

## WSR 21-20-027

## EMERGENCY RULES

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

[Filed September 24, 2021, 2:36 p.m., effective September 24, 2021, 2:36 p.m.]

Effective Date of Rule: Immediately upon filing.

Purpose: The purpose of this emergency rule making on chapter 180-90 WAC is to clarify policy regarding loss of private school approval.

The rule making clarifies that private schools must comply with state law, including all applicable health and safety requirements, and that noncompliance may result in rescission of approval.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 180-90-112 and 180-90-141.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 28A.195.040, 28A.195.010, 28A.150.220.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: RCW 28A.195.040 states that the state board of education (SBE) shall adopt rules regarding the loss of private school approval. To ensure that private schools can safely deliver education during the emergency state and local public health response to COVID-19, the SBE has engaged in rule making that clarifies that the conditions for the loss of private school approval include noncompliance with all applicable laws, including applicable health and safety requirements. Due to immediate need to ensure public health and safety in private schools, emergency rule making is necessary to align loss of private school approval to all conditions of private school requirements including public health measures. Immediate adoption and amendment of rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest. The rule is intended to conform to the necessary requirements for private schools and, thus, allow SBE to ensure adequate standards of approval as necessary.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 2, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 0, Amended 2, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: September 24, 2021.

Randy Spaulding  
Executive Director

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 18-24-090, filed 12/3/18, effective 1/3/19)

**WAC 180-90-112 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Approved private school" means a nonpublic school or nonpublic school district conducting a program consisting of kindergarten and at least grade one, or a program consisting of any or all of grades one through twelve which has been approved by the state board of education in accordance with the minimum standards for approval as prescribed in this chapter.

(2) (a) "Reasonable health requirements" means those standards contained in chapter 246-366 WAC as adopted by the state board of health, and any other applicable health requirements for private schools.

(b) "Reasonable fire safety requirements" means those standards adopted by the state fire marshal pursuant to chapter 43.44 RCW.

(3) (a) "Minor deviation" means a variance from the standards established by these regulations which represents little or no threat to the health or safety of students and school personnel, and which does not impact the ability of the school to provide an educational program which is in substantial compliance with the minimum standards set forth in WAC 180-90-160, and which, therefore, does not preclude the granting of full approval.

(b) "Major deviation" means a variance from the standards established by these regulations which represents little or no threat to the health or safety of students and school personnel but may impact the ability of the school to provide an educational program which substantially complies with the minimum standards set forth in WAC 180-90-160, but is not so serious as to constitute an unacceptable deviation.

(c) "Unacceptable deviation" means a variance from the standards established by these regulations which either:

(i) Constitutes a threat to the health or safety of students or school personnel; or

(ii) Demonstrates that the school is not capable of providing an educational program which substantially complies with the minimum standards set forth in WAC 180-90-160.

(4) "Total instructional hour offering" means those hours when students are provided the opportunity to engage in educational activity planned by and under the direction of school staff, as directed by the administration and board of directors, inclusive of intermissions for class changes, recess and teacher/parent-guardian conferences which are planned and scheduled by the approved private school for the purpose of discussing students' educational needs for progress, and exclusive of time actually spent for meals.

(5) (a) "Non-Washington state certificated teacher" means a person who does not have a Washington state certification consistent with WAC 181-79A-030(2), but who has:

(i) A K-12 teaching certificate from a nationally accredited preparation program, other than Washington state, recognized by the U.S. Department of Education; or

(ii) A minimum of a baccalaureate degree in the subject matter to be taught or in a field closely related to the subject matter to be taught; or

(iii) A minimum of one calendar year of experience in a specialized field. For purposes of this subsection the term "specialized field" means a specialized area of the curriculum where skill or talent is applied and where entry into an occupation in such field generally does not require a baccalaureate degree including, but not limited to, the fields of art, drama, dance, music, physical education, and career and technical or occupational education.

(b) "Exceptional case" means that a circumstance exists within a private school in which:

(i) The educational program offered by the private school will be significantly improved with the employment of a non-Washington state certificated teacher. Each teacher not holding a valid Washington state certificate shall have experience or academic preparation appropriate to K-12 instruction and consistent with the school's mission. Such experience or academic preparation shall be consistent with the provisions of (c) of this subsection; and

(ii) The school employs at least one Washington state certified teacher, administrator, or superintendent who provides general supervision to any non-Washington state certificated teacher. The school will annually report to the state board of education the academic preparations and experience of each non-Washington state certificated teacher providing k-12 instruction in an addendum to the certificate of compliance as provided in WAC 180-90-160; and

(iii) The non-Washington state certificated teacher of the private school, employed pursuant to this section, has been verified by the private school, as meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements of WAC 181-79A-150 (1) and (2), and has not had his or her teacher's certificate revoked by any state or foreign country consistent with WAC 181-79A-155 (5) (a).

(c) "Unusual competence": As applied to an exceptional case wherein the educational program as specified in RCW 28A.195.010 and WAC 180-90-160(7) will be significantly improved with the employment of a non-Washington state certificated teacher as defined in (a) of this subsection.

(d) "General supervision" means that a Washington state certificated teacher, administrator, or superintendent shall be generally available at the school site to observe and advise the teacher employed under provision of (c) of this subsection and shall evaluate pursuant to policies of the private school.

**Reviser's note:** The unnecessary strike-through in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appears in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 21-01-077, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21)

**WAC 180-90-141 Loss of private school approval.** The state board of education may rescind approval of a private school for one or more of the following reasons:

(1) Failure to have students enrolled for any six consecutive calendar months in the school's physical facilities or failure to provide evidence of student enrollment upon request of the state board of education for the said period of time.

(a) For the 2020-21 school year, schools that implement an online education program consistent with the provisions of RCW 28A.195.090

will not be subject to rescission based on a failure to have students enrolled in the school's physical facilities; and

(b) The school maintains a physical address in Washington and plans to resume classroom instruction when the governing body of the school determines it is safe to do so and resumption is allowable under state and local emergency status.

(2) Failure to provide verification that the approved private school teaching staff have a valid Washington state teaching certificate or meet the provisions of WAC 180-90-112(5).

(3) Failure to provide verification that the physical facilities, personnel, and practices of the school meet ((the)) all reasonable health requirements and all reasonable fire safety ((standards)) requirements.

(4) Failure to meet any of the requirements, standards, or legal obligations that private schools are subject to including, but not limited to, those enumerated in this chapter or in chapter 28A.195 RCW.