

Approved Private Special Education Programs



Education of Students Receiving Special Education & LRE



- 4,739 students (6.80%) of the 69,730 students receiving special education (ages 3-21) are educated in private/other educational settings.
 - **APSEP**
 - RESC Special Education Programs
 - Homebound
 - USD II (DCF)
 - Other Non-Public
 - Out-of-State
 - Other

Role of APSEPs



- To provide the appropriate services and supports to students requiring special education when a local education agency (LEA) finds it necessary to contract with a private facility to meet their statutory obligation under Statute (C.G.S. 10-76(a)-(q) and Regulations (R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-76a-1 to 10-76h-16)
- Implement the individualized education program (IEP) as it is developed by the district's Planning and Placement Team (PPT)

Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs)



Must meet Standards and Approval Principles set forth by the State Board of Education (SBOE) (<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PPS.pdf>)

Must meet prerequisites for application

Must submit an application

Must participate in an approval process which includes two, day-long site visits

Must provide and implement Policies and Procedures which ensure compliance with provisions of IDEA, 504, CT Gen. Statutes and all other federal and state laws as well as local regulations

Must accept and correct all identified standard deficiencies

Approval Process



Purpose:

- To evaluate the suitability and efficacy of programs prior to those programs assuming their role in implementing IEPs for LEAs
- To verify that programs are meeting the policies procedures and standards approved by the SBOE

Approval Process



Prerequisites to submission of an Application

Programs seeking approval must:

- be in operation for at least a year
- have an enrollment of at least 10 students
- request consideration for approval and submit a completed application to the CSDE.

The Application

- Reflects the standards established by the SBOE
- Includes standards to address:
 - A. GOVERNANCE
 - B. ADMINISTRATION
 - C. FISCAL MANAGEMENT
 - D. ADMISSIONS
 - E. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT RECORDS
 - F. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
 - G. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS/REPORTING
 - H. STUDENT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES
 - I. QUALIFICATIONS/REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL
 - J. HEALTH AND SAFETY
 - K. TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Approval Process

- Programs request application
- CSDE provides consultation throughout the process of completing the application
- Program submits application to SDE
- SDE/BSE reviews/evaluates the application
- Site Visits are conducted
 - Day 1: SDE/BSE Consultant
 - Day 2: TEAM comprised of representatives from CSDE, an APSEP and LEA

Approval Process

Day 1:



The CSDE Representative:

- Provides comments regarding the application, including any necessary additions or corrections of standard deficiencies;
- Reviews:
 - student files;
 - health records;
 - emergency drill records;
 - annual compilation of restraints and seclusions;
 - personnel files: (evaluations, fingerprint and criminal records check);
 - professional development plan;
 - the facility/grounds; and
 - Curriculum;
- Interviews the program's Education Director;
- Shares preliminary impressions with administration; and
- Discusses Day 2 visit.

Approval Process

Day 2:

Private School Ed Director, Public School Special Education Director, CSDE Consultant(s)

- The team engages in verification that the program is fully implementing the IEP for each enrolled student. Specifically, the team
 - Observes classrooms/references IEP(s)
 - Interviews teachers; provider(s) of related services
 - Reviews curriculum and behavior intervention policies and systems;
- Exit Conference: The team shares preliminary impressions, including identification of any standard deficiencies.

APSEP Approval



- A **Preliminary Evaluation Report** is generated and reflects:
 - Commendations
 - Standard Deficiencies/Required Corrective Actions
 - Recommendations
- The private school is provided an opportunity to respond to and accept identified corrective actions.
- Upon the facility's acceptance of the Preliminary Report, a recommendation is forwarded to the Commissioner for approval
- One of the following dispositions is determined:
 - **Approved** (up to 5 years)
 - **Conditional Approval** (1 year)
 - **Disapproved**

Upon Approval

Per submission of a signed annual statement of assurances each program documents that they maintain:

- A governing body that ensures compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations and local requirements;
- An annual audit report, available to local school districts and CSDE when requested;
- Adequate insurance (fire and general liability);
- An IEP for each enrolled student as developed by the LEA which is fully implemented by the APSEP and a curriculum aligned with the Common Core Standards;
- School year and instructional hours commensurate with those of the students attending public school;
- Participation in the administration of statewide assessments;
- Appropriately certified administration and staff;
- Professional development plan; and
- Updated policies and procedures which ensure appropriate termination of enrollment procedures.

Other Requirements

- A program seeking **reapproval must follow the same procedures as the application for initial approval.**
- **Mandatory Data Collections/Reports:**
 - Staff File
 - Teacher/Course/Student collection *
 - Restraint and Seclusion
 - Membership and Attendance *
 - Discipline Data *

*reports are made to LEA
- Adherence to required Educator Evaluation Guidelines/SEED
- Adherence to procedures for requesting changes to program between compliance cycles
- Notification to CSDE of other program events; i.e. changes in administration, any legal proceedings, reports of child abuse or conditions that significantly alter the program, health/safety of students.

Approved Nonpublic Schools



Requirements:

- **Accreditation from an agency approved by CSDE**
American Association of Christian Schools,
The Association of Christian Schools International,
The Connecticut Association of Independent Schools,
The New England Association of Schools and Colleges.
- **Current clearance by fire and health authorities to the CSDE.**
- **Annual Attendance Report (ED 159)**
- **Approval as a nonpublic school allows the school to offer its own diploma.**

APSEP vs. Approved Non Public Schools



- An approved nonpublic school may confer a diploma. *An APSEP does not confer its own diploma unless it has also met the requirements of an approved nonpublic school*
- An LEA can submit an excess cost grant request if the cost of a student's program within an APSEP meets the identified cost threshold. Except under specific circumstances, a LEA cannot access their excess cost or state agency placement grant if they place a student in a nonpublic school that is not approved as an APSEP.

Resources



- **Directory of Approved Private Special Education Schools:**

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PrivSpEd Progs.pdf>

- **Policies Procedures and Standards for Approved Private Special Education Programs**

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PPS.pdf>

- **Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools**

<http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/csde/nonpublic.pdf>