



Janet T. Mills
Governor

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME
04333-0023



Pender Makin
Commissioner

For Your Information Only
Notice of the Special Purpose Private Schools Letter of Notification and Instruction

July 2, 2026

Dear School Administrative Unit Special Education Administrator,

The Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) is required under federal law to monitor special education programs and services for students with disabilities as described under Section 616 of the 2004 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

One or more of the Special Purpose Private Schools (SPPS) in which your Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams placed one or more students will be reviewed as part of the General System of Supervision and Monitoring for the 2026-2027 school year. The SPPS Monitoring Team is hosting an informational webinar that the FY27 SPPS Cohort Directors or an identified designee are required to attend. You are invited to participate in the upcoming informational webinar, which details the process and provides an opportunity for you to ask questions and seek clarification.

As the school administrative unit responsible for the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for the youth, your IEP Teams have determined that an out-of-unit placement is the least restrictive environment (LRE) for one or more students in one or more Maine SPPSs. We encourage you to join us.

July 27, 2026, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Topic: NEW COHORT WEBINAR

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://mainestate.zoom.us/meeting/register/TQxlWcXpRL2igHe9csf8Pw>

The training will include information pertaining to the Continued SPPS Approval Desk Audit materials to be submitted to the SPPS Monitoring Team, as well as information regarding on-site visits and file verifications conducted by the SPPS Monitoring Team. There will be a recording available afterward.

The Continued SPPS Approval Desk Audit documents are described below and due from the SPPS

Location: 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Phone: 207-624-6600 | **Fax:** 207-624-6700 | **TTY Users:** Call Maine Relay 711 | **Website:** www.maine.gov/doe
An Equal Opportunity Employer

December 31, 2026.

Continued Special Purpose Private School (SPPS) Approval Desk Audit Materials	
Criteria	Evidence
1 General Description of Program and Admission Requirements 20-A MRSA § 2951(6) 20-A MRSA § 7204(4)(A) MUSER IX.3.I MUSER XII.2.A(1)(a)(k)(l)	The SPPS Monitoring Team will confirm with the Fiscal Team that the Maine Department of Education has a copy of your annual budget Submit the Administrative Policy Manual AND Parent Handbook, with substantial and appropriate information, policies with documented dates of approval by your Board of Directors, and procedures regarding: a) General description of the program b) Grade levels served c) School calendar with at least 175 student instruction days d) Copy of the contract or MOU, if used, between the SPPS and the SAU e) Provide Board-approved dated policies to specifically reference Student Records ○ Maintenance of student files, including record of access ○ Attendance ○ Confidentiality and FERPA, including annual training requirement f) Provide Board-approved dated policies for: ○ Admission/Discharge ○ Policy of disseminating report cards at least as often as the sending SAU ○ <u>For those serving high schoolers</u>, policy for updated annual graduation credit agreements with sending schools/schools of residence signed by the SAU high school principal
2 Educational Environment 20-A MRSA § 7204 (4) MUSER XII.2.A.1.(o)	a) Provide Board-approved, dated policies and procedures to specifically reference access to Health and Medical Services as specified in the SPPS Initial Application Part XII: (1) Health Care Plan – i) Provisions made for medical, nursing, and infirmary care of students ii) Training by a physician or registered nurse to all staff that provides medication to students as required by Maine Guide to School Health Services Medication Administration

	(2) Emergency First Aid Policy - i) Training of direct service staff in emergency first aid ii) Secure storage of adequate first aid supplies iii) Posting of telephone numbers for the fire department, police station, poison prevention center, hospital emergency room and ambulance service serving the school iv) Procedures to be followed in the case of illness or emergency such as motor vehicle accident, including methods of transportation and notification of parents v) Procedures to be followed in the case of fire or other emergency vi) Procedures for informing parents of any medical care administered to their child or of any injury or illness that requires care other than basic first aid vii) Procedures to be followed in the case of illness or emergency if parents cannot be reached b) Safety protocols as necessary (for programming elements with increased risk during activities/courses such as kitchens, heavy machinery, auto shops, carpentry, rock wall climbing, etc.)
3 Qualification of Staff 20-A MRSA § 7204(4)(B) MUSER X. 2.A.(6) MUSER XII.2.A(1)(b) Maine Department of Education Regulations Chapter 115	Special Education and Related Service Provider Certification and License Form - Attached Enter required information for newly employed instructional staff (teacher, educational technicians) who were not listed on your SPPS FY 27 Basic School Approval submission, as well as <u>all</u> SPPS employed and contracted related service providers (nursing, social work, speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, BCBA, psychologist, psychiatrist, etc.).
4 Professional Supervision 20-A MRSA § 7204(4)(F) MUSER XII. 2.A. MUSER XII. 2.A.(1)f	Documentation of supervisory model/positions: of full-time, on-site, educational administrator(s): Educational administrator requirements: • Certification as a Special Education Administrator (030) or (035) • Certification as Special Education Consultant (079) • Certification as Teacher of Students with Disabilities (282), or Teacher of Severely Impaired Students (286), with both with a minimum of a master's degree in special education or a related field plus one year of administrative experience

	a) Educational administrator's name and certification - <u>if 282 or 286, evidence of completed Master's Degree</u> b) <u>If the Educational Administrator holds 079, 282, or 286,</u> supervision plan that includes a minimum of 5 hours of supervision per month, by a contracted Special Education Administrator, with an active 030 or 035 certification.
5 Plan of Instruction 20-A MRSA § 2951(6) 20-A MRSA § 7204(4)(C) MUSER XII.2.A(1)(c)	a) Plan of instruction/policy that the curriculum is aligned to the Maine Learning Results for each of the nine content areas b) Description of SPPS participation in statewide assessments
6 Teacher/Student ratio 20-A MRSA § 7204(4)(G) MUSER XII.2.A(1)(g)	Description and number of classrooms and student/teacher ratios The following child-teacher ratios shall not be exceeded for self-contained services from a special education teacher (educational technician) for a full school day. The figures in parentheses represent the number of additional children who may be provided self-contained services during the time that one or more educational technicians work under the supervision of the certified special education teacher responsible for the program. Staff: Child Ratios: Ages 5-9 ____ 6:1 (5) Ages 10-14 ____ 8:1 (5) Ages 15-22 ____ 10:1 (5) Classes for children with a severe to profound degree of impairment shall be staffed with a minimum of two (2) providers (i.e., one teacher and one educational technician) at all times to ensure the safety and well-being of the students.
7 Continuum of special education services MUSER X.2(B) MUSER XII.2.A(1)(h)	Provide your SPPS <u>continuum of special education services</u> documentation. Specific discharge data for the past 2 years, including: admission date, discharge date, grade level, and graduation data, if applicable

8 Notification and Reporting of Changes to the Application and of Serious Events Title 20-A Chap 117 MUSER XII.2.A(1)(n) MUSER XII. 2. D.	a) Policy for notification and reporting to Maine DOE of serious events and issues that would impact the approval status of your school/program: i. Immediate notification and reporting of serious events, including serious injury or death of a student, criminal activity on the part of a student or staff member, or other serious incident affecting the well-being of any student the approved special purpose private school shall immediately notify, by telephone and by letter, the parents, the sending school district(s), any state agency involved in child care or program placement, and the Department of Education ii. Any substantial changes in the school's program(s) iii. Any changes in the certification and/or credentials of its staff iv. Any action taken by a federal, state, or local agency that might jeopardize the school's approval with the Department, or any legal proceeding brought against the school or its employee(s) arising out of circumstances related to the care or education of any of its students, regardless of their state of residency v. Any new, or revisions to existing, policies that replace or revise policies described or provided with this application vi. Any changes to the program/facility that impact the overall health or safety of students, or the ability to deliver services vii. Any changes in services or staff, including temporary staff shortages, that alter the previously approved staff: child ratios and/or affect the ability to deliver services to students per their IEPs viii. Change in the Program Director b) Provide a statement that either: a. There are no reportable updates to the Initial Application, or b. There are reportable updates to the Initial Application, and describe the updates in the attached FY 27 Cohort Updates for SPPS Application
--	---

9 Rule Governing Physical Restraint and Seclusion policy 20-A MRSA 4014 Me. Dept. of Ed. Reg. Chapter 33	Official, dated policy regarding use of physical restraint and seclusion, including: a) Annual overview and awareness information to staff b) Annual notice informing parents c) Date reviewed/approved by Board of Directors, which is September 24, 2025, or later d) Name of DOE-approved crisis intervention curriculum your SPPS implements
--	---

Following the site visit and review of the submitted desk audit material, any findings that affect continued approval status will be outlined in separate Letters of Findings which are sent to both the SPPS being reviewed and the sending SAUs of students in each SPPS. The Letters of Findings will clearly outline the insufficiencies and the actions required to bring the findings into compliance, with time built in providing opportunities for the SPPS to submit corrective evidence and Maine DOE to provide support in an interactive process prior to an official Corrective Action Plan (CAP) being developed for any remaining unresolved findings.

CAPs will be generated for SPPS who have unresolved findings after the 8/7/27 due date. All CAP activities are to be completed and documentation of successful completion sent to the Maine DOE by 12/31/27. Final letters of approval will be issued on or before 1/31/28.

I have attached the form the Maine DOE requires for staff credential documentation and verification for all staff employed and contracted. Please reach out to Sarah Ferguson at sarah.ferguson@maine.gov or (207) 592-6498, Leora Byras at leora.byras@maine.gov or (207) 624-6618, or me at mary.adley@maine.gov or (207) 624-6671, if you have any questions or want clarification. We hope to see you at the webinar, and understand you may have competing demands. A link to the recording of the webinar will be posted on our webpage, and can be found at: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/specialed/specialpurposeprivateschools>

Sincerely,

Coordinator for State Agency Programs
Office of Special Services & Inclusive Education
Maine Department of Education

Attachment:

- Special Education and Related Service Provider Certification and License Form – Excel Workbook
- FY 27 Cohort Updates for SPPS Application