licensing, and Approval

- Accreditation has no requirements.
- Registration has no requirements.
- Licensing is mandatory.
 - The Wyoming Department of Education is charged with the responsibility of licensing all private schools with the exception of religious K–12 schools.

[§21-2-401\(c\)](#), [§21-2-406](#) and [Chapter 18, Section 3, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).

- A license issued to a private school permits the school to solicit (with agent license), offer, and maintain courses of instruction. [Chapter 18, Section 5\(c\), Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).
- The licensing provisions, [W.S. §21-2-401](#) through [W.S. §21-2-407](#), authorize minimum standards, degree, performance bond, and requirements.
- The provisions do not apply to private K–12 parochial, church or religious schools, [W.S. §21-2-406\(a\)\(i\)\(A\)](#); home-based educational programs defined by [W.S. §21-4-101\(a\)\(v\)](#), See [W.S. §21-2-406\(a\)\(ii\)](#); aircraft flight training schools approved and authorized by the federal aviation agency of the United States of America [W.S. §21-2-406\(a\)\(iii\)](#); or a non-degree-granting school teaching techniques of outdoor recreation, leadership, ecology or conservation domiciled in the state of Wyoming. [W.S. §21-2-406\(a\)\(iv\)](#).
- The private school must submit evidence of compliance with the licensing requirements stated in [W.S. §21-2-401](#) through [W.S. §21-2-407](#) and an application on such forms required by the Wyoming Department of Education. Each year, the private school must submit an application to renew the license and the school’s annual report by July 1, using the forms prescribed by the Wyoming Department of Education along with a \$200 application or renewal fee. [Chapter 18, Section 17, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).
- Approval has no requirements.
- School Certification is required to participate in some Education Savings Account Programs.

Curriculum

- Applicable only to K–12 private schools, all students in licensed non-religious private schools must meet the student performance standards at the level set by the school in: (a) reading/language arts; (b) social studies; (c) mathematics; (d) science; (e) fine arts and performing arts; (f) physical education; (g) health and safety; (h) humanities; (i) career/vocational education; (j) foreign cultures and language; (k) applied technology; and (l) government and civics, including state and federal constitutions in accordance with [W.S. §21-9-102](#). [Chapter 18, Section 7, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).
- Applicable only to K–12 private schools, all students in licensed non-religious private schools must meet the student performance standards at the level set by the school in the following skills: (a) problem solving; (b) interpersonal communications; (c) keyboarding and computer applications; (d) critical thinking; (e) creativity; and (f) life skills, including personal financial management skills. [Chapter 18, Section 8, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).
- Applicable only to K–12 private schools, Wyoming curriculum requirements “do not require any private school or home-based educational program to include in its curriculum any concept, topic or practice in conflict with its religious doctrines or to

exclude from its curriculum any concept, topic or practice consistent with its religious doctrines.” [W.S. §21-4-101 \(a\)\(vi\)](#).

- Licensed non-religious, K–12 private schools that are supported by public funds must provide “ ... instruction in the essentials of the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Wyoming, including the study of and devotion to American institution and ideals.” [Chapter 18, Section 9, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#) and [Wyo. Stat. § 21-9-102](#).

Health and Safety Requirements

- Students attending K–12 private schools must provide documentary proof of immunization within 30 days after the date of school entry. School administrators must not permit a student to attend school beyond that time without proper immunization. [W.S. §21-4-309](#).
- K–12 private schools are required to conduct a fire drill at least once every month. If a paid fire department is maintained in the area, the school must request a representative to attend and offer instruction and constructive criticism. [W.S. §35-9-505](#).
- It is illegal to operate a commercial oil field waste disposal facility within one mile of a private school without the consent of the school’s board of directors or trustees. [W.S. §35-11-306 \(a\) \(ii\)](#).

Length of School Year and Days

- K–12 private schools must be open during the entire time that the public schools are in session in the district in which the pupil resides in order to satisfy compulsory attendance law. (Public schools are required by statute to operate 175 days each school year unless an alternative schedule is approved by the state board.) [W.S. §§21-4-102\(a\); 21-4-301](#).

Nursing and Health

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to nursing and health for private schools.

Professional Development

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to professional development for private schools.

Recordkeeping and Reports

- Applicable only to K–12 private schools, private schools must provide an annual report to the State Board of Education that includes: (a) Number of students enrolled in the school on October 1st of the school year by grade (K-12); number of students dropping out of grades 9-12 during the school year; number of students completing high school and receiving a diploma issued by your school during the end of the school year; (b) Performance metrics on assessments; (c) Number of days students are in school;

number of instructional hours each day; (d) The school's recommended course of study for college-bound students and percent of students who have successfully completed the course of study; (e) The number of students involved in extra-curricular activities and events; (f) School improvement goals; and (g) Number of English learner Students enrolled in the school; name of English language proficiency assessment used to determine English language status; score for each student reported. [Chapter 18, Section 15, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).

Reimbursement for Performing State and Local Functions

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to reimbursement for performing state and local functions in private schools.

Special Education

- State law authorizes the public placement of children in a private agency, if the local school district cannot provide the necessary and appropriate programs and services. [W.S. §21-2-502\(a\)](#).

Teacher Certification

- Professional educational staff in non-religious private elementary and secondary schools must have a certificate with the necessary endorsements for the specific assignments assigned in accordance with the rules established by the Wyoming Department of Education. If any professional educational staff member does not qualify for certification or endorsement by the Professional Teaching Standards Board, a school must notify all parents and the public that the teacher is not certified by the state. [Chapter 18, Section 12, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#). These rules do not apply to any parochial, church or religious school as defined by [W.S. §21-4-101\(a\)\(iv\)](#).

Technology

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to technology in private schools.

Testing

- Testing is not required under the private school licensing statutes.

Textbooks

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to textbooks for private schools.

Transportation

- Applicable only to K–12 private schools, "Transportation used for students as part of the private school's educational program shall comply with the most recent edition of

Wyoming Pupil Transportation Manual.” [Chapter 18, Section 13, Wyoming Department of Education Rules and Regulations](#).

Tax Exemption

- There is no state policy at this time pertaining to tax exemptions for private schools.

Public Aid for Private Education

- Constitutional Provisions: The Wyoming Constitution prohibits appropriations from the public school fund to be used for any private school, or school controlled by a church or sectarian organization or religious denomination. Wyoming Constitution Art. 7, § 8.
- Programs for Financial Assistance for Attendance at Private Schools: The [Wyoming Education Savings Act](#) was signed into law on March 21, 2024, and is governed by [W.S. §§ 21-2-901](#) through [21-2-909](#). The [Steamboat Legacy Scholarship Act](#) was signed into law on March 4, 2025.

Resources

Contact Information – State and Federal Departments of Education

Private School Licensing
Brenna Harris
(307) 777-6210
brenna.harris@wyo.gov

Wyoming Department of Education
2300 Capitol Avenue
Hathaway Building, Second Floor
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0050
Phone: (307) 777-7690
Fax: (307) 777-6234
Website: <http://www.k12.wy.us>
U.S. Department of Education, [Wyoming](#)

Information and Legislation

- [Application to License Agents – Chapter 18](#)
- [2021-22 Chapter 18 Non-Religious K-12 Schools](#)
- [Wyoming Statutes at the Wyoming Legislative Services Office](#)
- [Accreditation information at the U.S Department of Education](#)

- [The U.S. Department of Education Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#)
- [Wyoming Department of Education: Private School Licensing](#)
- [Wyoming State Statutes](#)
- [Virtual Education Rules – Chapter 41](#)

School Choice Programs

[Steamboat Legacy Scholarship Program](#)

The [Wyoming Education Savings Act](#) was signed into law on March 21, 2024, and is governed by [W.S. §§ 21-2-901](#) through [21-2-909](#). The [Steamboat Legacy Scholarship Act](#) was signed into law on March 4, 2025. The Universal Family Application was opened on May 15, 2025.

Definitions. (a) (vii) “Qualified school” means a pre-kindergarten or a nonpublic primary or secondary school, certified by the state superintendent of public instruction pursuant to [W.S. 21-2-906\(a\)](#), located in or that provides education services in this state, that may include through online means. [21-2-902](#).

- As of the 2025-2026 school year, an eligible students can receive \$7,000 annually, deposited into an ESA account for their educational expenses.
- The WDE is developing a certification process to approve pre-k and non-public primary and secondary schools per the law.
- A list of certified education service providers, including individuals, organizations, and schools, will be published on this website when available.

Families can use ESA funds for various education expenses, including:

- Tuition and fees at a participating school;
- Tutoring services;
- Classes or extracurricular activities at a traditional public or public charter school;
- Textbooks and curriculum;
- Educational technology;
- School uniforms;
- Fees for summer education programs and after-school education;
- Educational therapies like behavioral or speech-language therapy;
- Costs for college admission tests and AP exams;
- Transportation costs to education service providers.

A “Education Service Provider” (ESP) is a Wyoming ESA-approved person, organization, or school that receives payment authorized by a parent from the ESA account to provide educational goods and services to the ESA student.

A “Qualified School” is a pre-kindergarten or a nonpublic primary or secondary school located in Wyoming or that provides educational services in Wyoming, including online services.

Schools must apply to be “Qualified” to participate at this [link](#).

Education Service Providers can apply at this [link](#).

Odyssey is the SGO. Odyssey Support can be found at this [link](#).

Odyssey Parent Information can be found at these links.

- [How to Complete the Wyoming ESA Program Application](#)
- [Video Tutorial: Wyoming ESA Application Process Overview](#)
- [Price Caps on Eligible Expenses for the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [Parent Guide to the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [What is the Wyoming ESA Program?](#)
- [Benefits of the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [How to Apply for the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [What are the requirements for participating in the Wyoming ESA Program?](#)
- [Eligibility Requirements for the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [Determining Household Size for Income Verification](#)
- [What amount can I receive for the for the Wyoming ESA Program?](#)
- [Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Where can I use my ESA?](#)
- [Can my student receive an ESA and remain in a public school?](#)
- [Reimbursements for Qualified Expenses](#)
- [Educational Expenses for the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [Disputes About Services](#)
- [Managing Your ESA Account](#)
- [Data Security](#)
- [Parental Agreement & Responsibilities](#)
- [Assessments & Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Renewal & Continuation of ESA](#)
- [Disqualification & Appeals for Parents](#)

Odyssey School Information can be found at these links

- [How to Update Tuition & Fees for Wyoming ESA Students](#)
- [How to Confirm Student Enrollments and Set Tuition & Fees for the Wyoming ESA](#)
- [Video Tutorial: School Enrollment and Tuition & Fees Process \(Detailed Overview\)](#)
- [Guide for Schools in the Wyoming ESA Program](#)
- [Step by Step Guide: Wyoming School Registration](#)
- [Video Tutorial: How to Complete the Wyoming ESA School Registration](#)

Resources

Wyoming Education Savings Accounts

Jennifer Pragnell

ESA Program Manager

Email: wde-esa@wyo.gov

- [ESA Family Handbook](#)
- [ESA Provider Handbook](#)
- [ESA Provider/Vendor/School FAQs](#)
- [Allowable and Disallowable Expense Guidance](#)
- [Pre-Approval and Reimbursement Guidelines](#)
- [School or Provider Application Guidelines](#)
- [List of Norm Referenced Assessments](#)